



Hawkins to coach receivers

By Kyle Ringo
Monday, June 1, 2009

BOULDER, Colo. — The college football season is still three months away and it's safe to say Colorado is likely to lead the nation in at least one category this fall -- teacher-to-student ratio at the wide receiver position.

Coach Dan Hawkins announced Monday he will coach wide receivers this fall, along with all his other duties. Hawkins will also mentor defensive technical intern Ashley Ambrose, who is expected to take over as wide receivers coach next year. Offensive coordinator Eric Kiesau, the former receivers coach, will also continue to help coach the position.

Hawkins also turned to his long-time friend and mentor, Bob Foster, to coach outside linebackers for a year.

Hawkins was faced this spring with a nightmare in the bad-timing department when former offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich bolted for the same job at Oregon in late April after spring practices.

Hawkins filled Helfrich's job with Kiesau but was faced with trying to find a quality assistant to fill out his staff extremely late in the offseason. He decided hiring the 68-year-old Foster for one year was the best decision.

The outside linebackers job has been handled the past three seasons by former graduate assistant Andy Avalos and defensive coordinator Ron Collins. Foster brings 40 years of coaching experience to the job.

"Bob Foster is one of the greatest coaches, husbands, fathers and mentors around," Hawkins said in a statement. "He was part of an NCAA record 20 consecutive conference championships, and coach Foster was a major part of the success of Oregon and (California) during his time there. He has never had a losing record and is a real quality human being who will be a major force for Colorado football on and off the field."

Hawkins and Foster met in the early 1980s when Hawkins was a player and Foster was an assistant coach at Cal-Davis.

Hawkins later became an assistant coach alongside Foster at his alma mater. In the mid-1990s when Hawkins was head coach at Willamette University, he hired Foster as a defensive consultant.

Foster also has served as a head coach at Cal-Davis and in numerous assistant coaching positions, including defensive coordinator at Oregon in 1998-99. Foster also previously coached alongside Kiesau, when he twice came out of retirement earlier this decade to coach linebackers at Cal.

Hawkins is the first CU head coach to also serve as a position coach since Bill McCartney coached quarterbacks in 1993. The truth, however, is that Hawkins always has been very hands-on during

practices, often engaging players at nearly every position with pointers and instruction.

Hawkins and Kiesau will help give Ambrose a buffer, going from no real coaching experience to assistant coach at the Bowl Championship Series level in one year.

"We all recognize Ashley as a rising star in the profession," Hawkins said in a statement. "He has the respect of our players, is extremely intelligent and is a class act. We look forward to mentoring Ashley and eventually having him be a part of our full-time staff."

More staff changes

Hawkins announced former CU linebacker Jashon Sykes has been promoted to assistant director of football operations, as well as coordinator of football relations, particularly with alumni. Sykes has worked in the operations side of the program the past three years.

Todd Ritter takes over as assistant director of football operations and coordinator of on-campus recruiting, a position vacated in February by Mark Nolan, who left to become head football coach at Regis High School.

Chip Marks, who coached wide receivers at Colorado Mines last fall, takes over Ritter's former position as Hawkins' right-hand man, handling administrative matters.

Comings, goings

Colorado announced several more departures from the football team Monday. The only scholarship player is senior offensive lineman Devin Head, who became academically ineligible for his senior season this spring.

Three walk-ons, fullback Matt Burgner, wide receiver Marion Brown and offensive lineman Evan Eastburn, also are leaving the program.

Nine players enrolled at CU and plan to join the program as walk-ons.

Grade-A Buffs

This spring, the Buffs posted the best team grade point average in any semester since 1986, the year the sports information department began tracking their performance.

Hawkins' team posted a 2.636 with the cumulative rising to 2.652. Grades are not official until June 10. It is the second consecutive semester the football team has set a new record for team GPA.

Notable

The Buffs' home game against Wyoming on Sept. 19 will begin at 1:30 p.m. and won't be televised. ... CU confirmed wide receiver Toney Clemons officially joined the program as a transfer from Michigan and fellow receiver Kendrick Celestine could return to the program. It remains unclear what Celestine must do to be officially added to the roster once again, after leaving school between the fall and spring semesters. "Should Kendrick recognize what he left behind and the opportunities he can have here- we certainly welcome him back," Hawkins said.



Colorado-Colorado State game set for Sunday, Sept. 6

Bufs, Rams to meet at Folsom at 5 p.m.

Camera staff report
Monday, June 1, 2009

BOULDER, Colo. — For the second time in as many years, Colorado and Colorado State will open the football season on a Sunday.

Officials from both schools announced Monday that next fall's opener will be played Sunday, Sept. 6, at 5 p.m. at Folsom Field.

The game was originally scheduled for Sept. 5.

The switch means that the Bufs and Rams will have the national airwaves virtually to themselves, as there are just two other college games on tap that Sunday. Grambling plays South Carolina State at noon and Ole Miss plays at Memphis at 1:30 p.m.

The NFL regular season does not begin until Sept. 13.

It will be just the second Sunday game at Folsom Field in recent memory. The Bufs last played on a Sunday at Folsom in 2001, when CU opened the season with a 24-22 loss to Fresno State in the Jim Thorpe Classic.

The Sunday game also means the Bufs will have just a four-day window between their season opener and their second game, a Friday, Sept. 11 contest at Toledo. With players usually getting just a light workout the day after games, and with the day before games also being a light day, the Buffaloes will have what amounts to just two full days of preparation for their first-ever meeting with Toledo.

It will be the first of two stretches next fall when Colorado plays two games in a six-day stretch. Later in the season, CU is scheduled to play at Iowa State on Nov. 14, then at Oklahoma State on Nov. 19.

Colorado leads the CSU series by a 59-19-2 count and has won five of the last seven, including last year's 38-17 win at Invesco Field at Mile High. That 21-point margin almost matched the combined margin of victory in the previous six games, which was 25 points.

The 2008 game featured a rarity in football: back-to-back kickoff returns for touchdowns, the latest on a long list of exciting moments in the rivalry.

This will mark the 15th consecutive year the CU-CSU game will televised on a national (11) or regional (4) basis.

The 2008 CU-CSU game registered a 12.3 rating in the Denver market, making it the most-watched college football game ever on FSN Rocky Mountain and the highest-rated regular season game for any sport at any level. The rivalry takes up the top three (2004, 2007 and 2008) spots of FSN Rocky Mountain's five highest-rated college football games, dating back to the network's launch more than 20 years ago.

Individual tickets priced between \$50 and \$120 will go on sale Aug. 3.



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WR Smith, TE Wallace to leave Colorado football program

Hawkins confirms departures

By Kyle Ringo
Saturday, May 30, 2009

BOULDER, Colo. — Colorado wide receiver Josh Smith and tight end Ryan Wallace are transferring from coach Dan Hawkins' football program.

Smith has asked for a release from his scholarship so he can transfer to another school to pursue a music major not offered in Boulder. Wallace is looking to transfer to a program closer to home in Bowling Green, Ky.

Hawkins confirmed the departures through sports information director Dave Plati on Saturday. Smith informed Hawkins that he wanted to return to California where he believed he could best further his music career and still play football. Wallace was homesick all year and simply wanted to transfer closer to his family. Both will leave in good academic standing, so there are no APR issues with either.

Smith and Wallace did not respond to messages.

The athletic department has planned several announcements concerning the football program for Monday. The updates will include the status of Hawkins' efforts to fill his coaching staff in the wake of Mark Helfrich's departure to Oregon and player personnel changes, including Smith and Wallace.

The announcement could also include news of an agreement between CU and Colorado State on a 10-year extension of the series beyond 2010, most, if not all, of which would be played at Invesco Field at Mile High in Denver.

Football coaches have done their best to talk Smith out of a transfer, but he appears to have made up his mind late this week.

Two schools that offer the music major Smith is interested in are Arizona State and Southern Cal. Both are possible destinations for the product of Moorpark, Calif. Smith began making rap demos and CDs during high school and has continued to pursue his love of music in college.

He spent time last year in the Phoenix area recording tracks with Arizona State quarterback Samson Szakacsy. Smith grew up in Tallahassee, Fla., with two older brothers involved in the music business there, and he began rapping at a young age because of their influence.

The transfers are a serious blow to an offense that has been among the worst in the Big 12 Conference the past three years under Hawkins, but was anticipating significant improvement this fall. The loss of

Smith also further compounds serious depth problems at the wide receiver position and robs the team of, perhaps, its most explosive player.

Smith finished his sophomore season last fall with 1,987 all-purpose yards. He set school records with 1,568 return yards and 50 kickoff returns, including one for a touchdown sparking the Buffs to a season-opening victory over CSU.

He also gained 387 yards receiving and 32 rushing. He caught 23 passes for 451 yards as a true freshman in 2007.

It is unclear how Smith's departure might affect the future of his nephew, CU tailback Darrell Scott, who signed with the Buffs in 2008 as the nation's top tailback recruit. Scott came to Boulder, at least in part, because of the opportunity to play with his uncle.

After a freshman season marred by injuries, Scott looked solid and much more prepared in spring practices in April. Scott did not respond to several messages left for him, but CU officials said the running back tried to encourage Smith to stay in Boulder, and that Smith's decision would not have an effect on Scott.

Wallace is the third member of the nationally ranked 2008 recruiting class to leave the program. The former three-star recruit came to Boulder from Kentucky and was said to be homesick at times last year.

Wallace and former five-star recruit Lynn Katoa helped elevate the 2008 recruiting class to a top-15 ranking by Rivals.com and a top-30 ranking by Scout.com. Neither played last season. Wallace redshirted and Katoa was academically ineligible.

Wide receiver Chance Blackmon decided to transfer in April in order to be closer to his family in Texas.



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college football briefs

Rams-Buffs showdown goes national, gets Sunday slot

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For the second consecutive year, the Rocky Mountain Showdown will be a featured attraction on the college version of Sunday night football.

This year's Colorado vs. Colorado State game will be played Sept. 6 at CU's Folsom Field, with a 5 p.m. kickoff to accommodate an FSN Rocky Mountain time slot, the network announced Monday. The game, originally scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 5, will open the season for both teams and is a national telecast.

The 2008 meeting at Invesco Field also was televised by FSN Rocky Mountain. According to the network, it registered a 12.3 rating in the Denver area, the highest rating ever for a college football game on FSN Rocky Mountain. It also became the most-watched regular-season game for any sport at any level on the network.

"Playing on Sunday, it's great to get that

exposure," CSU coach Steve Fairchild said Monday. "There's a short week for the next game, but, like last year, we've got a home game the next week (against Weber State)."

Colorado won't have that luxury. The Buffaloes will have an extremely short week in preparation for their second game, traveling to Toledo for a Friday night ESPN game.

Back to the future.

CU coach Dan Hawkins is returning the favor to the coach he played for. Bob Foster, 68, was hired Monday as outside linebackers coach for the 2009 season. Hawkins played fullback for Foster in the early 1980s at Cal-Davis, a power in the lower classification. Foster also coached at Oregon and California.

Hawkins had Foster speak to the team after a spring practice. "He has never had a losing record," Hawkins said.

Hawkins takes charge.

Hawkins announced Monday he will coach the wide receivers this fall. The position opened when Eric Kiesau was promoted to offensive coordinator.

Hawkins said he is grooming defensive technical intern Ashley Ambrose to become full-time wideouts coach in 2010. "We all recognize Ashley as a rising star in the profession," Hawkins said of the former longtime NFL defensive back.

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Footnotes.

CU senior offensive guard Devin Head is academically ineligible for the 2009 season. He joins junior wideout Josh Smith, redshirt freshman tight end Ryan Wallace and sophomore linebacker Lynn Katoa as players who will not return.

Smith, third last season in Big 12 all-purpose yardage (165.6 yards per game), wants to return to the West Coast to further his music and football careers.

On the plus side, former Buff wideout Kendrick Celestine has re-enrolled and could return to the team.

Tom Kensler, The Denver Post

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sports

CU-CSU football game moved to Sept. 6

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

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Colorado and Colorado State faced off at Invesco Field last year. The game will play at Folsom Field in Boulder this year. (Getty Images)

For the second straight year, the football teams of Colorado and Colorado State will battle on Sunday evening, this time to accommodate television.

This year's game was moved to Sept. 6 — instead of Sept. 5 — and will be played on CU's Folsom Field. FSN Rocky Mountain requested a 5 p.m. kickoff, which was granted.

The 2008 meeting at Invesco Field also was televised by FSN Rocky Mountain.

According to the network, it registered a 12.3 rating in the Denver area, the highest rating ever for a college football game on FSN Rocky Mountain. It also became the most-watched regular-season game for any sport on the network.

Colorado won last year's meeting 38-17.

Last year's game was moved to Sunday because of the Democratic National Convention, relieving emergency personnel.

CU leads the all-time series with CSU 59-19-2, dating back to 1893. The Buffs have won five of the past seven games, although six of those games have been decided by seven points or less.

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