



Local college football report, November 19

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CU

Owning up

Credit coach **Dan Hawkins** for practicing what he preaches. His latest entry in a periodical blog on the school's athletics Web site (CUBuffs.com) leads with this:

"As is popular these days, 'My bad.' I put the Iowa State loss squarely on my back. No excuses. Don't blame the officials. Don't blame wind, weather, crowd or others.

"If we are to live the life we aspire to, we must take responsibility for our actions and know that we have control over our lives. Even if it is a small percentage. If we control what we can, we need not worry about outside elements."

In the days after CU's 31-28 loss at Iowa State, Hawkins was criticized for gambling on fourth-and-1 at CU's 43-yard line in the third quarter of a game the Buffs led 21-0.

After momentum shifted with their fourth-and-1 stop, the Cyclones reeled off 31 straight points.

Postseason pathos

Hawkins isn't comfortable with being a postseason spectator.

In five seasons as Boise State's coach before accepting the CU job, Hawkins' Broncos teams were left out of the bowl picture only once - in 2001, after an 8-4 finish. Before that, his most recent bowl-less holiday season occurred in 1998, his first year on former Boise State coach **Dirk Koetter**'s staff.

A 2-10 finish in Hawkins' first year in Boulder left the Buffs watching postseason play, and he identified advancing to the bowl season as being chief among the team's 2007 goals. CU must beat Nebraska on Friday to at least gain bowl eligibility (six wins).

Last season marked only the fifth time since 1984 the Buffs didn't play in a bowl. Their previous non-bowl season occurred in 2003 (5-7), with CU also staying at home after the 2000 season (3-8).

The Buffs played in bowls in five of former coach **Gary Barnett**'s seven seasons.

Back to work

After having Friday off, a Saturday scrimmage involving mostly younger players and a day of rest Sunday, the Buffs resume work today for the Cornhuskers.

With Thanksgiving break under way for most students, the Buffs' meetings and practices this week shift to mornings. Their heaviest work will be today and Tuesday, with tapering beginning Wednesday and a walk-through on Thanksgiving Day.

Cornerback **Terrence Wheatley** (small fracture in left foot) remains CU's biggest question mark on the injury front. Wheatley still insists he will be among 14 seniors making their final appearance in Folsom Field.

Numbers game

73 points scored by Nebraska against Kansas State on Nov. 10 all were by the offense and without the benefit of a Wildcats turnover.

He said it

"He's a product of the system. This is a player that we've developed, and you can see his development ooze all over the field."

Bill Callahan, Nebraska coach, on quarterback **Joe Ganz**, who passed for 500-plus yards and seven touchdowns against Kansas State.

CSU

Border War next

With its confidence buoyed by a dominant offensive performance in a 42-34 win against Georgia Southern on Saturday, Colorado State now focuses on rival Wyoming. The Border War game will kick off at noon Friday at Hughes Stadium.

"A win over Wyoming would help tremendously," CSU coach **Sonny Lubick** said. "First of all, it would be Wyoming, and it's always a big win when we can beat Wyoming. Just the fact it's Wyoming would make Thanksgiving weekend a lot nicer. And it would be nice to win two games in a row at the end of the season."

The Rams, 2-9, were outgained by Georgia Southern 509-507, but many of those Eagles yards came late in the game. CSU played probably its best first half this year, leading 28-3 at the break.

"Beating Wyoming would help take the sting out of the season," CSU senior quarterback **Caleb Hanie** said. "This season will still hurt, but a win would be great for the seniors and give everyone a nice feeling going into the offseason."

Junior running back **Gartrell Johnson** saluted Lubick and his assistants for keeping the team focused despite its dismal record and numerous close losses.

"You just have to keep going, keep plugging away at it, and the coaches have been a big reason we've done that," Johnson said. "You have to admire Sonny and the other coaches for not letting us give up. We're used to winning here, and it's nice to get that feeling again."

Etc.

* CSU's only significant injury was the sprained left knee suffered by safety **Steve Juedes**. Juedes will be evaluated as the practice week goes on. **Mike Pagnotta**, the Rams' starting free safety, sat out Saturday because of ankle soreness but hopes to play against the Cowboys.

* Johnson's 136 yards rushing Saturday gives him 854 for the season. He needs 146 against Wyoming to become the eighth 1,000-yard rusher in Lubick's 15 seasons. In addition to scoring on two touchdown runs, Johnson had his first career touchdown reception against the Eagles.

Numbers game

36-2 record for CSU when scoring 40 or more points in a game under Lubick.

He said it

"It was good to be hitting on all cylinders as an offense. When that happens, you have to treasure it and enjoy it."

Hanie, after CSU's 42-34 win against Georgia Southern.

Air Force

Drinking it all in

Coach **Troy Calhoun** was showered with Gatorade after the Falcons wrapped up a 6-0 home campaign and a 9-3 regular season with a win against San Diego State on Saturday.

"I wanted to line right back up after the game was over, put them on the sideline and get a little extra conditioning," Calhoun said. "That didn't fly. I tell you what, we can keep doing it. If we get a 10th win, we'll take another shower."

Girding for the calls

Athletic director Dr. **Hans Mueh** knows he likely will get calls from college and professional teams asking permission to talk with Calhoun, but he hasn't received any yet and is confident the academy graduate will remain at Air Force.

"There's nothing to make me believe he won't stay," Mueh said. "He's talking about the freshman class for next year. He has a five- or six-year plan because we're not nearly where he wants to be. I don't think **Amanda** (Calhoun's wife) wants to move any more."

Etc.

* Calhoun and his staff will be out recruiting early this week while the Air Force players take part in the Commandant's Challenge, three days of mental and physical testing that began Sunday. After a Thanksgiving break that begins Tuesday evening, the team will resume workouts next week.

***Tom Starr**, executive director of the Armed Forces Bowl, hopes to make an announcement this week that Air Force will be invited to play in the Dec. 31 game in Fort Worth, Texas. But since the Las Vegas Bowl and Poinsettia Bowl have the first two choices of Mountain West Conference teams, Starr must wait until those two bowls make a selection or state they are not interested in Air Force.

Numbers game

80yards rushing needed by **Chad Hall** to break the school's single-season rushing record of 1,494 yards, set by **Beau Morgan** in 1996. Postseason games are counted in single-season records. Hall had only 186 yards after the first five games this season before the Falcons started giving him the ball more.

He said it

"On my long touchdown run, there were guys holding blocks downfield and I know it took me a while to get there."

Shaun Carney, Air Force quarterback, on his 40-yard touchdown run in the Falcons' 55-23 win against San Diego State on Saturday.

Next

(Home team in CAPSo all times MST)Team Opponent Kickoff TV Radio Odds

COLORADO (5-6, 3-4) Nebraska (5-6, 2-5) 10 a.m. Friday Ch. 7 KOA-AM (850) CU by 6

COLORADO Wyoming (5-6, 2-5) Noon Friday the mtn. KLZ-AM (560) CSU by 3 STATE (2-9, 1-6) KEPN-AM (1600)