



Bufs kicked while down

No. 5 Texas throttles CU

By Kyle Ringo
Saturday, October 4, 2008

Professional wrestler Goldberg told the Colorado football team to "crack some skulls" in his pregame speech Saturday night at Folsom Field.

In his postgame remarks, coach Dan Hawkins told the Buffs he still loved them.

In the 60 minutes of action between those two talks, the fifth-ranked Texas Longhorns showed the Buffs just how little margin for error they still have when facing the cream of the crop in college football.

CU didn't come close to playing error-free Saturday and the Longhorns bulldozed them once again 38-14 in the annual homecoming game.

Much of the first sellout crowd in Dan Hawkins' tenure as football coach lacked the motivation to stick around for the fourth quarter when it had become clear a large talent and depth disparity remains between the elite teams and the Buffs, who were hosting their largest recruiting weekend of the season.

If there is an upside to Saturday's loss at the old stadium on the hill, it would be that Hawkins and his staff clearly still have immediate playing time as a selling point to those recruits.

"You come out of these things and you find out what your team is made of," Hawkins said. "I feel very good about what they're made of."

Texas quarterback Colt McCoy continued to make a case for inclusion in the early Heisman Trophy discussion, despite throwing two interceptions, which doubled his total in the first four games of the season.

McCoy completed 23 of 30 passes for 262 yards and two scores. He demonstrated his playmaking ability early with a 65-yard touchdown pass to running back Chris Ogbonnaya thrown as he was falling forward across the line of scrimmage. Officials correctly ruled that he had not crossed the line of scrimmage.

McCoy also added 39 rushing yards gained on scrambles that usually led to first downs in key situations against a tough-minded CU defense that played well enough to keep the team in the game until the middle of the third quarter.

"He's amazing because he's playing with so much confidence and he knows where everybody is," Texas coach Mack Brown said.

It was all the Colorado offense could do just to extend the program's scoring streak to 240 games against the big, fast and tough Texas defense. Working with a makeshift offensive line that has lost two starters in the past two weeks, the Buffs were unable to run the ball against the No. 2 rushing defense in the nation.

The burden fell on quarterback Cody Hawkins to move the team and he wasn't given much time to do it against the nation's best pass rush. Hawkins completed only 13 of 33 passes for 118 yards. He was sacked twice, hurried three other times and had eight passes broken up. Redshirt freshman Matt Ballenger replaced him in the fourth quarter.

"I think we're a good football team and we have a lot of potential, but we have to be able to put it together on a consistent basis," Cody Hawkins said.

CU did enough in the early going to keep itself in the game. The offense drove into range for three first-half field goal attempts, but place-kicker Aric Goodman missed them all.

"It's our job as an offense to score touchdowns," Cody Hawkins said. "Nobody ever says, 'Hey, let's drive down the field and kick a field goal.' So obviously we weren't accomplishing our job and we shouldn't have been putting Aric in those situations anyway."

The Buffs got on the board thanks to the defense tipping a McCoy pass and Cha'pelle Brown making the interception at the Texas 27-yard line. The offense nearly blew the opportunity and needed a 17-yard completion on fourth-down-and-10 to keep the drive alive. Cody Hawkins eventually found fullback Jake Behrens for a seven-yard touchdown pass with just under four minutes left in the third quarter.

Ballenger saw the first real action of his career in the fourth quarter and threw a 28-yard touchdown pass to wide receiver Patrick Williams.

"We're a resilient team and nobody is going to stay down on this loss," Williams said. "We have a lot of football in front of us. We're in it for the long run."

The loss in front of the 53,927 ended the Buffs three-game winning streak against the Big 12 South Division.



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CU's defense lone bright spot vs. McCoy, Texas

Buffaloes finish with four sacks, two interceptions

By Ryan Thorburn
Sunday, October 5, 2008

Colorado's defense played well.

At least in comparison to the offense and special teams.

For the most part, the Buffs were able to hold their own defensively against No. 5 Texas during an otherwise forgettable Saturday as the Longhorns tuned up for next week's showdown against Oklahoma with a 38-14 victory at Folsom Field.

CU finished with four sacks and intercepted Colt McCoy, who had only thrown one pick in the previous four games, twice to set Cody Hawkins and Co. up deep in Texas territory.

But three missed field goals, the absence of a running game and another tough game for the starting quarterback squashed any momentum created by the Buffs' defense.

"I said earlier this week we needed to stop the run, put pressure on the quarterback and force some turnovers," senior defensive tackle George Hypolite said after a seven-tackle performance. "We put pressure on the quarterback, we forced some turnovers, we just didn't tackle well enough to stop the run."

The Buffs thought McCoy was going to tuck the football and run on Texas' third offensive snap of the game, something they were ready for. But the smooth signal caller surprised everyone in the stadium by tossing the ball to Chris Ogbonnaya just before crossing the line of scrimmage.

Upon further review, the officials ruled the senior running back's 65-yard touchdown reception was legal. In their view, McCoy appeared to be an inch or two behind the line of scrimmage before throwing the ball.

"I couldn't tell but the referee said he wasn't (across the line)," cornerback Cha'pelle Brown said. "So I guess not."

Jalil Brown intercepted a pass intended for Quan Cosby on a third-and-8 and returned the turnover 57 yards to the Texas 16-yard line with 20 seconds left in the first quarter and the Buffs trailing 14-0.

But the offense squandered the golden opportunity to get back into the game as Nate Solder was called for holding, Hawkins threw an incomplection on third-and-20 and Aric Goodman's 43-yard field goal attempt bounced harmlessly off the left upright.

"We were giving it our all out there and tried our best, but unfortunately it didn't work out the way we planned for it to go," Jalil Brown said.

With 5:29 remaining in the third quarter and the Longhorns enjoying a 28-0 lead, McCoy had a pass bounce off his intended receiver and into Cha'pelle Brown's hands at the Texas 27. After Hawkins connected with Josh Smith for 17 yards on fourth-and-10 he threw an 8-yard touchdown pass to fullback Jake Behrens to finally get CU on the scoreboard.

Ogbonnaya killed the buzz in the stands moments later with a 51-yard run. Cornerback Jimmy Smith forced McCoy to fumble in the red zone but the loose ball rolled harmlessly out of bounds instead of hitting the pylon for a touchback, and Cody Johnson then proceeded to put the final nail in the coffin -- a 1-yard touchdown run -- to make the score 35-7.

"We're doing OK. Again, we kind of give up that gasher at an inopportune time," CU head coach Dan Hawkins said when asked about the defense's performance. "You just need to get helped up by the other two phases of the game."

Hypolite said the defense was not frustrated by the struggles of the offense and special teams.

"The frustration is when you know you can't get any better. I'm sure when we watch the film there are a lot of plays, just like against Florida State, we missed," Hypolite said. "It's easy when you know the things you can correct. We've just got to keep fighting, keep pushing."

McCoy was 23-for-30 passing for 262 yards with two touchdowns to even out the two interceptions. He was sacked three times before watching the end of the game from the bench and added 59 yards rushing.

Ogbonnaya had 187 yards of total offense (71 rushing, 116 receiving) and two touchdowns.

CU's leading receiver was Patrick Williams (50 yards), who made a 28-yard touchdown catch during garbage time, and Rodney Stewart was the leading rusher with 27 yards on 12 carries (2.2 yards per).

Back to the drawing board for the Buffs. Defense included.

"Yeah, I did get an interception," Cha'pelle Brown said. "But I gave up a touchdown, too. We still have a lot of work to do, but we'll be back ready next week."



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Teammates won't put blame on Goodman

CU kicker ties school record for missed FGs

By Ryan Thorburn
Sunday, October 5, 2008

Aric Goodman was walking around the bowels of the Dal Ward Center late Saturday night amongst the rest of the Buffs.

None of them tried to throw the placekicker under the bus.

Had to be tempting though after Goodman missed field goals of 36, 43 and 44 yards in the first half that could have kept Colorado in the game against No. 5 Texas.

"It wasn't just that," CU defensive back Cha'pelle Brown said after the Buffs' 38-14 defeat. "Collectively, we had too many mistakes. I'm not going to say it's the kicker's fault."

Brown pointed out that he was beaten for a touchdown by Jordan Shipley in the second quarter due to "bad technique" in his coverage and that he should have scored on his interception instead of slipping on the sod.

Offensively, the Buffs mustered only 49 net yards rushing (1.8 yards per attempt) and Cody Hawkins was bruised, battered and 13-for-33 with only 118 yards passing.

To his credit, Goodman didn't hide from anyone after another special teams debacle.

"It's all me. I take full responsibility for it," Goodman said. "You miss kicks like that it definitely hurts the team and it hurts momentum. I'll definitely be in the video room watching tape all week and hopefully I'll figure it out."

Goodman wore Michael Johnson-style gold cleats but it had nothing to do with swagger or making a fashion statement. One of his regular playing shoes ripped last week and the flashy footwear was all Nike could deliver in time for Saturday's game.

He changed into some old white cleats at halftime and made both extra point attempts.

"I'm not blaming anything," Goodman said. "I just tried to go out there and think about keeping my head down and kicking through. It just didn't work out today."

Goodman -- who was awarded a scholarship by head coach Dan Hawkins after winning the West Virginia game with a 25-yard field goal in overtime -- tied the CU record for the most missed field goals in a game.

Since being carried off the field after the upset of the Mountaineers, Goodman is 0-for-4 on field goals. He missed a 27-yard attempt that would have given the Buffs a 10-7 lead in the first half of the 39-21 loss to Florida State.

"It's a tough job. Sometimes you're the hero, sometimes you're the goat," Goodman said. "Unfortunately, tonight it's about as low as it can get. I'll bounce back."

Scott serenaded

During waning moments of the one-sided Big 12 opener, when the burnt orange-clad portion of the crowd was in the majority inside Folsom Field, the Longhorns faithful began chanting "Darell Scott (clap, clap, clap) ... Darell Scott (clap, clap, clap) ..."

The nation's No. 1 running back prospect last year chose CU over Texas in the recruiting battle. In his first matchup against the Longhorns, Scott finished with just four yards rushing on two attempts after spraining his ankle on a 38-yard reception in the first quarter.

"Just twisted a little bit and bounced back," Scott said. "After that big catch I was all fired up. Everybody was around here."

And then the Longhorns shut down CU's run game, including the one rare recruit that got away.

Lights out on streak

CU entered Saturday's game with a 20-6-2 record in night games at Folsom Field, including a 2-0 record against Texas (27-6 in 1989 and 36-14 in 1993).

The Buffs have also won the only two night games between the programs in the Lone Star State -- a 29-22 victory during the national championship season in 1990 and a 39-37 victory in the 2001 Big 12 championship game in Dallas.

The night record, of course, includes the 17-14 overtime victory over then No. 21 West Virginia on Sept. 18.

New CU commitment

CU received a verbal commitment from Chaparral High School offensive tackle Jack Harris during his official visit on Saturday, according to scout.com. The 6-6, 280-pound prospect is the fifth player to commit to Dan Hawkins' 2009 class and the first from in state.

By the numbers

It took awhile, but the Buffs extended the nation's fourth longest active scoring streak to 239 games. Jake Behrens' 7-yard touchdown reception got CU on the board with 3:58 remaining in the third quarter. ...

CU is now 21-15-1 wearing all-black uniforms. ...

The last time the Buffs were shut out in the first half was on Oct. 20, 2007, against Kansas when they trailed 3-0 at the intermission en route to a 19-14 loss. ...

The game was an official sellout (53,927). ...

The CU athletic department placed 20,000 gold T-shirts, mostly in the students section, in seats around Folsom Field before opening the gates. Some threw their free gifts onto the playing surface during the game.

Notable

Matt Bahr made his first career start, filling in for an injured Ryan Miller at right tackle. ...

Quarterback Matt Ballenger and guard Ethan Adkins entered their first CU game on offense in the fourth quarter. ...

Guard Shawn Daniels and linebacker Tyler Ahles also got onto the field for the first time. ...

Denver Nuggets forward and Redeem Teamer Carmelo Anthony was among the Colorado Olympians honored at halftime, along with Boulder cyclist Taylor Phinney and CU track star Jenny Barringer. ...

Former CU defensive tackle James Garee (2005) made the Homecoming trip from Austin, where he now works as a firefighter. ...

NFL scouts representing the Broncos, Browns, Jaguars, Chiefs, Eagles and 49ers watched the game from the Fred Casotti press box.



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Hawkins continues to struggle under center

Bufs quarterback completes just 13 of 33 passes

By Joshua Lindenstein
Sunday, October 5, 2008

That Cody Hawkins' performance Saturday night came opposite that of Heisman Trophy candidate Colt McCoy's made it seem only that much rockier.

For the second week in a row, the Colorado Buffaloes' starting quarterback struggled.

Under pressure from the fifth-ranked Texas Longhorns for much of the night, he threw for just 118 yards and one touchdown on 13-of-33 passing in the 38-14 defeat at Folsom Field.

McCoy, meanwhile, shredded the Buffs, throwing for 262 yards, two touchdowns and two largely inconsequential interceptions on 23-of-30 passing.

"You look at stats and again, I don't know where he was, but I'm sure it wasn't great," Cody's father, CU head coach Dan Hawkins, said in the postgame press conference. "But you have to get your running game going to compliment your play-action and then you have to be able to protect as well. He functionally didn't play great, but that's kind of residual of the circumstance, too."

The game was Cody Hawkins' first of the year in which he didn't throw an interception.

But he did miss handoff exchanges with running back Rodney Stewart twice. The first got the Buffs' second drive of the game off to a minus-9-yard start. The second gave Texas the ball at the CU 18-yard-line in the third quarter and set up a Longhorns score that made it 28-0.

Hawkins also had five passes deflected at the line of scrimmage, one of which Scotty McKnight caught for a 10-yard gain.

"They did an awesome job making plays," Cody Hawkins said. "I think their guys played very well in space and they read routes very well. There were a lot of possessions where there should have been openings but their guys were just making football plays."

Hawkins did cap off a 27-yard scoring drive late in the third quarter by connecting with fullback Jake Behrens on a 7-yard scoring strike. But by that time it was too late for any sort of rally.

Whether due to Hawkins' play, the fact that CU merely had no other quarterbacks with much experience or a combination of both, redshirt freshman Matt Ballenger took over in the fourth quarter for his first collegiate playing time.

The 6-foot-4, 230-pounder from Nampa, Idaho, led the Buffs on an 89-yard scoring drive that he capped

with a 28-yard touchdown pass to Patrick Williams with 1:54 remaining. Ballenger finished 3-of-4 for 61 yards on two drives.

"He did a nice job," Dan Hawkins said. "He came in and threw a good ball to Patrick. It's great to see him get some snaps and get some work done, and move the club a little bit."



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Woelk: Gap still large between CU, Big 12's best

By Neill Woelk

Sunday, October 5, 2008

Maybe Colorado has indeed closed the gulf between the middle of the pack and the top of the Big 12.

At least the scoreboard Saturday night at Folsom Field didn't flash 70-3 at game's end. There were actually some moments -- at least in the first half -- that Colorado managed to make Texas coach Mack Brown pay attention. Had CU's kicker actually made a couple of field goals, Brown might have even been forced to stop worrying about Oklahoma (next week's opponent) and concentrate completely on the Buffs.

But by game's end, if anyone had any questions about the difference between the Big 12 elite and the rest of the conference, the Longhorns provided the answer.

That's still a mighty big gap. At this rate, Dan Hawkins' Buffaloes should pull even with Texas in ... well, you do the math.

We just know it's not going to happen overnight.

Clearly, there's still plenty of work to be done. Coaching, recruiting, preparation -- you name it. The Longhorns provided a textbook example of how a college football power goes to work. Great players at every position, plenty of depth and the experience and skill to overcome mistakes. The Longhorns were by no means perfect, but the talent differential is so marked that their mistakes are blips on the radar.

For Colorado, mistakes are still deadly. No margin for error exists, and once again, there were too many of those mistakes to keep CU in the game on this night.

"There's no quick path to the top," Hawkins said after the game. "You find out what your team is made of when you go through those valleys, and I feel good about what this team is made of."

Long-term, the feeling from this corner is that the prognosis is still solid for Colorado's football program. The Buffs have improved their talent level significantly over the last couple of years. There were, as Hawkins noted, a handful of elite players wearing black and gold Saturday night, a step forward over previous years.

But by no means were there enough elite players to match the Longhorns, who boast quality at every position -- and two deep on the depth chart.

The knee-jerk reaction among Buff faithful this morning will be that a quarterback change is in order. Backup Matt Ballenger came on and moved the Buffs to a fourth-quarter touchdown, throwing a beautiful touchdown strike to Patrick Williams to finish the drive. Even though it came against Texas' second-team defense (Ballenger actually had time to stand in the pocket and throw), it will nevertheless provide enough fuel to ignite a quarterback controversy by the time you read this.

But a quarterback change won't miraculously heal CU's injured offensive linemen. It won't cure the special teams flubs, and it won't immediately add a couple years of experience across the board.

Still, we're hoping Dan Hawkins' judgment of his quarterbacks isn't clouded by the names on the jersey. If the opportunity arises, we'd like to see more of Ballenger in the future, particularly if CU's offense continues to struggle with Cody Hawkins at the helm. A change of pace early in a game, a fresh look, a twist for opposing defensive coordinators to consider, couldn't hurt.

We think Hawkins the Elder will do the right thing. If mixing it up gives the Buffs a better chance to win, we're betting he'll do it.

The bigger question for the Buffs, however, is how they react after two straight losses. Three wins to start the season had them flying high; how they come back after their second straight loss will be key.

With seven conference games remaining, the chance for a good season still exists. Colorado -- now 3-2 - - will see just one more team with Texas-caliber talent the rest of this season, that coming when the Buffs head to Missouri.

Otherwise, there's not a team on the schedule Colorado can't play straight up with -- if the Buffs eliminate their mistakes and take advantage of opportunities when they arise.

"We have to keep taking steps," Hawkins said. "I believe in our guys. We have to keep working. That's all."

It's a mantra Hawkins has been preaching since the day he arrived. Patience, build a foundation through recruiting and build experience. The Buffs are moving in that direction.

But nights like Saturday prove that the growing pains will still be evident. The gulf between Colorado and the top of the Big 12 is a sizable one.

The good news is the Buffs have seven games remaining to prove they are closing that gap on a consistent basis.



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THE DENVER POST

cu football

Texas tops CU 38-14

Overmatched Buffs come up far short against No. 5 Longhorns

By Tom Kensler,
Denver Post Staff Writer

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CU fullback Jake Behrens goes head over heels to get into the end zone in the third quarter. The 7-yard catch-and-run was the Buffaloes' first score of the night. (Andy Cross, The Denver Post)

at the 2005 Big 12 championship game that finished the coaching tenure of Gary Barnett.

But this 38-14 loss to the fifth-ranked Longhorns gave Barnett's successor, Dan Hawkins, another indication of how much his program must grow to play with the big boys.

"We're playing a tough stretch, and I think we have a good pulse of where we are," Hawkins said after the Big 12 opener for both teams. "We need more depth and experience. We have to continue the quality recruiting we've had. We'll get there."

It wasn't going to happen on this night. Texas (5-0, 1-0) never trailed and

Colorado Football

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BOULDER — At least it wasn't 70-3. Colorado showed more fight Saturday than it had in the Buffaloes' last meeting with Texas, the bitter blowout

Colorado (3-2, 0-1) couldn't give the sellout homecoming crowd of 53,927 a reason to hang around Folsom Field until the end.

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Texas scored two first-quarter touchdowns and never trailed.

"Our margin of error is less than other teams," CU senior defensive tackle George Hypolite said, referring to the roster's youth. "We've got to play a clean game to beat the No. 5 team in the country."

In the first half, Colorado penetrated Texas territory to the 18-, 26- and 27-yard lines in the first half but came away empty-handed when sophomore place-kicker Aric Goodman missed three field-goal attempts.

Texas certainly didn't need any help. The Longhorns led 21-0 at halftime.

"Aric had a bit of an anxiety issue that we have to get him through next week," CU special-teams coach Kent Riddle said, adding that Goodman did not miss any kicks during the preceding week of practice.

Texas junior quarterback Colt McCoy entered the game with an unconscious 80 percent competition rate. If Texas receivers had not dropped a few Saturday night, he would have surpassed that. As it was, McCoy went 23-for-30 for 262 yards and two touchdowns.

Things didn't always come easy. He was intercepted twice and sacked twice.

"We put pressure on the quarterback and got some turnovers, like we knew we needed to do," Hypolite said. "But we just didn't tackle well enough."

McCoy's counterpart, CU sophomore Cody Hawkins, had a tough day: 13-for-33 for 118 yards with one touchdown and no interceptions. A week earlier, Colorado's offensive line lost two starters and Texas pass rushers smelled a mismatch.

"Our guys rushed the ball so well," Texas coach Mack Brown said afterward.

Hawkins took a pounding. He rarely attempted a pass with his feet set. Several passes were batted down at the line of scrimmage.

It was never so evident that Colorado is a year or two away from challenging for a Big 12 North title. Sophomore left tackle Nate Solder, a tight end before spring drills, went against Texas senior defensive end Brian Orakpo, the nation's sack leader. It didn't seem fair.

"(Orakpo) is a good player," said Solder, who was pushed into the backfield several times. "He can move well and he varies his moves."

Particularly disheartening for Buffs fans was failing to get anything out of Jalil Brown's first career interception. Late in the first quarter, Brown stepped in front of Texas senior wideout Quan Cosby in the left flat and swiped McCoy's pass and returned it 57 yards to the Texas 16. But the offense couldn't punch in, and Goodman hit the left upright with a 43-yard field-goal try.

"You can say those (three missed field goals) would have helped, but the most important thing for our offense is to put the ball in the end zone," Cody Hawkins said.

Freshman tailback Darrell Scott must have had this game circled from the moment he picked CU over Texas on signing day in February. Scott had said all week that he was ready to show what he could do, but he never got that chance.

Texas fans above the north end zone mockingly chanted "Dar-rell Scott, Dar-rell Scott" in the closing minutes.

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"I was excited (at the beginning), and now it's just back to rehab," Scott said of the ankle he sprained Saturday, limiting him to just two carries.

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Key stat

169-49: Colorado hoped to establish a running game to control the clock. But it was Texas that ran wild, outgaining the Buffs 169 yards to 49. UT's blocking up front was superb, and CU missed too many tackles.

Key play

It came early, really early. On the third play from scrimmage for Texas, junior quarterback Colt McCoy was flushed from the pocket and started to fall, apparently for no gain, when he flipped a pass to running back Chris Ogbonnaya. He raced untouched down the left sideline for a touchdown. That forced Colorado to play catch-up before some in the sellout crowd had taken their seats.

Tom Kensler, The Denver Post

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woody paige

Bufs get clocked in speed trap

By Woody Paige
The Denver Post

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BOULDER — The Bufs have one Speedy. The Horns have 22, maybe 35 or 50.

Colorado's Rodney Stewart is called "Speedy" for good reason. And Josh Smith and Ralphie are fast too.

But those three Buffaloes were lost among the fleet of fleet feet from Texas on Saturday night.

The Longhorns possess a whole team of Jonathan Swifts. They're quicker than a late-payment call. The media guide literally ran out of synonyms. "Quick, explosive," "young and speedy," "tall, speedy and athletic," "quick and speedy," and those are the linemen.

The Horns hooked 'em, cooked 'em, forsook 'em. Out-speeded 'em.

'Em fell, 38-14.

Texas is high-def defense, and the Bufs' hurry-up offense was slowed down, so this wasn't much of a contest at full Folsom Field. When the third quarter was finished, so were the CU student body and UT quarterback Colt McCoy.

McCoy, who is real, looked quicker than all the Bufs. He ran rapidly for 53 yards and threw accurately for 252 yards.

Then there was Chris Ogbonnaya, who is so unappreciated at Texas he must share the jersey number 3 with a sophomore quarterback and share the tailback position with a freshman and a sophomore.

Ogbonnaya, a fifth-year senior, is a third-string, third-down tailback. In four previous games he rushed for 22 yards on seven carries. Texas is one tailback shy of a load. (They were second in the race for Darrell Scott, who had a 38-yard reception but ran — sort of — only twice for four yards and departed with an injury.)

But the All-Academic Ogbonnaya was presented with a prime-time opportunity against CU — and responded with 75 rushing and 116 receiving yards and two touchdowns, faster than you can say "Ya-Ya."

It is said that these No. 5- ranked Longhorns don't have the speed of, say, the 2005 national championship team. But they sure seem as fast as fiber optics, particularly in comparison to Colorado.

The Bufs still need speed. It's not something you can sculpt or knit. Speed has to be enticed to Boulder, as CU coach Dan Hawkins realizes. "We have to continue to recruit," he said. "We have some elite players, but . . ." Texas has many.

Texas is the home to millions of kids who are jackrabbit-fast. So the Longhorns were quicker at linebacker, in the defensive backfield, at wide receiver, in the line and to the postgame box dinners.

On the Horns' third play, McCoy scrambled toward

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the line of scrimmage and, just shy of it, flipped to Ogbonnaya, who ran off and left everybody in black. Sixty-five yards later, 7-0. Ogbonnaya's third quarter 51-yard run set up the 35-7 lead. Good night. Tip your wait staff. Drive back to Denver or Austin safely.

"We gave up that gasher (Ogbonnaya's TD catch) and a long run (Ogbonnaya's TD sprint)," Hawkins said.

Through three quarters the Buffs couldn't run much (net 10 yards) or pass much (net 156 yards) or kick field goals much (net 0-of-3) or stop Texas much.

Unlike Florida State, Texas is quite superior to Colorado (the team, not the state. Nobody from here goes to ski there.)

In the second quarter, a McCoy pass was picked off by cornerback Jalil Brown at the Colorado 27, and he was racing free toward the distant end zone.

"There was nothing but green in front of me at first," Brown said, "but they are fast. One guy had the angle and closed quick."

That guy was Ogbonnaya.

"Speedy" Stewart, who had broken out earlier, was held to 27 yards. The Texas plan apparently was to shut down the rush and knock down the pass. The Horns' defensive linemen acted like volleyball net defenders whenever Hawkins tried to throw from the pocket. "They were awesome dudes," Hawkins said.

And that guy Ogbonnaya — a Texas running back nobody outside Texas ever heard of — had the most receiving yards by a Texas running back in a half and the second-most in a game to Eric Metcalf, of whom everyone's heard.

"Write something nice about the Buffs," said a Buffaloes' partisan.

They . . . they . . . they tried hard, and they didn't give up an interception or a fumble, and they outpunted the Horns and they had more punt return yardage (9 to 0), both Browns (Jalil and Cha'pelle) had interceptions, and Jeff Smart contributed to 13 tackles, and they don't play any team this good until . . . uh . . . Saturday at Kansas. But Kansas nearly lost Saturday.

And Kansas is not as speedy as Speedy and Texas. The Horns beat the Buffs, but Bevo is not as fast, or pretty, as Ralphie.

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THE DENVER POST

cu football

Longhorns crank up the "D"

A new defensive coordinator might be the missing ingredient for a national title run.

By John Henderson
The Denver Post

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Texas' Sergio Kindle, left, and Jared Norton sack CU quarterback Cody Hawkins in the first quarter Saturday. (Andy Cross, The Denver Post)

BOULDER — It was a recipe for Buffalo stew, the perfect appetizer before fifth-ranked Texas tries taking a bite out of top-ranked Oklahoma next weekend. Colorado came in Saturday night with two starters missing on its offensive line and a left tackle

playing the position for only the fifth time in his life.

Texas came in leading the nation in sacks and in second in rush defense. Crunch the numbers, throw in a Heisman Trophy candidate as Texas' quarterback and you have the foundation of the Longhorns' 38-14 mauling at Folsom Field in their Big 12 opener.

"Their defense," Colorado quarterback Cody Hawkins said, "is awesome."

Colorado's offense, Hawkins could have added, is a ways away. The ugly numbers went way beyond the scoreboard. The Buffaloes rushed 28 times for a net of 49 yards, or a little more than one long step per carry. Hawkins had his second-worst game as a Buffalo, hitting only 13-of-33 passes for 118 yards and a touchdown.

Hawkins had to face the nation's No. 5 team behind a line that lost guard Max Tuoti-Mariner to a torn ACL in practice less than two weeks ago and then star sophomore right tackle Ryan Miller to a fractured fibula four days later against Florida State. Their replacements were freshmen Blake Behrens and Matthew Bahr.

Plus, converted tight end Nate Solder has less experience at tackle than Bahr had his senior year at Mission Viejo (Calif.) High.

"We got a lot of young dudes, and we're trying to plug some young guys in there," Hawkins said. "We've got some freshman and sophomore tailbacks, and up front we're very young."

To the young line's credit, it gave up only two sacks, half of Texas' average. Still, that made Colorado's net rushing total even more telling. Colorado (3-2, 0-1 Big 12) didn't have a rush for more than 3 yards until its ninth attempt. By that

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THE DENVER POST

time early in the second quarter, the Buffaloes were already down 14-0.

"It was on us," Solder said. "We weren't as clean as we could've been. That slowed down the running game."

With Texas (5-0, 1-0) shutting down the running game and harassing Hawkins with only a four-man front, the CU quarterback had a tough time finding open receivers through a sea of defensive backs. His lone bright spot was a 73-yard drive in which he completed his last three passes, topped with a 7-yard scoring toss to Jake Behrens, a backup fullback. That made it only 28-7.

"They were pressuring the quarterback all day long," said Patrick Williams, who had a team-high four catches for 50 yards and a late score. "We respected that. We'd seen them on film. I take my hats off to them."

A lot of opponents are going hatless in the presence of Texas — in particular, of new defensive coordinator Will Muschamp. He was the defensive architect of Louisiana State's 2003 national championship and the man who made Auburn a defensive scourge in the Southeastern Conference the previous two years.

Coach Mack Brown brought in Muschamp and moved co-defensive coordinator Duane Akina back to the secondary, and Texas' "D" cranked up the intensity. Of course, it helped Muschamp to get back senior end Brian Orakpo, who played most of last year on one leg after hurting his knee in the season opener.

Under Muschamp, Texas is allowing only 51.8 rushing yards per game and just 1.96 yards per carry. Think Oklahoma's staff will notice that number today?

"He came in with a new scheme, and we all jumped on board," junior linebacker Roddrick Muckelroy said. "We can't lose focus with him. He doesn't let us. He's always riled up, and it gets us riled up."

No one could be happier than Brown, who has gone 10-3 and to non-BCS bowls each of the last two years. He is one win over Oklahoma on Saturday in Dallas from being smack dab in the national title picture.

"Our defense is playing so much better than in the first game against Florida Atlantic," Brown said. "We're much better up front, the secondary is growing up and the guys have done a great job coaching them."

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cu football

Goodman ties record he'd rather not

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BOULDER — To this point, CU kicker Aric Goodman's happiest moment on the football field came three weeks ago, and it's fading fast. On Sept. 18, Goodman's overtime field goal beat then-No. 21 West Virginia. After the game he was awarded a scholarship by coach Dan Hawkins.

Goodman hasn't made a field goal since.

Goodman is 0-for-4 in the past two games, which includes three misses Saturday against Texas. Goodman's 0-for-3 against the Longhorns tied the school record for most misses in a game. Before the Florida State game, Goodman had been fairly reliable, hitting three of his first four attempts this season.

CU coach Dan Hawkins noted the miscues hurt but stood behind his man.

"Gotta get that done," Hawkins said. "We have to be able to take advantage of some opportunities. I told Aric I love him. You've got to have the courage to jump in there and say, 'That's me and I'll be back.' "

Knock it down.

Included in CU quarterback Cody Hawkins' poor completion percentage against Texas was a number of passes that were tipped or batted down at the line of scrimmage.

The 5-foot-11 Hawkins downplayed the situation.

"They have big dudes," Hawkins said. "They always say if you can't get to the quarterback, get your hands up. They did a great job of that."

Injuries.

Running back Darrell Scott suffered a sprained ankle and did not return. . . . Safety Ryan Walters also suffered a leg injury. He left the game in the first quarter, but returned in the second. Dan Hawkins said further tests will be run.

Footnotes.

CU extended its streak of not being shut out to 240 games. . . . Quarterback Matt Ballenger, who competed with Cody Hawkins for the starting spot in the preseason, made his first appearance of the regular season, in the fourth quarter. . . . Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony, a self-professed Texas fan, though he attended Syracuse, was at the game on the Longhorns sideline with teammate J.R. Smith. Smith, wearing a burnt orange Texas jacket, took a picture with Texas team personnel at halftime. Anthony was honored with other Olympians in a halftime ceremony. . . . The official attendance was 53,927, a sellout. It was CU's first since the 2005 finale, against Nebraska.

Chris Dempsey, The Denver Post

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Bufs struggle in 38-14 loss to Longhorns

By B.G. Brooks

Saturday, October 4, 2008

The Colorado Buffaloes played before their first home sellout crowd since 2005 on Saturday night, but the evening belonged to No. 5 Texas and several thousand Longhorns fans among the 53,927 at Folsom Field.

Treating CU as hardly more than a warm-up act for its annual mega-date with No. 1 Oklahoma next Saturday in Dallas, the Longhorns mauled the overmatched Buffaloes 38-14 in the Big 12 Conference opener for both teams.

It was the unbeaten (5-0, 1-0) Longhorns' second consecutive runaway win against the Buffs, who were crushed 70-3 in the 2005 Big 12 championship game.

Counting Saturday night, Texas has outscored CU 181-41 in their past four games.

The Buffs, who play at No. 16 Kansas next Saturday (10:30 a.m. MDT), lost their second consecutive game and fell to 3-2 overall (0-1 Big 12).

Although they trailed 21-0 at the half, the Buffs had put themselves in position to be even or down by at least half that margin had they executed.

On two occasions, CU had possession inside the Texas 20-yard line (the 19 and 16) and on a third occasion was at the Longhorns' 26-yard line.

But on all three trips, the Buffs' offense stalled and kicker Aric Goodman was summoned.

And on all three occasions, Goodman failed to answer, missing first-half field goal attempts of 36, 43 and 44 yards.

"If we get a couple of those," the game might have been different, Buffs coach Dan Hawkins said.

Coupled with an errant 27-yard attempt last weekend at Florida State, Goodman went to the locker room having missed his past four attempts. His three misses in a half tied a dubious school record shared by several former Buffs kickers.

Ironically, Goodman's previous successful kick was the 25-yarder that beat West Virginia in overtime (17-14) on Sept. 18.

"Some days it doesn't work out," Goodman said with a shrug after the game.

Texas' defense completely waylaid CU's offense in the first half, limiting the Buffs to 57 total yards and four first downs in the first quarter and 60 yards and three first downs in the second.

The teams ran the same number of plays (12) in the first half from plus territory, but Texas gained 82 yards and scored twice while CU managed only 13 yards.

Longhorns quarterback Colt McCoy played as advertised, throwing a pair of first-half touchdown passes (a 65-yard catch/run play to Chris Ogbonnaya, a 16-yard pass to Jordan Shipley) and driving the offense 68 yards in eight plays for a third score with just over a minute left in the half.

That touchdown also was scored by Ogbonnaya, who ran through the Buffs' middle for 13 yards to help provide the Longhorns with their comfortable halftime lead.

"As long as we win, I don't care about numbers," said Ogbonnaya, who set career highs with a 51-yard run and the 65-yard catch.

CU didn't have a run from scrimmage longer than 4 yards in the first half and managed only 4 yards rushing. The passing game contributed long plays of 38 and 26 yards, but the longest of those was a throwback pass from receiver Scotty McKnight to tailback Darrell Scott.

The Buffs also wasted cornerback Jalil Brown's first career interception. Brown picked off McCoy near the end of the first quarter and returned the football 57 yards to the Longhorns' 16-yard line.

Brown thought he had a chance to score: "There was nothing but green in front of me at first. But they are fast; one guy had the angle and closed quick."

CU got no further than the 16. In fact, the Buffs retreated 10 yards after a holding call on left tackle Nate Solder. Goodman's 43-yard attempt caromed off the left upright to end the threat.

Texas took advantage of a fumble lost by quarterback Cody Hawkins on CU's first possession of the second half.

Recovering at the Buffs' 18-yard line, the Longhorns needed four plays to score, with 255-pound freshman tailback Cody Johnson lunging over for a 1-yard touchdown.

The Buffs faced a 28-point deficit and, given the way the Longhorns were playing defense, little chance of making that up.

But they tried. Cornerback Cha'pelle Brown (no relation to Jalil) intercepted McCoy's tipped pass at the Texas 27-yard line, setting up Cody Hawkins' 7-yard touchdown pass to fullback Jake Behrens six plays later.

It was 28-7, and any glimmer of hope Buffs fans might have received from that score disappeared less than 2 minutes later. Ogbonnaya broke on a 51-yard run from scrimmage, setting up another short plunge by Johnson and sending the Longhorns ahead 35-7 as the third quarter wound down.

Hunter Lawrence's 46-yard field with 10:35 left in the game pushed Texas ahead 38-7 and sent many CU fans in search of other ways to celebrate homecoming.

Those who stayed saw redshirt freshman quarterback Matt Ballenger play for the first time this season.

He replaced Cody Hawkins on CU's first series after Lawrence's field goal.

Ballenger capped a seven-play, 89-yard drive with a 28-yard touchdown pass to Patrick Williams with 1:54 to play. Goodman's extra point kick gave CU its 14 points.

BROWN'S WIFE HURT: Mack Brown's wife, 54-year-old Sally Brown, missed the game after breaking her right arm and suffering a gash to her head when she tripped while descending a Boulder-area mountain trail Saturday morning.

"Colorado's medical staff was on top of it. They met her at the emergency room, reset her arm and fixed her head," Mack Brown said. "It's the only injury we had."

ETC.: The picks by Jalil and Cha'pelle Brown gave the Buffs six interceptions this season . . . McCoy had thrown only one interception in his previous four games . . . CU redshirt freshman offensive tackle Matt Bahr made his first career start, as did true freshman tight end Ryan Deehan . . . Sophomore offensive tackle Ryan Miller underwent surgery on Friday to repair his fractured left fibula. He is out for the season . . . Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony was among several local Olympians introduced at halftime . . . CU freshman tailback Darrell Scott suffered a sprained ankle and saw limited second-half duty . . . Perhaps the Buffs' lone highlight: They extended their scoring streak to 240 games, fourth-longest (active) in the nation.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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Longmont, Colorado
Monday, October 06, 2008



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Texas holds 'em

Colorado's mistakes costly against No. 5 Longhorns

By Patrick Ridgell

Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — There was no magical second-half rally this time. No standing up to the elite of the elite. No shocking upset to ripple through the polls and all of college football.

Saturday night, before a sold-out Folsom Field, the Colorado Buffaloes were a team that wants to play with the best, but couldn't.

Texas' 38-14 win in the Big 12 opener for both programs was decisive and thorough. The fifth-ranked Longhorns built a 28-0 third-quarter lead by playing well enough on offense and dominating CU with its defense. The Longhorns were dominant when necessary.

When CU pulled to within 28-7, Texas used its ensuing possession to go 71 yards on four plays — all runs — to score in 96 brutal seconds.

CU (3-2, 0-1 Big 12) couldn't afford to make many mistakes Saturday if it planned to pull the kind of upset it sprung on then-No. 3 Oklahoma in last year's conference opener. The Buffs committed a bunch.

Three missed field goals by kicker Aric Goodman glared brightest. But missed tackles and the inability to block Texas' defensive front showed the talent and strength gap between the teams.

So when coach Dan Hawkins addressed his players, he found himself rehashing lines that continue to ring true, but offer little solace.

"There's no quick path to the top," Hawkins said. "You find out what you're made of when you go through the valley a little bit."

Besides Goodman's woes, which tied a program record held by many for missed kicks in a game, the Buffs were shaky, especially early. Quarterback Cody Hawkins and running back Rodney Stewart fumbled an exchange. Josh Smith strolled through the end zone, forgetting to down a kickoff.

Missed tackles abounded, including one by safety Anthony Perkins in the first quarter that helped Texas turn a short gain into a 23-yarder. The Longhorns used the play to escape a second-and-17 and score their second touchdown two plays later.

While Goodman's field goals could've made things closer, and more interesting, the Buffs said their problems were widespread.

"It wasn't just that," cornerback Cha'pelle Brown said. "Collectively, we had too many mistakes. It wasn't just the kicker's fault."

Said safety D.J. Dykes: "We didn't play the game we needed to play in order to beat them."



Colorado fullback Jake Behrens, center, wasn't going to be denied a touchdown by Texas cornerback Ryan Palmer in the third quarter at Folsom Field in Boulder on Saturday. Below, Colorado placekicker Aric Goodman reacts after missing his second field goal attempt. **Joshua Buck/Times-Call**

TimesCall.com Slide Show

[Colorado loses to Texas 38-14](#)

Texas did. The Longhorns weren't perfect, but they were too good.

Quarterback Colt McCoy went 23-for-30 for 262 yards, two touchdowns and two interceptions. Running back Chris Ogbonnaya caught six passes for 116 yards and their first touchdown that featured McCoy coming close to throwing the ball past the line of scrimmage, but a replay review said no.

"Colorado changed up what they had been doing," Texas coach Mack Brown said. "They put a lot of guys on the line of scrimmage, blitzed every time.

"But Colt's so good and so accurate, that he just threw the ball down the field and helped us score 38 points."

CU's Jalil Brown intercepted McCoy in the first quarter and returned it to the Texas 16, but the offense could do nothing. Hawkins threw three incompletions, and Goodman missed his second kick.

After losing two starters over the past two weeks, CU's offensive line used its fourth combination in five games Saturday, and the group had a tough time. Offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich said the offensive line is something the staff has to think about every week and try to find the proper adjustments for.

"Those guys are gone for the year, so we have to figure something out," he said about injured starters Ryan Miller and Max Tuoti-Mariner.

"(Texas is) a very good football team and we're not in position to give too many people field position or turnovers and make the kind of mistakes we did, not taking advantage of their turnovers. We have plenty of things to correct."

Texas outgained CU, 431-266. CU totaled 49 rushing yards.

Running back Darrell Scott, who chose CU over Texas in a heated recruiting battle last year, caught two passes for 45 yards in the first half. He left with a sprained ankle and didn't return. He carried the ball twice, rendering inconsequential any lingering animosity Texas might have felt toward the situation.

Texas faces No. 1 Oklahoma next Saturday in a game that'll receive much hype.

Up next for CU is a trip next Saturday to Kansas (4-1, 1-0), which overcame a 20-point deficit to beat Iowa State on Saturday. The 16th-ranked Jayhawks have beaten CU two years in a row, and figure to be a tall order for a visitor that's struggling, which the Buffs are.

"We were struggling to find ourselves, but we just have to keep coming out," Cody Hawkins said.

"The bottom line is we have to come out and execute."

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A lot of growing up to do

*By Justin Williams
Longmont Times-Call*

BOULDER — Nope. Lightning doesn't strike twice in the same place. And nope. Colorado isn't on the same level as the Big 12 elite.

It didn't take a 38-14 loss to fifth-ranked Texas to drive home that point — but it sure made some of the more glaring problems clear.

At times Saturday, it looked as though the Texas defense had 13 players on the field. The Buffs lack tremendously in the speed department. And while CU might be on par talent-wise with the rest of the Big 12, it's obvious it still has a lot of growing up to do before that talent is realized.

"We're going to have to watch the film tomorrow and be honest with ourselves," Buffs defensive end George Hypolite said. "I don't think that we gave the effort that we know we can."

The win against Oklahoma — ranked third in the nation at the time — last year gave hope that the Buffs were on their way back to the top, but those expecting a reprieve Saturday were terribly disappointed.

"You don't ever come in with a negative attitude, necessarily, but we knew they were good," Colorado coach Dan Hawkins said of the Longhorns.

Realistically, not many expected the Buffs to be back in the national title picture two years removed from a 2-10 season. But wins against Oklahoma a year ago and West Virginia earlier this season, along with a couple of good recruiting classes, do show signs of progress.

"We have some elite players in some certain areas, and I think as we continue to establish some depth and some experience there, we're going to be OK," Hawkins said. "As you play these really good football teams, the margin of error is really, really slim."

Saturday was one of the biggest recruiting weekends of the season for the Buffs, with roughly a dozen players in town for the homecoming game. They saw a lopsided game with two-thirds of the student section home by the fourth quarter. Not exactly the electric atmosphere Colorado was hoping for to woo some nation's best.

But Darrell Scott — the most sought after running back in the country last season — was in Boulder for the Missouri game. And 55-10 couldn't have looked that great, either, but he still ended up in the black and gold.

"We're in it for the long run," senior wide receiver Patrick Williams said. "Coach Hawk, we have his back 100 percent, and he has ours. We believe in our teammates, the coaches, our schemes — everybody's positive."

"It takes a special kind of person to come back tomorrow and get back to the grind. We understand that this is a loss, and it hurts, but we're not going to hang our heads. We're going to take it as a lesson and continue to get better."

Patience.

That's what Hawkins has been preaching since he took over, and it's clear that the Colorado faithful will have to

exercise plenty of it for at least a few more months.

“In these situations, and it doesn’t matter if it’s football or life, the common thing to do is to point fingers,” Hawkins said. “They’ll sit on the sidelines and they’ll criticize. Everyone will point out what’s wrong and what needs to be fixed, and that’s OK.

“But you just have to keep taking a step towards the middle and say, ‘What can I do?’”

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Placekicker's troubles tie record

*By Patrick Ridgell**Longmont Times-Call*

BOULDER — Aric Goodman knows it can be a short trip from hero to goat. Saturday provided a reminder.

The Colorado placekicker tied a program record held by several for missed field goals in a game Saturday night in the Buffs' 38-14 homecoming loss to Texas when he missed three. All came in the first half, when the points could've made things interesting. All came from makable distances — 36, 43 and 44 yards.

"I just tried to go out there and keep my head down and kick through it and it just didn't work out," Goodman said.

"It's a tough job. Sometimes you're the hero and sometimes you're the goat. Tonight is about as low as it can get. But I'll bounce back and keep working hard."

The last time CU played a home game, Goodman's 25-yard field goal in overtime Sept. 18 gave the Buffs a 17-14 win over West Virginia. The Big 12 named him its special teams player of the week for the successful kick.

Goodman fell to 3-for-8 on field goals in 2008. Special teams coach Kent Riddle said Goodman is "battling a little bit of an anxiety issue."

"We charted every kick in practice (last week) ... and he didn't miss a single kick. We analyzed his film, but there isn't a whole lot to analyze when he makes every kick."

Goodman stressed he did not want to make any excuses, and said he takes "full responsibility" for Saturday's misses.

He also said he ripped his normal kicking cleats this week in practice, and wore ones ordered through Nike that CU could only get on short order.

"I told him after the game that sometimes you have to hit rock bottom to appreciate the highs," Riddle said. "You can't go much lower than we were today. But he's a good kid and works his butt off and tries hard."

Pat Broughman is the last Buff to miss three field goals in a game. He did so in the 2002 Big 12 Championship Game.

SHORT STROLL: When returner Josh Smith strolled through the end zone after catching a kickoff, he confused everyone in Folsom Field. Smith did not want to return the kick, wanting to take a touchback. He simply didn't take a knee.

A Texas defender hit him right before Smith was about to cross the goal line, which would have made things more interesting. CU was given the touchback.

Riddle had no explanation why Smith did what he did.

"He should've taken a knee," Riddle said. "He just never had to take a knee before."

Smith declined to comment Saturday night, saying he had to host a recruit.

Riddle said Smith did well in other areas. He did not fumble, and he returned one kick 46 yards.

"We have so many guys where everyday is the first time something happens to them," Riddle said. "We're covering all these things, but so many things are going through their heads."

INJURY REPORT: CU running back Darrell Scott left the game in the first half with a sprained ankle and did not return. His status for Saturday at No. 16 Kansas (10:30 a.m., ESPN2) is unclear.

Safety Ryan Walters hurt his knee in the first quarter. He returned in the second quarter, but did not play after halftime. CU coach Dan Hawkins said he'll have some tests done on the knee to determine the injury.

RECRUITING NEWS: CU hosted about a dozen recruits Saturday night. Chaparral High offensive tackle Jack Harris committed, according to Internet recruiting sites. Harris gives the Buffs five known commitments.

EXTRA POINTS: The crowd of 53,927 was CU's first sellout since the 2005 finale against Nebraska. ... CU guard Shawn Daniels and linebacker Tyler Ahles saw their first game action. Right tackle Matt Bahr made his first start. Quarterback Matt Ballenger, also made his debut. He threw a 28-yard touchdown pass to Patrick Williams in mop-up duty late in the fourth quarter. ... Quarterback Cody Hawkins cracked CU's top 10 list in total yardage with 96 passing yards, placing him at 3,573 total yards, which is ninth all-time.

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