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K-State blocks a threat to CU

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

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BOULDER — Colorado football coaches hope CU's annual "Family Weekend" activities Saturday do not include a block party. At least, not by visitors.

Kansas State (4-2, 1-1 Big 12) has blocked six kicks this season, including four blocked punts. Each of the blocked punts was returned for a touchdown. The six total blocked kicks leads the nation.

"They've got good speed and some confidence going after it," CU special-teams coach Kent Riddle said. "They also have dangerous returners. So teams are thinking they either have to stop a long return or stay and protect against a block. That's tough."

There have been a total of 10 punt-related touchdowns by Big 12 Conference teams thus far in 2008. In addition to the four blocks, Wildcats junior Deon Murphy returned a punt 86 yards for a touchdown against Louisville.

Colorado Football

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Kansas State's special teams have been emphasized for years, an attitude instilled by former Wildcats coach Bill Snyder. Since the start of the 1999 season, Kansas State ranks second nationally in nonoffensive touchdowns (including interceptions and fumble returns) with 66. Virginia Tech has 68 during that span.

During three seasons under coach Ron Prince, Kansas State leads with 22 nonoffensive TDs. Texas and Virginia Tech are tied for second with 15.

"Kansas State recruits guys who have shown the ability to block kicks," Riddle said. "They go hard. They believe in it. Success breeds success. They get the other team thinking about it, and doubt sets in."

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Riddle has shown film of Kansas State's blocks to his block/return team as well as to his kick protection unit. Colorado (3-3, 0-2) has not recorded a blocked kick this season. The lone return for a touchdown was a 93-yard kickoff return by Josh Smith in the season opener against Colorado State.

"We need some of those," Riddle said of blocked kicks. "That could be the spark our team needs."

Hall of Famers.

The class of nine inductees into the University of Colorado Athletic Hall of Fame will be honored Friday evening at the Omni Interlocken Hotel and Resort in Broomfield. A reception begins at 5:30 p.m., with the induction ceremony at 7 p.m. It is free to the public.

The new Hall of Famers — Claude Walton (track and field), Frank Clarke (football), Billy Lewis (basketball), Dal Ward (football, administration), Don Campbell (track and field), Dave Logan (football, basketball), John Stearns (football, baseball), Kara Grgas-Wheeler Goucher (cross country, track) and Alfred Williams (football) — also will be recognized at halftime Saturday.

This is the largest class for the CU athletic hall of fame, established in 1998.

Beatty's back.

Against Kansas, CU sophomore linebacker B.J. Beatty saw his first action since cracking his left fibula in the season opener. Beatty was one of the surprises of spring drills. "It helps us a lot getting him back — fresh body, fresh legs," linebackers coach Brian Cabral said.

Finished at CU.

Fifth-year junior defensive end Drew Hudgins, who blew out his ACL during August drills, has decided not to apply for a medical redshirt, Hawkins said. Hudgins missed last season after a ruptured Achilles tendon.

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Rocky Mountain News

CU report: Crowder's ashes to be scattered in Boulder

By **B.G. Brooks**, Rocky Mountain News ([Contact](#))

Published October 15, 2008 at 10:10 p.m.



Cliff Grassmick / Boulder Daily Camera

Kate Crowder, center, wife of the late Eddie Crowder, said the former University of Colorado football coach's ashes will be scattered in three places, including Folsom Field.

Of the places graced by **Eddie Crowder** during his 77 years, three provided the fondest memories - Muskogee, Okla.; Owen Field in Norman, Okla.; and Folsom Field on the University of Colorado campus.

Kate Crowder, his widow, plans to scatter her late husband's ashes at those sites.

"When he was so sick, he initially didn't want to talk about it," she said Wednesday. "But I finally told him I wanted mine scattered in Boulder Canyon, somewhere near the Red Lion Inn, where we had lots of really good times."

"He finally relented and picked those three places."

The three sites were important to him because he was reared in Muskogee, then excelled playing quarterback at Oklahoma under legendary coach **Bud Wilkinson** and later enjoyed similar success coaching football and serving in athletic administration at CU.

Typical of Eddie, Kate said, he wanted nothing to be ceremonial about the scattering of his ashes: "He wanted it all to be low-key."

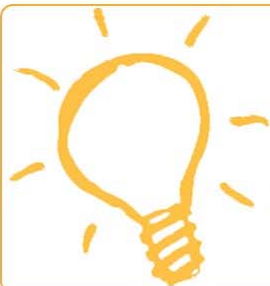
She said the widow of one of Eddie's former Sooners teammates, **Billy Vessels**, and several other close friends will meet her next week at Owen Field in Gaylord Family-Oklahoma Memorial Stadium on the Oklahoma campus.

Kate Crowder said she likely will give a portion of Eddie's ashes to those friends, who will scatter them in Muskogee.

She was uncertain when she might visit Folsom Field, where Crowder's teams compiled a 67-49-2 record in 11 seasons.

Eddie Crowder died Sept. 9 at Exempla Health Center in Lafayette from complications of leukemia.

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Rocky Mountain News

About 1,000 people attended a memorial service for him at Folsom Field the next Saturday, when CU had an open date.

Kick blockers deluxe

BOULDER - They'll be coming.

The statistic seems a bit unfathomable, but it's no lie: Kansas State has blocked six kicks in six games this season and has a Football Bowl Subdivision-leading five punt returns for touchdowns (four on blocks).

This, of course, means the onus squarely will be on CU's protect teams as they try to prevent the Wildcats from adding to their four blocked punts and two blocked extra points.

"They've got great speed and they've got great technique," CU long snapper **Justin Drescher** said Wednesday. "They get skinny through there and they stay on their blocks well for their returner (**Deon Murphy**), who's shifty quick and fast."

According to Drescher, CU won't try to overthink things and dramatically change its schemes considering the Buffaloes have been mostly successful in their protection, a blocked punt against Florida State notwithstanding.

"We just have to do our job," Drescher said. "Sit right back and make sure we have our right guy, and we should be fine."

Can't fall behind early

If the Buffs enter halftime trailing Saturday, it will take something unprecedented to escape with a win.

Under coach **Ron Prince**, Kansas State has won all 16 games in which it took a lead into halftime. The Wildcats generally protect the lead anyway, having posted a 96 percent success rate since 1990 in games they've led at the break.

By contrast, the Wildcats are 2-13 under Prince when trailing at intermission.

Kansas State also is lethal when scoring first, having compiled a 117-19 mark since 1990 when doing so.

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