

# Rocky Mountain News

## Coach Hawkins calls QB switch 'way easy'

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

Published October 20, 2008 at 3:40 p.m.



Photo by David Zalubowski/Associated Press

CU quarterback Tyler Hansen runs for a short gain against Kansas State in the third quarter of Colorado's 14-13 victory Saturday.

A week ago today, with a hush-hush quarterback change put in motion two days earlier, **Dan Hawkins** was answering questions at his weekly news conference about the realities and pitfalls of such a move.

Successfully pulling it off, said the Colorado

football coach, requires "real tangible reasons" bolstered by genuine communication, genuine care among all parties: "There are probably very few positions in all of sport that sit on such a small pinnacle of stability as the quarterback . . . I've said this many times before: That's why most little kids don't want to play quarterback."

If the topic did a midweek fade, it flared brightly Saturday night when freshman **Tyler Hansen** replaced Hawkins' sophomore son, **Cody**, in the first quarter and helped guide the Buffs to a 14-13 win against unsuspecting Kansas State.

It wasn't a haphazard, spur-of-the-moment deed, but by most accounts it was done nearly seamlessly - mainly because of willingness of those involved to make it work.

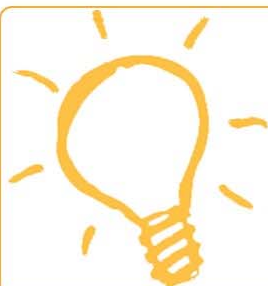
In a perfect world, CU's quarterback situation would be a "non-issue" this week and for the rest of the season.

Of course, the issue was raised on Hawkins' portion of Monday's Big 12 Conference coaches teleconference.

Hawkins responded evenly, calling Saturday night's win among the best of his career because of "all the intangibles that really went into it - a bunch of heart, guts, soul and sacrifice it took to get the win . . . it was a special effort by not only those two (Hansen, Cody), but by a lot of people."

A questioner wanted to know how his wife, Misti, reacted to the move.

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# Rocky Mountain News

"It's funny being in this position where you got 3 billion people passing judgment about you, your wife, your kid, your quarterback," he said. "The vast majority of them have been so off-target it's not even funny."

"She was fired up that Tyler got in and that he played well and . . . we won. She understands this thing as much as anybody else. She's a mom for everybody on the team, not just No. 7."

Dan Hawkins and his offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach, Mark Helfrich, have indicated that both quarterbacks will play Saturday at No. 16 Missouri. Who starts might not be as relevant as who finishes - but then again, Cody Hawkins was on the field last against Kansas State.

"The great thing is, both of those guys are awesome about it," Dan Hawkins said. "I'm not in a sense giving Cody more props, per se, but I mean, he's the guy that's got to take the back seat, and for him to really deal with it like he's dealt with it, even makes it way easy."

"Because it's hard, and I'm sure even in his mind there's even a little bit of a jilt . . . but he's been around this thing long enough that he understands and knows what the nature of it is. Tyler obviously made a huge sacrifice in taking off the redshirt, saying, 'Yeah, I'll do whatever it takes to help the team.'"

"If you don't have two guys with the kind of mentality they have, then maybe you have an issue. But they've been so great with it, it makes

it easy."

Cody Hawkins started against Kansas State, by design getting a feel for the defense, then relaying it to Hansen, who said, "If I would have started, I would have had a lot more nerves. Cody helped me out a lot, telling me what defense they were in, what they were doing."

Hansen, who came to CU's attention at a day camp the summer before his senior season at Chaparral High School in Temecula, Calif., reminds Cody of the youngest Hawkins sibling, Drew, a walk-on freshman quarterback at Boise State.

"He's the same age as my brother, and I see a lot of my brother in him," Cody said. "He's the kind of guy who runs around and gets involved. I care a lot about Tyler and I want to see him succeed."

Late Saturday night, Cody Hawkins was asked what Monday would bring for him.

"I'll be the same old Cody I always was," he said. "I'll be in there watching film and trying to get better. I'll keep coaching up Tyler and keep coaching up Matt (Ballenger) and Nick (Nelson). I do have a lot of knowledge of this stuff, and I am used to playing it."

"If I can use that experience to help somebody else who's better suited for the job, then I'm going to do that, because I want to be part of a winning program and I'm not going to be selfish at any point during my career. Whether it's helping Tyler or going in and trying to convert a

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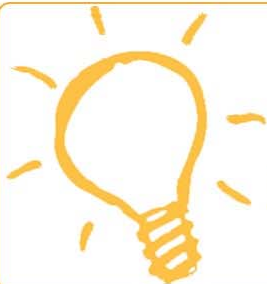
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third down, I'm going to do what's best for the team."

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## CU report: Double their pleasure

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

Published October 20, 2008 at 11:43 p.m.

**BOULDER** — No. 16 Missouri gets the distinction this week of preparing for two CU quarterbacks - sophomore **Cody Hawkins** and freshman **Tyler Hansen**

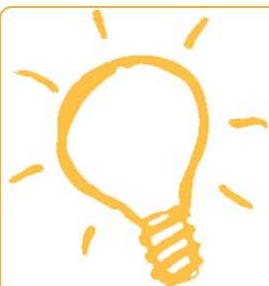
Tigers coach **Gary Pinkel** called Hansen, who made his college debut Saturday night in the Buffaloes' 14-13 win against Kansas State, "very athletic . . . he ran the ball well (86 yards on 19 carries)."

Pinkel said in preparing for two quarterbacks, "You have to separate the two, find out their positives (and) be aware of that with your (defensive) calls."

In 2005, the final season for starter **Brad Smith**, Missouri was breaking in a new quarterback. Pinkel used freshman **Chase Daniel** in 10 games, noting his current three-year starter received "very valuable" experience for the upcoming seasons.

But, Pinkel added, CU is "not as concerned about next year" with Hansen, "as much as what he can do this year."

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cu football

## Hansen to play more at Missouri

**Bufs' new quarterback doesn't shock old coach**

**By Tom Kensler**  
*Denver Post Staff Writer*

Article Last Updated: 10/21/2008 12:14:13 AM MDT



CU's Tyler Hansen, giving Kansas State cornerback Courtney Herndon the runaround, ran for 98 yards in his debut Saturday, not counting negative yardage on sacks. The freshman has provided a running threat at quarterback that the Buffs previously lacked. (Kathryn Scott Osler, The Denver Post )

BOULDER — Tommy Leach did so much head scratching last year it's a wonder he has any hair left.

Leach, the football coach at Chaparral High School in Temecula, Calif., could not understand why Colorado was the only big-name school to recruit his quarterback. After watching CU freshman Tyler Hansen come off the bench Saturday night and spark the Buffaloes to a 14-13 victory over Kansas State in his first college game, Leach must feel vindicated and as proud as he could be.

"San Diego State didn't even recruit Tyler, and his dad played quarterback there," Leach said Monday in a phone interview. "To be honest, we were in shock."

Leach predicted on signing day in February that Colorado got a steal. Chalk up another diamond-in-the-rough uncovered by CU recruiters.

"My phone is ringing off the hook. It's crazy," Hansen said of the reaction he's getting from back home. "I'm getting a lot of text messages from people I hadn't talked to in a while."

Hansen, 6-feet-2 and 205 pounds, will again share time with sophomore quarterback Cody Hawkins on Saturday at No. 16 Missouri, Colorado coach Dan Hawkins said. Discarding his redshirt with 2:01 remaining in the first quarter, Hansen led CU to both of its touchdowns.

He completed 7-of-14 passes for 71 yards with one touchdown and an interception.

The fastest of Colorado's quarterbacks, he hurt Kansas State with his feet — netting 86 yards on 19 carries, including scrambles of 13, 24, 12, 11 and 10 yards.

Word is out. Hansen will not benefit from any

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element of surprise this weekend in Columbia, Mo., no matter who starts.

"You kind of have to separate the two (CU quarterbacks) and find out which one does their positives and be aware of that," Missouri coach Gary Pinkel said Monday on the Big 12 coaches teleconference.

Hansen decided to become a Buff on June 23, 2007, after attending a summer camp session in Boulder. To that point, his only offer had come from Idaho State.

Other offers may have arrived later if Hansen had not taken his name off the board — especially after he earned offensive MVP honors in the Navy-Marine Corps All-Star Classic ("SoCal Bowl") by throwing for two touchdowns and running for another.

"People kept calling me," Hansen recalled of the recruiting process. "I just told them I was committed to Colorado."

It's not that Hansen was an unknown. Like Cody Hawkins, he has an athletic pedigree. Rick Hansen played quarterback at San Diego State from 1978-83 and made it to the final cut at the Chicago Bears' training camp. Tyler may get his foot speed from his mother, Pamela, who earned All-America honors as a sprinter and hurdler for San Diego State.

Leach surmised why Hansen was so lightly recruited: A) It was a good year for high school senior quarterbacks in California. B) Hansen's statistics "weren't through the roof" as a senior (1,652 yards and 10 touchdowns, down from 2,248 yards and 21 TDs as a junior) because Leach lacked experienced wide receivers and changed the offense to more of a running attack. C) Hansen continued to be listed at 185 pounds by recruiting services although he had added 20 pounds. D) Geography:

Located between Los Angeles and San Diego, the Inland Valley region is known more for producing vintage wines than for football players.

He was listed as a three-star prospect by [Rivals.com](#) last fall and just a two-star by [Scout.com](#). The latter ranked Hansen as just the nation's 110th-best recruit at the position.

"I'm not sure even the Colorado coaches believed me at first when I told them how good Tyler is," Leach said. "Tyler will do whatever it takes, whatever the coach asks of him. He's just a humble, hardworking kid. I knew he would be successful wherever he went."

Turning over every stone, Colorado recruiters saw Hansen play as a junior and asked him to attend CU's summer camp before his senior year.

"One of the things we do in evaluating quarterbacks is to see how many plays they account for on their own," said CU offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich, the point man for the recruiting of Hansen. "It's one thing to throw a short pass and have a receiver run for a lot of yards. Tyler could make something out of nothing by running or throwing."

Dan Hawkins said he hates to use more than one quarterback, but "you've got to do what's best given that situation, and that's where we are right now."

In any case, any whisper of a quarterback controversy "is totally a nonissue," the coach said, because everybody involved wants only what is best for the team.

Hansen will be ready when called upon.

"Now that I have the jitters out of the way, I can just go out there and be my true self," Hansen said. "Now I can just go play."

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Publish Date: 10/21/2008

## CU not out for revenge

Bufs say last year is not motivation

By Patrick Ridgell  
Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Maurice Cantrell remembers watching Missouri tight end Chase Coffman hurdle Colorado defenders on the way to one of his three touchdown receptions in last season's 55-10 loss to the Tigers. That about summed things up.

Missouri scored the most points by a Folsom Field visitor since 1983 in last year's meeting and handed the Buffs their third-worst home loss ever. Thousands of the 51,483 in attendance left at halftime. Missouri outgained CU, 598 yards to 196.

"They beat us up pretty bad," Cantrell said.

For Saturday's rematch in Columbia, Mo., the Buffs will try to beat a team it didn't belong on the same field with a year ago. No. 16 Missouri has lost two straight, but Coffman, quarterback Chase Daniel and several other key Tigers are back.

Cantrell, a senior fullback and captain, said last year's loss does not hone CU's focus this week because the Buffs approach every game the same, regardless of history. But he believes there's a difference between this CU team and the 2007 edition.

"Last year we were in kind of a, I don't know, a state of waiting to see what was going to happen," Cantrell said. "Maybe a lot of people didn't believe 100 percent in what we were doing. There was some division, probably, among the team.

"This year, we're more cohesive, more people as a whole buying in." Coach Dan Hawkins said CU will not use what happened in last year's game as a motivator.

"I understand the nature of it, but if you get beat bad or lose funky or have any of that kind of stuff, if you start going, 'I need external motivation to get me going,' that's just not healthy, it's not educationally sound and, long term for your football program, it's not good," Hawkins said.

**MORE QB:** Hawkins, who said Sunday CU's quarterbacking situation will only become an issue if reporters make it one, received eight more questions about it Monday on the Big 12 coaches teleconference.

Most came from out-of-state organizations. And most had been asked since CU's 14-13 defeat of Kansas State on Saturday, in which freshman quarterback Tyler Hansen made his debut and led the Buffs to their touchdowns. One asked how Hawkins' wife reacted to the win, in which the coach pulled his son and starting quarterback Cody Hawkins.

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"Well, she was fired up, she was awesome," Hawkins said. "It is funny being in this position where you have 3 billion people passing judgments about you and your wife and your kid and your quarterback and the vast majority have been so off target it is not even funny," Hawkins said. "But she was fired up that Tyler got in and that he played well. She was happy for him and happy that we won."

"She understands this thing as much as anybody else. She is a mom for everybody on the team. Not just No. 7 (Cody Hawkins)."

Dan Hawkins said he plans to use both quarterbacks Saturday.

**EXTRA POINTS:** CU's Nov. 1 game at Texas A&M was not selected for television. It'll start at noon. ... Missouri's first-string offense went the first 49 possessions of 2008 before it recorded a three-and-out. The No. 16 Tigers average 45.9 points per game, which in the Big 12 is only tied for fourth-highest. Asked how to slow down the Tigers, Hawkins said, "I don't think you can."

Patrick Ridgell can be reached at [pridgell@times-call.com](mailto:pridgell@times-call.com)

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