



CU spring game set for April 25

Banged-up Buffs will begin practice March 31

By Kyle Ringo
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Diehard Colorado football fans can begin planning their spring with a save-the-date for April 25 to throw on the refrigerator.

The Buffs will conduct their spring game that day at Folsom Field, completing more than three weeks and 15 practices that are tentatively slated to begin March 31, associate athletic director Dave Plati said.

Colorado coach Dan Hawkins said last month he planned to push back the start of spring ball as late into the spring semester as possible to allow his banged-up team to heal from a injury-plagued season. The team had 13 active and redshirting players have their seasons cut short by injuries or illness. Seven more were scheduled for postseason surgeries.

The March 31 start date is the latest in recent history. The program used to conduct spring ball even later in the semester in the 1960s, '70s and '80s. NCAA rules would allow the team to complete spring ball as late as the final day of spring classes if coaches chose to do so.

The current schedule calls for all but two practices this spring to occur on weekdays. The only exceptions are the first scrimmage, slated for Saturday, April 11, and the spring game.

The athletic department hopes to improve on its record-setting attendance at last year's spring game when an estimated crowd of more than 17,000 watched the Buffs free of charge. Other programs around the nation routinely attract crowds to their spring games that are larger than game-day crowds in Boulder.

There are no special plans in place for a special event to coincide with this year's spring game. Last year, Colorado was one of a small group of schools around the country that attempted to participate in the Gridiron Bash, which paired concerts with spring games and charity.

The NCAA squashed the idea late in the process and organizers acknowledged they did not seek the organization's approval beforehand.

Plati said efforts are still ongoing to one day revive the idea in some fashion.



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