



# CU coaches make decision on QB

## Cody Hawkins expected to get nod when starter announced today

By Kyle Ringo  
Sunday, August 19, 2007

Colorado football coaches had a good, long look Saturday morning at the two quarterbacks competing for the starting job.

Saturday night, they chose their starter — but said they would not announce their decision until today.

Redshirt freshman Cody Hawkins entered the 160-play scrimmage with a small advantage over junior Nick Nelson and nothing in their performances led anyone to believe they had changed places on the depth chart.

Coach Dan Hawkins met with his assistants after the scrimmage and discussed the decision, but said the final determination would be made by offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich.

Hawkins said it will be good for everyone involved to have the decision made and in the past.

"I think we need to kind of do something to push forward here and just kind of start getting some continuity," Hawkins said.

Cody Hawkins led the Buffs on 10 drives. Three ended in touchdowns and two ended in field goals. Hawkins also threw an interception, but the ball was tipped at the line of scrimmage.

Nelson led seven drives, two of which ended in touchdowns and two more in field goals. Nelson threw two interceptions, including one that should have been caught by a wide receiver who tipped it instead.

True freshman quarterback Matt Ballenger led two drives, both of which ended in touchdowns. That led Dan Hawkins to joke that the youngest of the three quarterbacks should be the starter.

The CU sports information department did not release individual statistics at the coaching staff's request. However, the three quarterbacks combined to throw for 451 yards. CU does not allow reporters to track and publish individual statistics in scrimmages.

Helfrich called the mistakes made by his quarterbacks "all very fixable stuff." He said he feels good about the level of competition at the position and he believes both Hawkins and Nelson are capable of leading the team to points in games this season.

"They both got off to not-great starts but rebounded pretty well, and at least made good decisions on time," Helfrich said. "That's what we're trying to get those guys both to do."

"Hopefully, we're in a situation where it's very difficult and both guys are improving and competing. That puts everybody in a better position."

Both Cody Hawkins and Nelson said they believed they played well overall, despite a few mistakes. They were both eager to find out who the coaches would choose.

"In Division I football, there is too much on the line to just pick somebody you like," Cody Hawkins said. "You've got to pick the guy who is going to go out there and make plays, and whether that is Nick or me, the Buffs are going to be winning games this fall."

Last year's starting quarterback, Bernard Jackson, did not participate in the scrimmage despite being on the field in full pads. Hawkins said Jackson was held out because he had participated in a limited number of practices because of a class conflict.

Some in the crowd estimated at 4,800 theorized that coaches are holding Jackson out while practices are open to the public because they don't want opponents to get wind of how they might use the multi-talented senior, who is expected to play a "slash" role this season at running back, wide receiver and quarterback.

The Buffs racked up 759 yards on 130 plays from scrimmage, including 326 yards rushing.

"I think our offense is getting their horns out and getting a mentality going," Dan Hawkins said. "I think you can see that at times, the way they run the ball and come off the ball."

Hawkins noted that four defensive linemen — Jason Brace, Marquez Herrod, George Hypolite and Maurice Lucas — did not participate because of minor injuries. He said he thought that gave the offense a clear advantage.

The defense did manage to sack the quarterback four times.

"We showed some flashes, a little sloppy at times on both sides," Hawkins said.

The most exciting moment came in a negative way when hearts sank around the stadium as freshman wide receiver Josh Smith ran into a wall in back of the south end zone. He was not seriously injured.

No serious injuries were reported.

### **CU scrimmage scoring summary**

**Series 2 (Cody Hawkins)** — Kevin Eberhart 29 FG 9 plays, 46 yards

**Series 4 (Nick Nelson)** — Kevin Moyd 5 run (Kevin Eberhart kick) 11-80

**Series 6 (NN)** — Nate Solder 6 pass from Nick Nelson (Kevin Eberhart kick) 8-57

**Series 8 (CH)** — Kevin Eberhart 27 FG 5-22

**Series 10 (CH)** — Tyson DeVree 2 pass from Cody Hawkins (Kevin Eberhart kick) 6-65

**Series 11 (MB)** — Tyson DeVree 23 pass from Matt Ballenger (Kevin Eberhart kick) 12-80

**Series 13 (NN)** — Kevin Eberhart 32 FG 8-37

**Series 14 (NN)** — Demetrius Sumler 9 run (Kevin Eberhart kick) 6-57

**Series 15 (CH)** — Byron Ellis 2 run (Kevin Eberhart kick) 3-43

**Series 16 (NN)** — Kevin Eberhart 35 FG 9-44

**Series 18 (CH)** — Scotty McKnight 18 pass from Brian Lockridge (Tyler Cope kick) 10-74

**Series 20 (MB)** — Cory Nabors 3 run (Kevin Eberhart kick) 13-80

**Attendance** — 4,800.



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# When Dad is the coach: Dual roles can test tandem

By Kyle Ringo  
Sunday, August 19, 2007

Growing up in Salem, Ore., and later in Boise, Idaho, Cody Hawkins and his three siblings loved playing games with their father, Dan, when he would come home from his job as a college football coach.

Those games rarely involved the pigskin.

They played wiffle ball in the backyard. Sometimes it was basketball in the driveway, where Dan Hawkins earned the nickname "Shot Doctor" from his children during games of H-O-R-S-E or P-I-G.

Their favorite activity with dad was a living room rodeo.

"He would get on his hands and knees and all the kids would put their arms around him and he would try and buck us off," Cody Hawkins said. "We used to call him 'Bad Medicine.'

"We'd be at the dinner table and say, 'Is Bad Medicine in town?' If he was too tired, he'd be like, 'No, Bad Medicine ain't here.' Other times he'd be like, 'Oh, Bad Medicine is rolling in.' Then the whole family would get in the living room and we'd get on Dad's back and try to hang on for as long as we could."

Cody Hawkins has always considered his dad his role model. So when Dan Hawkins decided to leave Boise State after five years as head coach there and take on a new challenge at Colorado, his son, an undefeated high school quarterback, followed after his senior year.

They both suffered through a 2-10 season last fall in Boulder, with Cody in a redshirt year as a true freshman while his father tried to change the culture and mentality of the program he inherited. Now two weeks from the start of their second season as Buffs, the father is poised to name his son the starting quarterback today.

Cody Hawkins entered the second scrimmage of preseason practices Saturday with a slight edge over junior college transfer Nick Nelson. Both quarterbacks' performances were a mixed bag of good and bad decision-making in the scrimmage.

In short, nothing happened that would indicate Cody had lost his lead.

Dan Hawkins has said all along the final decision will be made by offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich after a meeting between all the coaches today.

If Helfrich does select Cody Hawkins, it will mark the sixth time in the modern history of major college

football that a father-son tandem has led a program as head coach and starting quarterback, according to research done by the CU sports information department.

Some of those who have worked together in college football as father and son and coach and quarterback say it was one of the most treasured parts of their lives. But it also comes with tough challenges.

Unless they are fortunate enough to win every game — Cody Hawkins is 59-0 as a starting quarterback — the Hawkins tandem will probably take a few jabs from fans and critics along the way.

"People will be looking for favoritism," said Dr. John Murray, a renowned sports-performance psychologist in Palm Beach, Fla. "It's a huge potential burden to bear. I would think that if anything, coach will be harder on his son on the field and maybe softer on him in family situations away from the field to balance the equation."

### **Previous case studies**

Fan interference was a regular occurrence for Jim Dickey and son Darrell, who led the Kansas State program to its first bowl game in 1982 after several difficult seasons together. It even happened to Jim Sweeney and son Kevin, whose time together at Fresno State in the mid-1980s was much more successful.

"I'm so happy that I had the courage to do that at a young age — to make the commitment to go and put yourself in a little bit of a pressure cooker," Kevin Sweeney said. "It is the greatest gift I've gotten because it allowed us to have a tremendous experience and go to battle together on the football field. Now I look at him as one of my very best friends in the whole, wide world."

Kevin Sweeney left Fresno State after the 1986 season as the leading passer in the history of Division I football with 10,653 yards. He and his father led the Bulldogs to an 11-0-1 record and No. 16 national ranking in 1985.

Jim Sweeney, now 78 and retired after 200 wins in 34 seasons, said the first year was the most difficult because, though his son was highly recruited by nearly every program on the West Coast, he hadn't proven himself at the college level.

Jim Sweeney recalled taking a phone call from a female caller on his radio show one night during his son's redshirt freshman year, just after he had named his son the starter.

"She wanted to know, 'Are we gonna be seeing anyone else besides Kevin Sweeney play?'" Jim Sweeney said. "I said, 'He'll be playing as long I'm sleeping with his mother.'"

### **Distancing themselves**

Both Dan and Cody Hawkins have downplayed their father-son relationship since coming to Colorado. Cody Hawkins is the spitting image of his father, right down to the grimace when he gets a question he doesn't like. He's been asked about being the coach's son often lately. Each time he politely muddles through it.

"When I'm out on the practice field, I try to associate with him as little as possible," he said. "I mean, basically the only time we ever talk is when I screw up. It's not like he's calling me out. I'm just one of

the guys."

The coach has repeatedly said his son will never be treated differently than any other player on the roster. And it seems Dan Hawkins is succeeding in this regard.

Nelson, the player with whom Cody Hawkins has been competing in training camp, has said he believes coaches have treated him and the coach's son fairly and equally. That was Dan Hawkins' vow on national signing day in 2006 when he was surprised by his son's national letter of intent.

"From my standpoint it's not a problem because of my coaching style," Dan Hawkins said then. "I tend to coach all of my guys like they are my kids.

"He is a talented player, he's a good kid and he's a great guy to have around. I think the only drawback that happens is if we're not playing well, then he is going to catch more criticism than the normal guy would. He's had to shoulder that, growing up with that last name in Boise. So he's kind of used to it."

### **Good and bad**

It took Darrell Dickey a while to get used to the scrutiny he received as the coach's son when he played for his father, Jim, at Kansas State. His father didn't make it any easier on him.

Prior to the 1981 season, Jim Dickey decided to make a bold move. He told 13 upperclassmen they would redshirt that season in order to get some of their teammates some experience. The plan was to combine all their experience the following year and see what happened.

The plan eventually propelled the Wildcats to the 1982 Independence Bowl, the first in the program's history. But Darrell Dickey had to endure the previous season to get there.

"You know, I saw both sides of it," he said. "I was a below-average quarterback on a very poor football team for a few years. So I caught a lot of flak. My father caught a lot of flak and my mom had to put up with quite a bit of stuff. Then my senior year, I was still a below-average player, but I was on a very good team and we went to the very first bowl game."

"Everything you hear about the quarterback gets too much credit or too much blame is totally true, but then you just kind of double that because if you happen to be the coach's son, it's just more magnified or whatever you want to call it.

"There are those who will say the only reason he's getting to play is because his dad's the coach. But I think overall, there are some positives and negatives to doing that. It's a great experience and I wouldn't trade it for anything. The positives far outweigh the negatives."

The Sweeneys and the Dickeyes will be paying close attention to the Buffs this season and pulling for the Hawkins family in particular. All of them say they believe Dan and Cody will enjoy the experience and learn a lot from it.

And they all offer one piece of similar advice.

"He's got to ignore the public," Jim Sweeney said of Dan Hawkins. "I know that group up in the stands there in Boulder. They're a little tough on coaches. I just think he ought to obey his heart and do what he thinks is right."



## Woelk: Progress shows, but Buffs better not forget 2-10

The offense continued to show flashes and the defense made more plays than a week ago.

But maybe the most surprising news from Saturday morning's Colorado scrimmage at Folsom Field came in the stands.

A crowd appeared. On a sun-splashed summer morning, with the start of school just around the corner and plenty of things to do, an estimated 4,800 people found their way to Folsom Field to get a glimpse of the future.

That's a bigger gathering than CU has drawn to its annual spring game on more than one occasion.

It's a sign that Dan Hawkins' second CU team has aroused the curiosity and interest of the fan base. That's not a bad thing when you consider such interest comes in the wake of last year's 2-10 finish.

What the crowd saw had to be encouraging, especially after last year's 2-10 record.

The offense is clearly (insert favorite descriptive phrase here) ahead of last year. There are play-makers at wide receiver, running back, quarterback and tight end. All are a welcome sight after last year's 2-10 mark.

Meanwhile, CU's secondary managed to pick off a couple of passes and knock down a few more. That's also something that didn't happen nearly often enough during last year's 2-10 season.

"I thought the tempo was good," Hawkins said. "The guys are in shape and I think they're ready to get in a game and go the whole round."

No doubt, the Buffs should be anxious to get back on the field, particularly considering last year's 2-10 finish.

(Did someone say 2-10? We're betting the Buffs would like to put that number behind them ... say, beginning about Sept. 1. Until then, we may find it necessary to remind them on occasion.)

As for Saturday, names that stood out included running back Demetrius Sumler, tight ends Nate Solder and Tyson DeVree, and wide receiver Josh Smith.

Sumler ran hard inside and outside, and recorded a 9-yard scoring run. Said offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich: "When it's 11-on-11, he always shows up."

Smith, who had a solid opening scrimmage last week, once again showed his big-play ability, and even did something veteran Folsom observers couldn't remember seeing before: Smith chased a ball out of the

southwest corner of the end zone and collided with the wall.

Much to Hawkins' relief, Smith walked away from the crash, apparently no worse for the wear. Odds are there will be padding on that wall sometime in the near future.

Solder and DeVree, meanwhile, proved to be large and capable targets for the quarterbacks. DeVree caught a pair of TD passes and Solder one.

Of course, the question of the day when the scrimmage ended was which quarterback will be throwing passes when the season opens. Helfrich and Hawkins said the decision will be announced soon, but it will be a surprise only if the starter isn't Cody Hawkins.

The coach's son entered the day with an edge over Nick Nelson and did nothing to lose that edge. While there's not a huge difference between the two, the intangibles that Cody Hawkins brings to the table are just too much to ignore.

But if you want to look past the immediate future — as in 2008 or 2009 — keep a very close eye on true freshman Matt Ballenger. The 6-4 slinger from Idaho might have had the best day of any of the QBs in the scrimmage. The guess here is that a year or two from now, Cody Hawkins will be looking over his shoulder at Ballenger closing in quickly. It wouldn't be a shocker to see Ballenger earn the starting job with Hawkins still having some eligibility remaining.

Defensively, the Buffs still have work to be done. With at least four linemen — including Maurice Lucas and George Hypolite — sitting out with minor injuries, the defense was admittedly at a disadvantage.

"The offense is doing a great job," said defensive boss Ron Collins. "They're moving the ball and they look good."

Neither is Collins by any means ready to panic. The Buffs have installed more defensive calls already this year than they did throughout most of last season (did someone say 2-10?), and the older players have adjusted accordingly.

"The younger guys are playing catch-up, but we'll be OK," Collins said. "One thing I did like today was that the guys played with a much higher tempo."

Saturday afternoon, the first Associated Press poll of the season was released. The Buffs — to absolutely no one's surprise — didn't get a sniff of a vote. That's to be expected for a team that last year ... OK, you know the number.

No surprise. Truth is, Hawkins' program is still at least a year — probably two — away from turning the corner.

But the horsepower necessary for such a turn appears to be coming into place.

That's already an improvement over last season.





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## Walking a fine line at CU

Hawkins negotiates coaching new QB - his son

By John Henderson  
Denver Post Staff Writer

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Boulder - Cody Hawkins never saw it. He never heard it. But he heard about it.

All high school football players do. He'd be quarterbacking Boise, Idaho's Bishop Kelly High School, and parents in the stands would be screaming. They'd be yelling at the coach. At the other team. Sometimes yelling at their own kid.

Meanwhile, in the middle of the mob, Dan Hawkins would sit silently, like a math teacher who stopped by the game on his way home from grading papers.

Dan Hawkins isn't in the stands any longer. He's on the sideline. He talks a lot to his son, Cody. The question is how much different is it putting your hand on your son's shoulder going over third-and-goal at the Nebraska 5 than reviewing the importance of homework? Where do you separate being a coach and a father? How can you separate it?

Dan Hawkins helped build little Boise State into a perennial top-25 program. But he had no clue what it took to coach his son.

"After spring, some people asked me if I was prepared for the land mines of coaching your own son," Dan said. "I said, 'Hey, this job is fraught with land mines. OK, just add another one in there.'"

The problem is, land mines can explode.

You give your son a starting job over another? BOOM! He throws three picks and you stick with him? KA-BLAM! Criticism rains down not only in the coaches' office but in Western Civ? POW! He's a quarterback. He's a freshman. Holy Bobby Bowden!

What an interesting season this will be for Colorado, with Hawkins expected to start for his dad.

However, father and son appear confident enough to prance through the minefield like Cody racing down the sideline on a quarterback keeper. If you look at their relationship and the dynamics of a Division I coaching staff, one can see why.

Look back at Cody's high school days. A reality TV show would not depict Dan taking a napkin at the dinner table and diagramming a new post pattern against a Cover 3 defense while Cody is cutting into his sirloin. That stoic persona in the high school stands is pretty much what Cody saw at home.

Fortunately.

"He was just sitting back trying to be a dad, and I think he did a great job doing that, not just through football but basketball and baseball," Cody said. "He's just been a great dad. He let me play sports for me. I'd always ask questions, and he'd always be there for me. But he was never pushing me along or

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pulling me aside and giving me advice."

## Numbers speak for themselves

Hawkins also wasn't an absentee father.

Many college coaches carry pictures of their children to remember what they look like, and Hawkins was gone a lot.

"For a long time if he made it to one game a year that was awesome," Cody said. "Mom would freak out."

But in Cody's junior and senior years, his father started coming to the games. Then again, was he coming as a father or a recruiter? After all, Cody was a SuperPrep All-American, its 13th-ranked quarterback in the country two years ago and also Idaho player of the year. Dan saw Cody throw for 2,783 yards and 42 touchdowns on 72 percent passing for a team that averaged 50.6 points a game and probably forgot he was the kid's dad.

That is, until they jabbed each other at the dinner table about their records. Dan led the Broncos to a 37-3 record in the Western Athletic Conference. Oh, yeah? Cody said. He has never lost a game he started. Zero. He is 59-0.

Yet, the two are not tied at the hip. Dan lets Cody have his own life, everything from where he lives - he rooms with fellow student Niko Lostra of the football operations department and only goes home when the Ramen noodles run out - to his college of choice. Cody always wanted to go to Boise State. In

high school he followed his autograph with "Go Broncos."

## Post Poll - CU Football

How many wins will the Buffs tally this season under

Even when his father took the Colorado job Jan. 1 of Cody's senior year, he didn't start scribbling "Go Buffs." He almost stuck to his commitment.

"Definitely," Cody said. "I seriously considered (Colorado) then I talked myself back to Boise State. Then the night before signing day, I went up and thought about it for awhile and I really wanted to take on the challenge. Come play in the Big 12."

It wasn't like Cody caved to family pressure. His father didn't recruit him. New Colorado offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich did. Cody felt more pressure from his father choosing which tux to wear to the prom. In fact, Dan didn't know Cody would sign with CU until he got a fax on signing day.

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Cody's mom knew five minutes before Dan did.

"(Boise State) was a great situation for me but it wasn't the same situation as it would've been if he was there," Cody said. "I thought Colorado was a great situation for me as well, so I stepped out of my comfort zone to come here to play. That's not something I've done a lot of in my life."

Once Dan saw the letter, he said to himself, "Now what do I do?"

He needed advice. Quarterbacks playing for their father in Division I-A has happened nearly 20 times. But one hasn't been a starter since Fresno State's Kevin Sweeney started for his father Jim from 1983-86.

Dan stepped outside the football box and called Oregon basketball coach Ernie Kent, who coached his son Jordan from 2003-06.

"I gave him the same advice Tubby Smith gave me and Jerry Tarkanian gave me and Jim Harrick gave me," Ernie Kent said. "The toughest part is getting through in the locker room. When all is said and done, after you come up with all the weaknesses, it's well worth it. I don't regret it for a minute.

"It made me a better father and a better basketball coach. It reminded me that at times you're so entrenched in the job that you leave the locker room and realize, Oh, I forgot to hug Jordan and tell him I love him. But some guys in that locker room don't have a dad. They may need it more than Jordan. So I was able to reconnect in the locker room."

## Ready for prime time

Dan had time. Cody redshirted last year. But this year, one of Colorado's many holes to fill is quarterback, and the whole state soon knew that it was a two-man battle between Cody and junior college transfer Nick Nelson.

This didn't put Dan in a no-win situation. He didn't have to make the decision. He gave the job of jury and judge to Helfrich. At Arizona State, Helfrich coached Andrew Walter into the NFL, Sam Keller to 309 yards a game and Rudy Carpenter to the top passer rating in the nation. Nothing personal, Dad, but Cody had no problems spending more time with Helfrich.

"I don't interact with the (head) coach very much," Cody said. "He knows a lot and he oversees the whole operation and he's a great coach but my coach is Coach Helfrich and he's the guy I interact with the most in the offensive meetings and out on the field. So he's the guy who really critiques us and grades us and how we do in practice."

Barring injury or a major development in the next two weeks, Cody Hawkins will start the Sept. 1 opener against Colorado State. He'll be the man most responsible for turning around a 2-10 season, Colorado's worst since 1984, back when his father was the freshman coach at Cal-Davis.

Cody is only 5-feet-11, but he has taken care of the ball a bit better and made a few more plays than the 6-1 Nelson. Cody also won't be awed by walking into Invesco Field at Mile High in two weeks. He can thank Dad for that.

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"He's been in a lot of big venues," Dan said. "He knows the mentality of it. I think he's very comfortable with all those things. But he's also won a lot of games in his own right."

None will be more important than this season. Unlike everyone else in Colorado, he saw what his father did at Boise State. He has seen what he does at home. And he has also seen what he hasn't done in the stands when his son just wanted to play football for fun, to be a kid, to be a son.

"I don't consider it an obstacle," Cody said. "I consider it very much a blessing."

## Did you know?

A closer look at CU quarterback Cody Hawkins:

- \* Selected by teammates to receive the Offensive Scout Award during his redshirt season last fall.

- \* Was on a reality series on ESPNU with other college athletes in Chicago before coming to CU.

- \* During his senior season at Bishop Kelly High School in Boise, Idaho, he threw for 42 touchdowns and just five interceptions in 12 games; as a junior he had 31 TDs and eight INTs. He was 24-0 in those seasons.

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## Hawkins' No. 1 status likely safe after drills

By Tom Kensler  
Denver Post Staff Writer

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Boulder - After watching a 2 1/2-hour scrimmage Saturday "that showed some flashes, (but was) a little sloppy at times," Colorado coach Dan Hawkins said the time has come to gear up for the Sept. 1 season opener against Colorado State by naming a starting quarterback.

Hawkins said he intends to have that decision made by today's practices. Redshirt freshman Cody Hawkins, the coach's son, entered the scrimmage with a lead over junior-college transfer Nick Nelson, according to coaches. Hawkins' performance Saturday, though more solid than spectacular, did not appear to jeopardize his standing.

Hawkins threw a 2-yard touchdown pass to tight end Tyson DeVree and directed the offense to two other touchdowns and two field goals.

"Yeah, I think we need to do something to kind of push forward here, to get some continuity," Dan Hawkins said, when asked if the decision would be made by today. "We need to start getting the right personnel in for the right plays. We need to get in the

groove you want to be in for the game."

Although there had been some speculation that the final scrimmage Friday might serve as a final audition, CU offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich said naming a starting quarterback two weeks before the opener had been the plan all along.

Cody Hawkins and Nelson said they will accept the decision whichever way it goes.

"It's going to be an exciting decision," Cody Hawkins said. "Whichever guy they go with, the Buffs are going to be in great shape. I think we can both run the team efficiently."

Said Nelson: "All I can do is come out here and do my best. I've worked hard. Whatever happens, happens."

Helfrich said Nelson might have played his best football of fall camp on Saturday. Nelson tossed a 6-yard touchdown pass to tight end Nate Solder and, like Hawkins, he guided the offense to two other TDs and two field goals.

Individual statistics from the scrimmage were not released.

"We're absolutely, 100 percent going to need both guys," Helfrich said.

### Footnotes

Another big day for the offense (759 yards on 130 plays) was aided by a lack of depth along the defensive line because of the absence of defensive tackle George Hypolite, defensive end Maurice Lucas

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and others who are nursing injuries not deemed serious. ... All Colorado practice sessions and scrimmages are now closed to the public. ... As of Friday afternoon, CU reported that almost 6,000 tickets (including 800 student tickets) remained for the opener against CSU at Invesco Field at Mile High on Sept. 1. Tickets (\$60.50) may be purchased by calling 303-49-BUFFS or visiting [CUBuffs.com](http://CUBuffs.com). ... Attendance for the scrimmage was estimated at 4,800 by the school.

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## QB quandary

Decision on starter may be made today

*By Patrick Ridgell  
The Daily Times-Call*

BOULDER — Today's the day Colorado will "probably" — in the non-committal terms of offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich — name its starting quarterback.

The decision could come as a big relief to Nick Nelson and Cody Hawkins — the two duking it out for the job — for many reasons, but perhaps none larger than this: Neither will have to answer any more questions about their battle once a decision is made.

"That's going to be really nice," Hawkins said. "It's kind of awesome for the rest of our offense because they (reporters) talk to me and Nick the whole time instead of talking to the other guys. They deserve a lot more attention than they're getting."

Hawkins has a point.

On Saturday, in CU's second scrimmage of camp before an estimated 4,800 fans at Folsom Field, several facets of the team demanded attention. The offense totaled seven touchdowns, four field goals and 759 yards on 130 plays from scrimmage against a depleted defense that might become a concern if improvement isn't made soon.

CU's sports information compiled statistics, but coaches once again asked that individual numbers be withheld from the media.

The offensive-line rotation is far from set. Determining depth charts, or in CU lingo, "contributor charts," awaits.

News on grades is still to come. And there have been few sightings of Bernard Jackson, the man expected to provide some slash this year.

But quarterbacking will remain at the forefront until the starter has been decided.

Hawkins and Nelson did nothing fantastic, or anything terrible, on Saturday, making the coaches' call tougher.

Head coach Dan Hawkins continued to defer most questions about the quarterbacks to Helfrich, possibly trying to remain as far as possible out of an equation that includes his oldest son.

Helfrich wouldn't rule out the chance the Buffs could wait a tad longer to name the starter, but with Colorado State looming 13 days away, urgency is building.

"We're going to get together and watch film, and then we're going to be in a position to make a call soon," Helfrich said.



With starting quarterback candidates Nick Nelson and Cody Hawkins, above, emerging as a clear-cut standout in Saturday's intrasquad scrimmage at Folsom Field, the CU coaches don't have an easy decision to make. **Times-Call/Lewis Geyer**

"I think we're ready, and I think it'll help everybody. ... With the situation we're in, where Nick and Cody are similar players, just rallying behind one guy and getting everybody ready to go toward an endpoint, toward a game plan, it puts the other guys somewhat at ease. There's always a day or two where the other (quarterback) is somewhat upset, and that's fine and fair. But that guy usually relaxes a little bit and then competes."

The head coach agreed.

"We need to do something to push forward here and just kind of start getting some continuity," Dan Hawkins said. "We have so many things in right now — formations and everything — we need to start gearing things down, getting the right personnel in for the right plays and getting the formations down, and start getting in a groove that you want to be in for a game."

Finding that groove requires more than just naming the quarterback, though.

Four defensive linemen sat out Saturday — starting tackle George Hypolite and starting end Maurice Lucas, plus end Marquez Herrod and tackle Jason Brace.

Hawkins has also yet to issue official word on the academic status of linebacker Marcus Burton, but when he played Saturday, it was with the third team and other players expected to redshirt.

Defensive depth Saturday appeared scary thin.

Cornerback Terrence Wheatley said the defense even made adjustments at halftime.

Still, Wheatley, a fifth-year senior, said all will be fine.

"We got some new calls in, so you see a couple of ball coverages here and there, a couple new techniques," he said.

"We're kind of getting into it, but when it comes to the base calls we're going to use in the season, I'm not worried."

Nelson and Cody Hawkins say they aren't worried, either. Both say it's the coaches' decision, and all they can do is play their best and see what happens.

Hawkins said he expected to sleep fine Saturday night.

"Whatever happens, I feel like the Buffs are going to be in good shape," the redshirt freshman said. "(Nick Nelson is) a good quarterback, and I feel like I can move the team efficiently. Whichever guy they go with, it's going to be a good decision.

"In Division I football, there's too much on the line to just pick somebody you like. You have to pick a guy that's going to go out there and make plays, and whether that's Nick or me, the Buffs are going to be winning games this fall."

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## Sumler making gains

Redshirt freshman pushing Charles for playing time at tailback

*By Patrick Ridgell  
The Daily Times-Call*

BOULDER — Hugh Charles no longer runs alone as Colorado's top tailback.

According to running backs coach Darian Hagan, Charles is 1A and redshirt freshman Demetrius Sumler has joined him as 1B. Hagan said if Sumler continues to run as he has of late in camp, he'll split carries with Charles, and it might be 50-50.

Sumler's emergence came this week and was pronounced during Saturday's scrimmage, when he ran well and produced several nice gains. He ran hard up the middle and on short yardage.

Sumler has responded to a challenge Hagan threw him earlier this month.

"I challenged him a week ago to get tougher, get more physical — I just demanded it out of him," Hagan said. "It (angered) him, but at the same time, the light switch went on for him. He'd doing a really good job." Hagan said he's more confident than ever that if an injury slows Charles, Sumler can relieve him effectively.

The coach said Sumler, a redshirt freshman, is in the best shape of his life.

For CU, the biggest positive from Sumler's emergence is the depth it provides.

Hagan said he's also comfortable with Byron Ellis and Kevin Moyd behind Charles, but Sumler's work is standing out. He had a nine-yard touchdown run Saturday.

"He's running like he ran in high school, like the guy we recruited," Hagan said. "He's running with determination. He's a hard worker, and everything you ask of him, he does and more.

"I'm extremely proud of him."

Offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich said the running backs made mistakes Saturday that "go unnoticed," as far as missing running lanes. But he expects Sumler to find them.

"Demetrius is a guy that when it's 11-on-11 real football, that guy always shows up, and at tailback that's important," Helfrich said.

Hold your breath: Freshman receiver Josh Smith slammed into a wall behind the south end zone while trying to catch a pass.

As the crowd gasped, he fell to the ground and lay there momentarily before popping up and returning to the scrimmage.



Tailback Demetrius Sumler breaks through the line during Saturday's intrasquad scrimmage at Folsom Field. **Times-Call/Lewis Geyer**

Asked if his heart stopped upon seeing the talented receiver crash, head coach Dan Hawkins said, "Yeah."

Freshmen everywhere: It's no secret freshmen will play major minutes this year, especially at offensive line, where at least three true freshmen could be in the rotation.

Hawkins said playing freshmen at any position can make him pause, but he has no choice.

"I'm just telling you, talent, experience, depth, I don't care what the business is, but particularly in sports, you look at that," he said.

"When you have a bunch of youth, there's going to be some issues with that.

"Can that be overcome? Yeah. But it takes extra things."

Ryan Miller, Kai Maiava and Mike Iltis are the true freshmen who continue to get reps with the first two units up front.

Redshirt freshman guard Wes Palazzi also worked with them.

Junior center Daniel Sanders, and senior tackles Tyler Polumbus and Edwin Harrison appear set to start.

Scoring: Scotty McKnight caught an 18-yard score from running back Brian Lockridge on a ball safety Lionel Harris could have intercepted, but he stumbled.

Tight end Tyson DeVree caught two touchdown passes, one from Cody Hawkins and another from Matt Ballenger.

The other touchdowns, in addition to Sumler's score, came on Nick Nelson's 6-yard pass to redshirt freshman Nate Solder and short runs by Ellis, Moyd and walk-on Cory Nabors,

Extra points: The hit of the day came when safety Ryan Walters leveled Moyd while he ran along the sideline. .... Quarterback/receiver Bernard Jackson did not play much. Hawkins said that was because he hasn't practiced much. ... Freshman Tyler Cope handled most of the kickoffs, while Kevin Eberhart kicked the field goals. Eberhart hit four, from 29, 27, 32 and 35 yards. He had no misses. ... Ballenger fumbled only one snap, an improvement over the four he dropped in the first scrimmage.