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## Bufs not making excuses for defeat

*By Patrick Ridgell  
Longmont Times-Call*

BOULDER — The day after might have hurt the Colorado Buffaloes even more.

They convened Sunday for meetings and conditioning still stinging from Saturday's 31-28 loss at Iowa State, during which game officials denied CU two Kevin Eberhart field goals in the final second that would have tied the game.

CU coach Dan Hawkins said Sunday he had yet to speak with the Big 12's coordinator of football officials, Walt Anderson, because Anderson was working an NFL game.

Hawkins, who was not very talkative Sunday, said he planned to contact Anderson today. He said he sought "understanding" for why the final second transpired as it did.

"I need to talk to those guys. I need to talk to Walt," Hawkins said when asked about what he saw of the play on film.

Plenty of frustration remained throughout the Buffs' team.

"I honestly wish we had a game this weekend," guard Edwin Harrison said. "I really wish we could just go out there this Saturday and play just to get this taste out of our mouths."

CU does not play again until it hosts Nebraska on Nov. 23 in the regular season finale for both teams (10 a.m., ABC).

To recap Saturday's events: CU quarterback Cody Hawkins completed a pass to Tyson DeVree in-bounds with about 12 seconds left to play that put the Buffs at Iowa State's 33. CU's field goal team rushed onto the field. Deep snapper Justin Drescher snapped the ball before time expired, and Eberhart hit from 50 yards. But officials called a delay of game penalty on CU because they said Drescher snapped it before the ball was set.

After the five-yard mark-off, Drescher snapped it again and Eberhart hit from 55. But officials ruled Drescher did not snap it the second time before time expired.

Hawkins reiterated Sunday what he said Saturday, that he thought more time would be put on the clock, but wasn't. Hawkins said Saturday he believed Drescher snapped the ball before time expired. So did Drescher, whom Hawkins said understood the urgency of the situation.

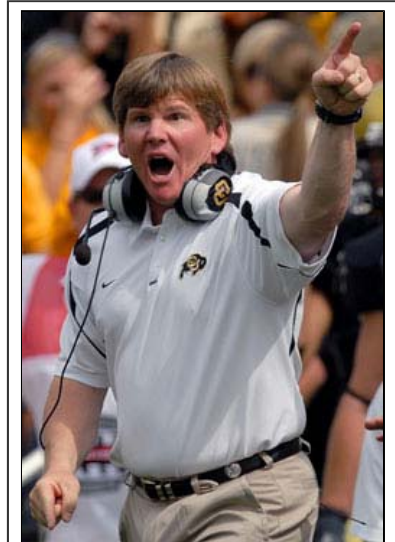
The referee who made the final call, Clete Blakeman, lettered as a Nebraska quarterback in 1985, '86 and '87. Blakeman said after the game that the ball was marked on the final play and time started to run. He said CU failed to snap it before time expired. Blakeman did not give CU an explanation on the field.

Hawkins discussed the end with his team, but would not tell reporters what he said. Harrison provided some idea, though.

"He expressed to us that he wants to take responsibility for this loss," Harrison said.

A fourth-down gamble in the third quarter backfired, giving Iowa State the ball on CU's 43, which led to the Cyclones' first touchdown, which sparked their comeback from a 21-0 deficit.

Senior offensive tackle Tyler Polumbus said he sent Hawkins a text message Saturday night telling the coach he would do everything he could to get the Buffs a win against Nebraska.



CU football coach Dan Hawkins planned on speaking with Big 12 officials about two questionable calls late in Saturday's loss at Iowa State. Hawkins didn't get answers on Sunday and was understandably upset. **Times-Call/Joshua Buck**

While Hawkins' calls and that fourth down gave CU plenty to ponder, Harrison focused on another culprit.

"We shouldn't have rested a game on an official's call," he said. "We shouldn't have rested a game on a last-second kick. The game shouldn't have been decided by somebody else. It should have been decided by us, and that's what where we failed.

"I know coach Hawkins puts a lot of this loss on his shoulders. I constantly ask myself what could I have done better in that game for us to win."

**EXTRA POINTS:** Linebacker Jordon Dizon was named Sunday one of eight semi-finalists for the fourth annual Lott Trophy, which honors college football's defensive impact player of the year. It recognizes players for their on- and off-field work. ... Freshman receiver Kendrick Celestine did not play Saturday, even though he was in Ames. Hawkins said it was a coach's decision and that he'd be available for Nebraska. He said it was "not really" a suspension.

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cu football

## Buffs in rush to resume playing

By Tom Kensler  
The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 11/11/2007 11:31:24 PM MST

BOULDER — Although getting some time off to heal 11 weeks of bumps and bruises never is a bad thing, Colorado players said Sunday they wish the game against Nebraska were this weekend rather than the day after Thanksgiving.

"In fact, I'd give anything to have a game today," CU senior tackle Tyler Polumbus said after a 90-minute conditioning session. "I'm killing myself. We're all killing ourselves (over the Buffaloes' 31-28 loss Saturday at Iowa State)."

Colorado blew a 21-0 halftime lead, losing momentum early in the third quarter after a failed fourth-and-1 play gave Iowa State the ball at the Buffs' 43-yard line. Iowa State scored in three plays and ultimately reeled off 31 consecutive points.

Hearing CU coach Dan Hawkins tell the team that he would like to "take responsibility for the loss" in Ames made the players want to get that taste out of their mouths as quickly as possible,

senior guard Edwin Harrison said.

"He expressed that," Harrison said of Hawkins

### Colorado Football

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wanting to accept blame. "(But) it's all of us. It's not Coach Hawk. It's not any one of us. We are a team. We have to find a way to get it done."

All the wiggle room in the schedule has disappeared, leaving Colorado (5-6, 3-4 Big 12) in a must-win situation. The Buffs need a victory over Nebraska (5-6, 2-5) on Nov. 23 at Folsom Field to become bowl eligible. The Huskers also need to win that game to have a chance at continuing their season.

"It's going to be like a playoff for a bowl game," CU quarterback Cody Hawkins said. "It's a huge game. But playing Nebraska always is."

Polumbus said he felt so badly after CU's loss to Iowa State, he sent a cellphone text message to Dan Hawkins on Saturday night after the team returned to Boulder.

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"I told him I'm going to give everything I can to make sure this isn't my final two weeks," Polumbus said.

**Footnotes** . Dan Hawkins said he was unable to reach Big 12 coordinator of football officials Walt Anderson on Sunday but would attempt to do so today. Hawkins wants an explanation of the circumstances that nullified two would-be field goals by CU's Kevin Eberhart at the end of the Iowa State game. ... Freshman wideout Kendrick Celestine did not play against the Cyclones because of a "coach's decision," but Hawkins said Celestine would play against Nebraska.

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# CU football Hawk hopes to get answers from Big 12 today

## He seeks interpretation of ISU game ruling

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer  
Monday, November 12, 2007

Mark Sunday down as the least quotable day in Dan Hawkins' tenure as coach of the Colorado football team.

Hawkins chose not to make any significant comments about the controversial way the Buffs' game ended Saturday at Iowa State because he wasn't able to speak with Big 12 Conference coordinator of football officials Walt Anderson.

Anderson also works as an official in the NFL and was working a game Sunday. Hawkins is expected to be able to get his questions answered today in regard to two calls made by officials at the end of regulation Saturday in Jack Trice Stadium nullifying the potential game-tying field goal twice.

The Buffs lost the game 31-28 and Hawkins acknowledged Sunday that no matter what comes out of his discussion with Anderson, the outcome won't be changed. He said he's just hoping to get some "understanding" of what referee Clete Blakeman ruled Saturday. "I need to talk to those guys," Hawkins said. "I need to talk to Walt."

Anderson cited two rules that governed the specific plays at the end of the game in an e-mail to conference spokesman Bob Burda late Saturday night.

Colorado's offense moved the ball to the Iowa State 33-yard line on a completed third-down pass to tight end Tyson Devree. The offense raced off the field as the field-goal team darted on and set up for the kick.

An official placed the ball down at the appropriate spot and CU longsnapper Justin Drescher snapped it. Place-kicker Kevin Eberhart made the 50-yard field goal, but officials flagged the Buffs for snapping the ball before it was ruled ready for play.

In his e-mail to Burda, Anderson cited rule 4-1-4, which governs when the ball is ready for play.

Drescher said he thought officials had ruled the ball ready for play when he snapped it. With the clock ticking down and time about to expire, Drescher had no alternative but to snap the ball when he did in order to get the kick off. The Buffs were out of timeouts.

Officials marked off a 5-yard penalty and put one second back on the clock. When they ruled the ball ready for play, Drescher snapped it and Eberhart drilled a 55-yard kick, but officials then ruled the snap did not come quick enough and the game had ended.

In his e-mail, Anderson said rule 3-2-5 governed the play. The rule indicates that if the clock is running when a penalty is called, it will be started again when the referee signals ready for play.

Hawkins said it is physically possible to snap the ball on time with just one second remaining once the referee signals the ball is ready.

"It's got to be well-timed," he said.

Hawkins said Drescher was aware of how quickly he needed to make the snap. Drescher said he did his best to snap the ball as quickly as possible as soon as the referee blew his whistle.

"I snapped the ball when I heard the whistle and obviously it was a second too late," Drescher said. "It's my fault for, I guess, not hearing the whistle soon enough. It was a loud place. They had a great fan base and obviously I was just one second too late. "

The Buffs and there fans should have a better understanding of what transpired today when Anderson is available. But the Buffs must put the disappointment in the past with the regular-season finale with Nebraska less than two weeks away and a bye week this week.

Players had already started to move on Sunday after conditioning work and a round-robin Buff-ball tournament in the practice bubble.

"The game shouldn't have been decided by somebody else," senior Edwin Harrison said. "It should have been decided by us. That's where we failed."

### **Dizon honored again**

CU linebacker Jordon Dizon has been named one of eight semifinalists for the Lott Trophy, which is given to the defensive impact player of the year in college football. Dizon already is a finalist for the Dick Butkus Award, given to the nation's best linebacker and a semifinalist for the Chuck Bednarik Award given to the nation's best defender.

### **Notable**

Hawkins plans a regular week of practice this week and a scrimmage on Saturday afternoon during the bye week this week. He said the team will begin practicing the game plan for Nebraska immediately. ... Hawkins said he doesn't give much thought to whether it is a good time for a bye week. He just welcomes it whenever it arrives. He said it could be good for his players academically because the semester is winding down and players need extra time to focus on school at this point. ... Hawkins said true freshman wide receiver Kendrick Celestine was on the trip to Iowa State but did not play. Asked if Celestine was suspended for the game, Hawkins said, "Not really." Celestine is expected to be available for the Nebraska game.



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## Sunday's local college football notes

By B.G. Brooks, Randy Holtz & Jim Benton, Rocky Mountain News  
November 12, 2007

**CU**

### On hold

Coach **Dan Hawkins** didn't speak with Big 12 Conference coordinator of officials **Walt Anderson** on Sunday regarding the bizarre finish of the Buffaloes' 31-28 loss at Iowa State, but he said he will make the call today.

Anderson was not available Sunday because he also works as an NFL official.

CU had two **Kevin Eberhart** field goals (50, 55 yards) nullified by penalties - the first was called for the ball being snapped before the referee signaled play to begin, the second because the referee ruled that time had expired when the ball was snapped. One second remained on the clock.

Big 12 spokesman **Bob Burda** said, "The rule clearly states that what the referees did was by the rule book . . . certainly, coaches call for rules clarification all time, so it's not uncommon for (Hawkins) to call Walt and see if what transpired" was interpreted correctly.

"I've not seen the play myself (and) I'm not an official's expert."

The referee, former Nebraska quarterback (1985-87) **Clete Blakeman**, told an Iowa State sports information representative Saturday that the first CU penalty was "technically . . . called delay of game, but the foul is for the offense snapping the ball prior to the referee's ready for placing."

As for the second flag, Blakeman, now a trial lawyer living and practicing in Omaha, said, "Once the penalty was marked off, ready for play is going to be signaled, and then I'm going to start the clock. So that was done, the whistle was blown . . . and Colorado did not get the snap off prior to the clock expiring."

"I definitely want to believe I did (snap the ball in time)," CU sophomore **Justin Drescher** said. "But if the ref said I didn't, I didn't. That's just the way it is."

Drescher's dilemma was not snapping too soon and risking another penalty like the first, or being late with a near-simultaneous snap required when Blakeman blew his whistle and started the clock.

Asked if that was physically possible, Hawkins said, "It's got to be well-timed (and) Justin understood the urgency."

Hawkins spoke with his team about the loss but declined to make public what he said.

### Postseason play-in?

Call it a season-ending, winner-take-something game. Or not.

With 5-6 records, CU and Nebraska each need one win to become bowl eligible, upping the ante for their game on the day after Thanksgiving (Nov. 23) at Folsom Field.

There's no assurance that six wins will earn a postseason appearance, as Kansas finished 6-6 in 2006 and was omitted. But the Big 12 is aligned with seven bowls, plus the Bowl Championship Series, which in a best-case scenario could account for nine Big 12 teams reaching the postseason if two league schools become BCS choices.

Thus far, six Big 12 teams (Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, Texas Tech and Texas A&M) are bowl eligible, with four others (CU, Nebraska, Kansas State, Oklahoma State) needing one win.



Christopher Gannon  
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Colorado coach Dan Hawkins holds his head while watching Iowa State score 21 points in the third quarter Saturday in Ames. The Cyclones rallied from a 21-0 deficit to win 31-28.

If the Big 12 has two BCS teams, it would need nine bowl eligible teams to fulfill its postseason obligations. Also, by contract, the Gator Bowl must select a Big 12 team twice over the next three seasons, including 2007. If the Gator passed this year, it would be required to take a Big 12 team in each of the next two.

## Rambling, gambling . . .

Hawkins' third-quarter decision to go for it on fourth-and-1 at the CU 43-yard line - the Buffs were up 21-0 at the time - raised eyebrows among some of the Cyclones.

"I don't know," quarterback **Bret Meyer** said in *The Des Moines Register*, "what they were going for."

Facetiously asked if he believed Hawkins was offering the Cyclones a senior day gift, receiver **Todd Blythe** answered, "I think so. I'll go thank him now."

After CU tailback **Demetrius Sumler** was stuffed for no gain, Iowa State responded with 31 straight points.

Hawkins on KOA radio's postgame show: "I kind of let the dam break. . . . Maybe I just need to grow up and smarten up and start playing it by the book. Maybe I need to quit being so bullheaded."

Senior guard **Edwin Harrison** said Hawkins "put a lot of that loss on him . . . he said he would take responsibility for it. But it's not on him; we're a team (and) we have to find a way to win."

CU converted two of three fourth- down plays in the game, raising its season total to 13-of-26.

## In the running

Linebacker **Jordon Dizon** is one of eight semifinalists for the Lott Trophy, given annually to college football's defensive impact player of the year. Dizon also is a finalist for the Butkus and Bednarik Awards.

## CSU

## The Bummer Bowl

Both teams set to take the field Saturday at Sonny Lubick Field at Hughes Stadium are coming off frustrating, down-to-the-wire losses.

While Colorado State absorbed a 26-23 defeat against New Mexico when the Lobos' **John Sullivan** hit his fourth field goal of the game as time expired, Georgia Southern lost to Furman when the Eagles' **Jesse Hartley** missed a 33-yard field goal on the game's final play.

The Eagles' 24-22 loss made them 7-3 overall and 4-3 in the Division I-AA Southern Conference.

A major key in Georgia Southern's loss was the inability of quarterback **Jayson Foster** to spark the team's running game. Foster came into the game averaging 174 yards a game on the ground but gained only 82 yards on 26 carries against Furman. Georgia Southern, a longtime major player on the Division I-AA national scene, led 15-10 at the half but gave up 14 third-quarter points and scored only a touchdown after halftime.

## Big effort, no reward

CSU coach **Sonny Lubick** praised his players' efforts after the Saturday loss in Albuquerque, and New Mexico coach **Rocky Long** also saluted Lubick and the Rams' overall effort.

"They played their (butts) off and their hearts out, and I don't know how they do it," said Lubick, whose team dropped to 1-9. "I don't know how they just keep coming and coming and coming and take heartbreak after heartbreak. That's hard. Our coaches have done a good job of keeping our guys alive as long as they have."

Long, a longtime admirer of Lubick, had similar sentiments about the Rams' performance.

"I think Colorado State has the best coach in the league," Long said. "I think to keep a team playing as hard as they did (Saturday) is a great job of coaching. There are a lot of teams in the country that, at 1-8, they would have rolled over and died, but those guys came to play."

## Etc.



- Injuries keep mounting for the Rams. Starting offensive tackle **Cole Pemberton** left with an injury to his left leg on CSU's first offensive play of the day against New Mexico. CSU's coaching staff said **Dane Stratton**, a junior and one-time starter from Cheyenne, did an excellent job replacing Pemberton and likely would get the start Saturday if Pemberton can't play. Receiver/returner **Dion Morton** and safety **Jake Galusha** didn't make the trip to Albuquerque because of injuries.
- Defensive backs **Darryl Williams** and **Mike Pagnotta** were slowed some, and both left the game with ongoing leg problems, but they returned to action and should play this week. Senior **Nathan Pauly**, whose career largely has been waylaid by injuries, started in place of **Jake Pottorff** at weak-side linebacker and the two split time.

## Numbers game

**16 losses** in CSU's past 17 games dating back to last season, losing its final seven of 2006 before going 1-9 this season with two games remaining.

## He said it

"That's two years in a row we've been beaten in the last 3 seconds by a field goal from these guys, and I think we were the better team both times."

Caleb Hanie, CSU quarterback, after Saturday's 26-23 loss against New Mexico. CSU also lost at home to the Lobos last year on a last-play field goal.

## Air Force

## Bowl dreamin'

Air Force coach **Troy Calhoun** is starting to feel more comfortable about the possibility of the Falcons earning a bowl bid.

"Each week when you go along and win a game, absolutely it helps," Calhoun said. "I think if you have seven wins in one of the eight best conferences, you should go to a bowl. Just as it should be if you win 17 games in basketball in one of the top 10 conferences, you should at least be in the (National Invitation Tournament)."

Saturday's win over Notre Dame in South Bend on national television should enhance the Falcons' bowl aspirations.

"I think so, that always helps," he said. "Notre Dame has played a pretty good schedule this year. I think everybody they have played thus far is going to a bowl."

The Mountain West Conference has bowl arrangements with the Las Vegas Bowl, which has the first choice, followed by the Poinsettia Bowl in San Diego, the Armed Forces Bowl in Fort Worth and the New Mexico Bowl.

BYU (7-2), Utah (7-3), New Mexico (7-3) and Air Force (8-3) are currently bowl eligible MWC teams. Texas Christian (5-5) needs one win in its final two games against Nevada-Las Vegas and San Diego State to become bowl eligible. Wyoming (5-5) also needs a win in its final two games against Brigham Young and Colorado State to join the list of bowl-eligible teams, but six wins probably won't be good enough this season to attract a bowl bid.

## Etc.

- **Chad Hall** is second in the MWC and 23rd nationally in rushing, averaging 112.20 yards per game. Utah's **Darrell Mack** leads the conference, averaging 112.25 yards per game. Hall is the second leading all-purpose runner in the nation, averaging 203 yards per game.
- Calhoun indicated that guard **Caleb Morris** (strained medial collateral ligament) is doubtful for Saturday's game.

*B.G. Brooks (CU), Randy Holtz (CSU) and Jim Benton (Air Force).*

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