



CU BOWL REPORT

By B.G. Brooks

Monday, December 17, 2007

Doing it his way

Dan Hawkins' approach to bowl practices differs greatly from previous CU coaches. For the past three weeks, he has had the Buffaloes practicing on weekends, then essentially taking Monday through Thursday off (except for conditioning).

"It puts the focus on school during the week, and they get their bodies, their minds and their health back," he said. "We just found it to be a good combination. It's still like a normal week; you really practice hard for three days. You're just moving into when the coaches are back off the road (from recruiting). . . . I just like it that way."

When the Buffs reach Shreveport, La., their practice schedule also will be different. Meetings and practice on the day of their arrival (Dec. 26) are set from 6-9:30 p.m., with Day 2 work at the bowl site in the same time frame.

Hawkins, whose bowl record in five seasons at Boise State was 2-2, said the "different formula we've used has been pretty doggone successful."

After having no position meetings thus far during bowl drills, those will resume Thursday. Hawkins said there was no "relearning" required from the four off days between weekend practices: "Not really; we just kind of leak a little bit of stuff in as we go. . . . I've just found it to be a good combination (of time off and practicing)."

Tide back in

After being off since Nov. 24 but having three weeks of "voluntary" workouts, Alabama returned to the practice field Sunday. The Crimson Tide is scheduled to practice through Saturday, then take a break before reassembling Christmas Day in Shreveport.

Alabama coach **Nick Saban** said this week's work includes developmental "camp-type practices," with a couple of days devoted to strategizing for CU.

Referring to having played in last season's Independence Bowl (a 34-31 loss to Oklahoma State), linebacker **Darren Mustin** told the *Birmingham News*, "Of course, we've been there, done that. But we get another opportunity to play a game. . . . I don't know how excited Shreveport is about us. But we're excited about them."

Take a break

The recruiting calendar called for a dead period to begin today, during which schools are prohibited from having face-to-face or in-person contact with prospects or their parents on or off campus. Telephoning or writing recruits, though, is permitted.

The dead period extends through Jan. 1, with alternating quiet and dead periods through national signing day (Feb. 6). Jan. 13 through Feb. 2 is a contact period, when coaches are allowed to make in-home visits and campus visits are permitted.

Also, the signing period for midyear junior college transfers begins Wednesday. CU has a commitment from Orange Coast (Calif.) College linebacker **Shaun Mohler**, but he will not enroll in January.

CU's only other known junior college commitment is 2007 signee **P.T. Gates**, a running back from Saddleback (Calif.) Community College who initially did not meet CU academic requirements. Touted as last season's top JC running back

prospect, Gates has said he expects to be a January enrollee.

Etc.

* Hawkins said no position changes were made for the bowl, noting those switches occur only after "a lot of dialogue" in the offseason. "I've never been one of those (coaches) who will shove it down a guy's throat," he said. "Both sides have to agree that it's mutually beneficial for them and the team."

* Alabama's biggest question mark because of injury is return specialist **Javier Arenas** (high ankle sprain). He sat out the Iron Bowl loss to Auburn.

Numbers game

9-2-1 **record** for CU in season openers following a bowl victory. After a bowl loss, the Buffs are 6-8-1 in the next season's first game.

He said it

You want to win the first one, you want to win the last one. Anytime you lose that last one, it's a long ways from getting another chance.

© Rocky Mountain News

[Print page](#)[Close window](#)

Longmont, Colorado
Tuesday, December 18,
2007

DAILY TIMES-CALL

Publish Date: 12/17/2007

Youthful vigor

Bufs freshmen key components to team's success

By Justin Williams

Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Eric Kiesau believes the future of University of Colorado football is in his hands.

With a young and talented corps at his disposal, the CU receivers coach realizes the responsibility he holds.

"I'm like a nervous kid in a candy store," Kiesau said. "I like to look into the future and see what we have. I've been around a young group like this before, and if this group can keep up the progress and take care of the little things, it could be a very exciting unit down the road."

Receivers Josh Smith, Kendrick Celestine — both true freshmen — and Scotty McKnight, a redshirt freshman, all contributed a great deal to the Buffs' offense this season. Kiesau also has Markques Simas in his back pocket after the 6-foot-2 freshman redshirted this season.

"Honestly, I feel that we're the future of this program," Smith said. "The coaches are preparing us to be that, and we're learning a lot from the older guys. We feel like we're learning more and more about what Buff football is all about, and we feel like we make each other better every day because we live together."

"We're excited to see how next year is going to go. Especially with Markques coming along. He's a little bit taller, a little bit stronger, so you have to stick on him. But if you want to try and double up on him, that's when me and Kendrick's going to take you deep."

Kiesau, who created a formula of developing young receivers during his coaching stint at California, said talent isn't an issue with this group.

"The big thing I tell them is, 'Stay humble, stay hungry. Everybody knows you're good, so just keep your head on straight, and you'll be fine,'" Kiesau said.

After practice last week, Kiesau pulled his younger players aside and chatted about life outside football.

"It was more like a father-son talk than anything else," Kiesau said. "There wasn't a whole lot of football talk there. I talked to them about doing what it takes to become great, about going to class, going to their tutors and eating right. I was just offering a little guidance, a little direction."

Smith said that nurturing attitude has helped his transition from a high school football player to a college student-athlete.

"It's a little bit different when you're at the college level," said Smith, who is currently experiencing college finals for the first time. "There's a lot more pressure and the finals are mostly do or die."



CU receiver Josh Smith is one of several true freshmen who have been a key part of the Buffs' offense this season. Classmate Kendrick Celestine and Scotty McKnight, a redshirt freshman, have also been key pieces to the receiving puzzle. **Times-Call/Bradley Wakoff**

"A lot of us struggled at the beginning, trying to adjust, but we're finally getting the hang of it at the end. We're all trying to pull through together."

And they're having a little fun doing it. Smith, a California native, hasn't seen very much snow in his lifetime, so he's spent the past couple of weeks getting to familiar with it.

"It's pretty amusing to watch a snowball splatter on somebody's face, especially if you've never really been around it," Smith said. "A lot of us guys, we're trying to make up for 18 years of never seeing snow."

BROWN'S CAREER OVER: R.J. Brown admits the reality of his football playing career being finished hasn't quite set in yet, but the Colorado junior linebacker realizes his future has to be his main concern.

Brown, who suffered a concussion against Florida State and hasn't returned to action since, was recently advised by doctors to refrain from playing contact football ever again.

"Essentially, the doctors guaranteed I'd get another (concussion), and they couldn't tell me if I'd ever recover if I did get another one," Brown said.

Brown, who is near a journalism degree, said he hopes to stay with the team next year in some capacity, but thinking about his future beyond football is what made him ultimately come to this decision. He said it's been hard, but it's not something he wants to dwell on.

"You've got to look at the positives of every situation, or you get dragged down into a world of misery," he said. "You've just got to take joy in going for a run, lifting weights or whatever. I'll definitely miss playing, but we'll see where it goes after this season, whether I can help out the team or not."

FOCUS ON THE YOUTH: As the Buffs prepare for the Independence Bowl against Alabama on Dec. 30, CU head coach Dan Hawkins said practices have definitely been slanted toward developing the younger players.

"It's pretty amazing to see them blossom a little bit," Hawkins said.

Hawkins noted that the first, second and third teams are basically receiving equal reps during practice.

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

colorado football

Bowl against 'Bama special way for Barrett to bow out

By Chris Dempsey
The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 12/16/2007 11:26:14 PM MST

BOULDER — Ask Colorado senior defensive end Alonzo Barrett about what playing the Alabama Crimson Tide means to him, and watch a smile instantly brighten his face.

Barrett, who played high school football in Alabama, has a vested interest in CU's Dec. 30 Independence Bowl game in Shreveport, La., against Alabama — and an immediate need for about 200 tickets.

"It means a lot," Barrett said. "I played against a lot of those guys in high school, and I get a chance to be closer to home and play this game in Shreveport. I have a lot of family coming, and friends. I've got a lot of friends that go to that school. It's icing on the cake for me, to go out playing Alabama."

But that's not all. The weekend is a big one for Barrett's family. His sister is getting married the day before the bowl game, putting

the pressure on him to deliver on the massive ticket request.

"The whole wedding is going to come to the game after," Barrett said. "I doubt that I can get that many, but that's what I'm looking at."

It's also an opportunity to get back to the familiar roots of football fanatics in the South.

"I don't think people can fully understand until they go down there and really see how serious it is," Barrett said. "Alabama-Auburn week, it's like a state divided. Literally. Even the lunch ladies have separate lines. It's crazy down there."

More players available.

There was near full attendance at the Buffs' Sunday morning practice after Saturday's session was lightly attended because numerous players were taking final exams.

"Today was a little better that way," CU coach Dan Hawkins said. "A few more legs."

Practice repetitions are being split evenly among first-, second- and third-teamers, Hawkins said. Position meetings will resume Thursday.

"It's like life: You have to keep a fine balance there," Hawkins said. "You can't go too hard. You can't go too arduous. We don't meet during this time, so you've

Advertisement

TARGET COUPON		EXPIRES 3/3/08	
FREE	Twenty 4x6" basic prints		
<small>Offer available at Target One-hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One-hour service limited to machine capacity. Limit one item or offer per coupon. Offer not available for prints made on the Kodak Picture Kiosk. Void if copied, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. No cash value. Maximum retail value \$4.40 for combined free offer.</small>			9856-0113-2647-5849-0376-5806-89

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

got to take a little pressure off their minds, from game-planning and all those kinds of things, so they can focus on school. It's been the formula that we've used and has been pretty darn successful, both for taking care of guys minds and bodies and schoolwork and keeping them fresh to play."

Footnotes.

Hawkins said he won't consider position changes until after the season. Colorado holds its Independence Bowl media day today.

Chris Dempsey: 303-954-1279 or cdempsey@denverpost.com

Advertisement

TARGET COUPON		EXPIRES 3/3/06	
FREE	Twenty 4x6" basic prints		
<small>Offer available at Target One-hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One-hour service limited to machine capacity. Limit one item or offer per coupon. Offer not available for prints made on the Kodak Picture Kiosk. Void if copied, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. No cash value. Maximum retail value \$4.40 for combined free offer.</small>		9856-0113-2647-5849-0376-5806-89	

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™