



Bufs drop the ball at ASU

CU falters after building a quick 14-0 lead

By Kyle Ringo

Sunday, September 9, 2007

TEMPE, Ariz. — Young football teams can cause coaches and fans to jump for joy when they show flashes of their potential, but a minute later those same supporters might be pulling their hair when inexperience leads to mistakes.

Scalps are likely sore for those with ties to the Colorado football program this morning.

One week after overcoming a double-digit deficit to win, the Buffs fumbled away a double-digit lead to lose a game in which they were double-digit underdogs. It was the first game in CU history to begin at triple-digit temperatures (102 degrees).

Arizona State overcame its sloppy start at Sun Devil Stadium and charged back to a 33-14 victory behind a stout defense and the playmaking of quarterback Rudy Carpenter.

The Sun Devils improved to 2-0 this season once their potent offense awoke and when coach Dennis Erickson ordered it into hurry-up mode in the second quarter. ASU committed five personal-foul penalties in the first half and turned the ball over twice in spotting the Buffs a 14-0 lead.

It was a lead an impotent CU offense was unable to build on with no running game to speak of and a slew of dropped balls in the passing game.

"When the defense is playing really, really well, the offense has to be able to complement that," CU coach Dan Hawkins said. "When you get in that situation, you have to learn to capitalize. When you don't, it becomes almost a reverse momentum.

"...Offensively, we let them off the hook."

The Sun Devils roared back once they regained their composure and denied Hawkins his first road victory as coach at Colorado. The Buffs have lost seven consecutive road games dating back to the 2005 season.

It's the longest road losing streak since the program dropped 10 in a row over the 1980-81 seasons.

The loss was the first in the career of CU starting quarterback Cody Hawkins, who saw his winning streak as a starting quarterback snapped at 60 games. The streak dated back to Pop Warner football.

Hawkins completed just 15 of 42 passes in the game for 155 yards. The Buffs managed just 14 first downs and 39 rushing yards on 27 carries.

CU started the scoring when senior cornerback Terrence Wheatley stepped in front of a Carpenter pass on the third play from scrimmage and returned it 35 yards for a touchdown. Wheatley had spent the week leading up to the game asking to play offense and talking about his desire to have a good game with his former position coach on the other sideline.

Former CU secondary coach Craig Bray is the ASU defensive coordinator and butted heads with some of his players during his days in Boulder, creating hard feelings. Bray had the last laugh Saturday with his defense shutting down the CU running game.

"We had their wallet. We took their money and we gave it back to them with interest," Wheatley said.

Colorado's first offensive possession began on the Arizona State 34-yard line after a punt return from Chase McBride and a personal-foul penalty on the Sun Devils.

Quarterback Cody Hawkins dropped back to pass on the Buffs' first offensive play and threw a strike into the end zone to wide receiver Patrick Williams, who dropped the touchdown pass. The Buffs failed to move the ball on the drive and punted.

Colorado's second offensive possession also ended in a Matt DiLallo punt, but after the ball hit the ground it was kicked by ASU receiver Tyrice Thompson. CU's special teams captain R.J. Brown recovered at the Sun Devils' 17-yard line.

The Buffs settled for a field goal from Kevin Eberhart, but one of five ASU first-half personal-foul penalties gave the Buffs new life at 7-yard line. Three plays later Cody Hawkins connected with wide receiver Scotty McKnight on a 10-yard touchdown pass.

Carpenter led the Sun Devils to their first points in the second quarter by directing a 12-play, 80-yard drive that ended with his 12-yard touchdown pass to Michael Jones.

On the ensuing CU drive, Hawkins dropped back to pass under a blitz and threw to running back Demetrius Sumler, but linebacker Robert James tipped the ball and safety Troy Nolan intercepted it and returned it for a touchdown.

The Sun Devils missed the extra point and still trailed by a point, 14-13.

Hawkins again appeared to have throw a touchdown pass on the next CU drive when he lofted a ball over the defense to Kendrick Celestine, who was open down the middle of the field. The spiral went through Celestine's arms.

Carpenter led ASU down the field in the final 90 seconds of the first half and took the lead with 14 seconds remaining when he threaded a 22-yard touchdown pass to wide receiver Kyle Williams, who was surrounded by four Buffs in the back of the end zone.

Carpenter completed 19 of 37 passes for 269 yards and three touchdowns. ASU running back Ryan Torain ran 17 times for 91 yards and a touchdown. The Sun Devils racked up 407 yards of total offense.

The Sun Devils scored twice more in the second half and the Buffs were unable to move the ball with any consistency.



Wheatley sends a quick message

CU defensive back returns interception for TD on ASU's first series

By Neill Woelk
Sunday, September 9, 2007

TEMPE, Ariz. — Colorado senior defensive back Terrence Wheatley made it clear last week that he wanted to send a little message to his former position coach, Craig Bray.

Special delivery for Mr. Bray?

Bray, now Arizona State's defensive coordinator, watched Saturday night as his former player picked off a Rudy Carpenter pass on the third play of the game and returned it 35 yards for a touchdown, spotting the Buffaloes to a 7-0 lead less than one minute into the contest.

Wheatley made no bones during the week that he wasn't fond of his ex-position coach, who spent two seasons as defensive backs coach at CU under Gary Barnett. The two traded barbs in the newspapers, with Bray saying late in the week, "Who cares?" when asked about CU players' comments.

But it was Wheatley who had the last — or at least the loudest — retort with his second interception in as many games this season. The CU senior read Carpenter perfectly, stepped in front of wide receiver Michael Jones, picked the pass off and raced to the end zone. Wheatley had to dive for the goal-line flag, and it took a review to uphold the ruling on the field, but in the end, it was his second career interception return for a touchdown.

His first came in 2004, off of Vince Young against Texas in Boulder.

It was also Wheatley's second interception in as many defensive series for the Buffaloes. A week ago, in CU's season opener, he ended Colorado State's only overtime possession with an interception of CSU's Caleb Hanie in the end zone. That put CU in position for a 31-28 overtime victory.

Saturday, in CU's first defensive series since the CSU game, Wheatley picked off Carpenter, bringing his career interception total to 11.

Also sending a message to Bray on Saturday was Buff safety Ryan Walters, who likewise let it be known during the week that he wasn't a fan of Bray's. Walters had a big hit on ASU tight end Brent Miller in the first half that resulted in a fumble, which was recovered by Buff linebacker Jeff Smart.

But CU's secondary also had its troubles. After CU jumped out to a 14-0 lead, the Buffs yielded two touchdown drives, both finishing with Carpenter passes. Bray's ASU secondary also played a role in the scoring when Troy Nolan picked off a tipped pass and returned it 26 yards for a touchdown.



Win streak ends for Cody Hawkins

By Kyle Ringo , Neill Woelk
Sunday, September 9, 2007

TEMPE, Ariz. — Colorado redshirt freshman quarterback Cody Hawkins was a little more familiar with losing than his 60-0 mark indicated prior to the Buffs' game at Arizona State on Saturday.

Hawkins redshirted in Boulder last season on a team that endured a painful 2-10 campaign. But Hawkins finally felt the pain of a loss as a starter Saturday for the first time since losing a flag football game in the fifth grade.

The Buffs surrendered a 14-0 lead to the Sun Devils and had trouble all night moving the ball. Hawkins made some solid plays, including throwing solid potential touchdown passes to wide receivers Patrick Williams and Kendrick Celestine that were dropped.

But the Buffs' young signal-caller also made a few weak throws and several poor choices that contributed to the loss, including a second-quarter pass to Demetrius Sumler that was intercepted and returned for a touchdown by ASU safety Troy Nolan.

Hawkins is now 1-1 as a starter at the college level.

Rare absence

Colorado running back Hugh Charles (strained hamstring) missed a game due to injury for only the second time in his career Saturday.

He did not travel with the team.

Charles had played in 38 consecutive contests dating back to the second game of his freshman season in 2004. He did not play in the first game that season.

Charles' streak was the third- longest on the team. Senior linebacker Jordon Dizon and wide receiver Stephone Robinson both played in their 40th consecutive game Saturday. Dizon has played in every game CU has played since he joined the program in 2004, including two bowl games. Robinson has played in every game over the same span, but he redshirted in his first year in 2003.

Traveling well

It's not often that CU has a large number of fans at road games, but Saturday was a rare exception.

Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn said CU sold out its allotment of 5,000 tickets for the game and had to direct hundreds more Buffs fans to ASU outlets to purchase tickets. CU officials estimated between 7,000 and 8,000 CU fans attended the game.

CU also hosted multiple gatherings for alumni around the Phoenix area in the week leading up to the game.

Series to continue

After playing last season for the first time in the history of the programs, CU and Arizona State will resume their series in 2013, when the Sun Devils will visit Boulder again. Colorado will make the return trip to Tempe in 2018.

While Saturday night's game was CU's first against ASU on the Sun Devils' home turf, it was the Buffs' fourth trip to Sun Devil Stadium. Colorado previously played in Tempe in the 1993, 1995 and 2002 Fiesta bowls.

Big hitter

Heading into Saturday's games, Dizon was the nation's third active leading tackler, bringing his career total to 302 after his 22-tackle effort on Sept. 1 against Colorado State.

Dizon trailed only Central Michigan LB Thomas Keith (331) and Virginia Tech LB Vince Hall (317).

Dizon also passed his position coach, Brian Cabral, on CU's all-time list with his effort against CSU. Cabral finished with 297 tackles as a Buff, which was a school record at the time. Since then, Cabral has fallen to 16th on the list — and he's coached eight of the players who have passed him, including Dizon.

Cabral, by the way, is in his 18th season as an assistant coach at CU, tying him for the most all-time in years coached as a full-time member of CU's staff. Others who coached for 18 years are Frank Potts and Frank Prentup.

Buffalo roundup

The Buffs will try something new for their home debut next week against Florida State. Instead of unloading from buses at the Dal Ward Center, the team will be dropped off in front of Libby Hall, just off Colorado Avenue, about 2 hours and 20 minutes prior to kickoff.

The team will then walk to the stadium through the plaza area outside Folsom Field, stopping to touch the bronze buffalo in the courtyard while accompanied by the CU pep band. The players will then enter the stadium through Gate 1 and proceed to the locker rooms. This doesn't mean, however, that the traditional entrance with Ralphie will change. The team will still run onto the field behind CU's mascot prior to kickoff.

Notable

Tailback Kevin Moyd switched jersey numbers before Saturday's game. He had been wearing No. 23, but switched to No. 22 because he plays on several special teams unit with cornerback Jalil Brown, who also wears No. 23. ... CU officials said about 3,000 tickets remain for the home opener next week against Florida State. ... The CU band performed at halftime.





Woelk: CU still just a young team with potential

By Neill Woelk

Sunday, September 9, 2007

TEMPE, Ariz. — This morning is no time for the Colorado Buffaloes to console themselves with what might have been.

The temptation today will be for the Buffs and their fans to tell themselves that with a couple of catches here and there, the Buffaloes still could have escaped the desert with a victory over Arizona State on Saturday.

But the fact is, the Buffaloes were plenty lucky as it was — and they were still dominated by the Sun Devils, even after grabbing a quick 14-0 lead. Once the Sun Devils survived CU's early strikes, ASU simply played better than Colorado in virtually every area of the game. The Sun Devils' offense first controlled the line of the scrimmage and then the passing lanes, their defense turned Colorado into a one-dimensional attack, and their special teams made CU's bunch look quite pedestrian.

In other words, the Sun Devils exposed the Buffs for what they are: a young team with potential — and one that still needs to fully grasp the importance of taking advantage of opportunities when they are presented.

Yes, the Buffs could have had a 21-0 lead early — but they missed the chance. They could have been up by as much as 28-19 at the half — but they weren't. Spend all day figuring out the possibilities if you'd like, but it won't change the numbers on the scoreboard.

In case you missed it, they weren't pretty. Arizona State 33, Colorado 14.

Now the Buffs need to figure out how to turn those possibilities into results. It would be nice if they did it before Florida State rolls into Boulder next Saturday.

Start with the running game. Even after CU jumped out to a two-touchdown lead Saturday, the Buffs were never able to establish any kind of consistent rushing attack. After one quarter, they had zero yards rushing on seven attempts. By halftime, that number had ballooned to a robust 2 yards rushing on 14 attempts.

The guess here is that the return of Hugh Charles will provide a lift to the running game, but it will take more than the return of Charles. The Buffs never gave the indication that they were ready to fully commit to running the ball against the Sun Devils. Once ASU figured that out, they did exactly the opposite of what teams did to Colorado a year ago: They stacked their chips against the pass and dared the Buffs to run.

The Buffs couldn't call the bluff.

Neither did young quarterback Cody Hawkins have a stellar evening. In the process of suffering his first

loss since playing tiny tyke football — a stretch of 61 games — Hawkins hurried some throws, made bad decisions on others and was simply harassed into throwing the ball away too many times. No doubt, an improved running game will help Hawkins, particularly because CU runs so much play-action, and it certainly wouldn't hurt if CU's receivers start catching all the balls that hit them in the hands.

But Li'l Hawk will also be the first to tell you he has plenty of room to improve on Saturday's performance.

Defensively, the Buffs' worst fears came true: When CU's offense couldn't move, it meant the defense was on the field for far too long. CU's weariness began to show late in the second quarter, when ASU quarterback Rudy Carpenter shook off his early mistakes and guided the Devils on a nine-play, 86-yard scoring drive. When the Sun Devils then scored on their opening possession of the third quarter, the Buffs were spent, physically and emotionally.

And unlike the season opener, there would be no comeback in the heat of the desert. The Sun Devils grew stronger as the game progressed; the Buffs simply grew tired.

Now it's back to the drawing board. The Buffs had an opportunity for a head-turning moment Saturday night, the kind that would have signaled that Dan Hawkins was correct a week ago when he told an Invesco Field crowd that "the Buffs are back."

Instead, the jury's still out. The Buffs still need that signature win, that moment that convinces college football followers across the nation that CU's program is progressing steadily in the right direction.

The first impression will be that Saturday night's effort constituted a big step back. Not so. The Buffs were 15-point underdogs, and played within that range.

Rather, it proved to be an opportunity missed — far worse than merely a step back. In a season when upsets are becoming the norm, CU had the chance to put its name on the list of teams that are proving that parity is coming to college football. Those are the kinds of opportunities that can't be wasted.

Now, the Buffs are just another young team that temporarily threw a scare into an opponent before succumbing to the inevitable.

With 10 games remaining, the Buffs will have plenty more opportunities to prove they are a team with which to be reckoned.

But until the Buffs can take advantage of opportunities such as the one presented Saturday night, they'll remain just another young team that comes close — and that's a group they don't want to be a part of all season.



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arizona state 33, colorado 14

Buff break down in desert

CU's early lead evaporates against Sun Devils

By Tom Kensler
Denver Post Staff Writer

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Tempe, Ariz. — Colorado jumped out to an early two-touchdown lead but wilted in the desert heat Saturday night, losing 33-14 to Arizona State at Sun Devil Stadium.

CU cornerback Terrence Wheatley, who got the Buffaloes on the board 54 seconds into the game with an interception return for a touchdown, said the entire team "lost its composure" after the Buffaloes failed to capitalize on opportunities.

Colorado managed only seven offensive points — a touchdown pass from Cody Hawkins to Scotty McKnight and extra point — despite moving into ASU territory six times before halftime.

"The whole team got frustrated," Wheatley said, pointing to numerous missed assignments and mental breakdowns. "We had (ASU) where we wanted. When you're up 14-0, you have to knock them out."

McKnight's touchdown put the Buffaloes (1-1) up by two scores with 6:21 remaining in the first quarter.

But Arizona State (2-0) came back with 19 points late in the second quarter.

Colorado Football

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CU wideouts Patrick Williams and Kendrick Celestine both dropped passes that would have gone for first-half touchdowns. Hawkins, a redshirt freshman, finished 15-for-42 passing for 155 yards and a touchdown. He was intercepted once.

On the other side, ASU junior quarterback Rudy Carpenter hit 19-for-37 for 269 and three touchdowns. Carpenter also threw one interception.

Colorado's running game netted just 39 yards on 27 carries.

"In the first half, our offense got going," said CU running back Demetrius Sumler, who netted 34 yards on 16 tries. "But our running game never did."

The Sun Devils remained unbeaten in their first year under coach Dennis Erickson.

"It's tough when the defense is playing really well the offense has to complement that," CU coach Dan Hawkins said. "Good teams have to capitalize (on opportunities). When you don't, it's almost a reverse momentum."

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A 15-point favorite, ASU finally got on the board when Carpenter found Michael Jones for a 12-yard touchdown pass with 4:11 remaining before halftime.

On CU's ensuing possession, Sun Devils strong safety Troy Nolan intercepted a Cody Hawkins pass and returned it 26 yards for a touchdown. Nolan grabbed the ball after it was deflected by ASU linebacker Robert James, who had shadowed Sumler, the intended receiver. The extra point kick missed, however.

Colorado's 14-13 lead didn't last long. After a CU punt, Arizona State needed only 1:11 to drive 86 yards on nine plays for the go-ahead score — a 22-yard touchdown pass from Carpenter to Kyle Williams just 14 seconds before halftime.

"Arizona State is a good team," Dan Hawkins said. "(But) we had a hard time running the football. That's a credit to their defense."

Failing to get much of a breather in the second quarter, CU defenders appeared to wear down in the scorching temperatures. Although the sun had set almost an hour earlier, the temperature at kickoff was announced as 102 degrees.

According to the Colorado sports information office, that is believed to be the hottest temperature for an opening kickoff in CU history, bettering the 99-degree reading in a 2002 game at UCLA.

To conserve energy, Colorado players came out in pre-game warmups without their shoulder pads. That might have helped some, but the Buffs lack depth at most positions and couldn't substitute as often as

Arizona State.

Even so, Colorado had a chance to build a sizeable lead in the first half.

CU took a 7-0 lead when Wheatley intercepted Carpenter's first pass attempt and returned it 35 yards.

The Buffs regained possession deep in ASU territory, compliments of a silly mistake by the hosts. While trying to block, ASU's Tyrice Thompson turned his back on a bouncing punt and unintentionally kicked it. Colorado's R.J. Brown recovered, giving the Buffs first-and-10 at the 17.

Colorado senior Kevin Eberhart booted a would-be 32 yard field goal, but ASU's Morris Wooten was called for a leaping violation. As is his nature, Dan Hawkins gambled. He took the 3 points off the board, allowing the officials to spot the ball first-and-goal at the 7. On third down, and after a false start penalty, Cody Hawkins found McKnight for a touchdown. McKnight, a walk-on from southern California, beat cornerback Chris Baloney to the left corner.

But that would do it for CU's scoring in the first half, and Arizona State was just getting started.

The Sun Devils overcame 136 yards in penalties.

"I thought we played very sloppy," Erickson said.

Colorado managed just 219 yards in total offense in last year's 21-3 loss to the Sun Devils in Boulder and the Buffs had trouble moving the ball again this time.

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CU finished the first half with just 80 yards in total offense - including a net of 2 yards on 14 rushes.

"Obviously, defensively we played very well," Erickson said.

Carpenter, who threw for 248 yards and two touchdowns against CU in the 2006 meeting, already had 176 yards passing by halftime.

CU played without tailback Hugh Charles, a fleet senior who was a bright spot for CU in last year's loss to Arizona State when he rushed 20 times for 109 yards. Charles, who did not make the trip to Tempe, strained a hamstring in the first series against Colorado State and hopes to return for Saturday's home game against Florida State (1-1).

CU: THE GRADES | By Tom Kensler

Offense - F

It was a tough night. Colorado wideouts rarely gained separation on ASU cornerbacks and the Buffs dropped several passes when they did get open. The running game was almost nonexistent.

Defense - C

Buffs looked stout until late in the second quarter and played valiantly throughout. But there isn't enough depth to rotate in fresh players.

Special teams - C

Matt DiLallo placed several punts inside the 20-yard line. And Terrence Wheatley found decent running

room on kick returns. But unlike in the win over Colorado State, there weren't many chances for the special-team units to become a factor.

Overall - D

This game showed how far Colorado has to go to become a national story. The Buffs had an opportunity to build a big lead in the first half and quiet the crowd but didn't take advantage after gaining excellent field position.

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john henderson

Buffaloes' lack of speed a big problem

By John Henderson
Denver Post Staff Writer

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Tempe, Ariz. — When last I left the Colorado Buffaloes in the mid-1990s, NFL draft day was a big day on the calendar in Boulder. NFL scouts circled Folsom Field during practices in November. Colorado running backs and receivers and safeties and cornerbacks fought off agents their last two years in school.

I've been gone awhile, covering sports near and far. So now that I'm back following the Buffaloes more, I have a fresh perspective on the state of this program. One flaw has surfaced so obvious it might as well be in a bright black and gold package if it wasn't so ugly.

Holy Galapagos tortoise, these Buffaloes are slow.

It has been painfully obvious in recent years. But in the hottest game in Colorado history, Saturday night in the Arizona desert, the only thing truly hot for the Buffaloes in their 33-14 loss to Arizona State was the 102-degree temperature. Colorado's lack of offensive speed was exposed like a severe acne.

Against a plodding Colorado State team last weekend, Colorado's offense looked affective and athletic. With a smart, cagey quarterback in freshman Cody Hawkins, CU's offense looked ready to launch into a new era.

But the Buffaloes came to the desert to face an Arizona State team that has tread water in the Pacific 10, but not because of a lack of speed. You have to be fast to jump from air-conditioner to the pool back to AC around here. The Buffaloes, meanwhile, look as if they're slogging through a 3-foot-high snowdrift in January.

Hawkins was 15-for-42, primarily because of receivers who needed military help to get open. On four consecutive pass attempts in the first quarter against mediocre cornerbacks, primary receiver Patrick Williams couldn't get open, Hawkins threw one away with everyone covered, Cody Crawford was covered like a winter comforter and on third-and-8, cornerback Justin Tryon easily broke up a pass.

The running game was a myth. Eighteen times Colorado tailbacks took handoffs — and totaled 34 yards. They couldn't find the corner with MapQuest.

A big problem is Colorado missed three of its fastest players. Receiver Josh Smith is still out because of a kidney injury he suffered in camp, receiver Bernard Jackson remains out with academic issues and starting tailback Hugh Charles didn't play because of a bad hamstring.

A bigger problem is Colorado's depth is abysmal. When the Buffaloes' receivers did get separation,

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their hands were basically attached merely to pick themselves off the ground. Williams, who through camp and the overtime win over CSU looked like the most improved player on the team, morphed back to 2005. He dropped four passes, including an easy, wide-open 34-yard touchdown pass on Colorado's first play from scrimmage.

Not that he was alone. With Arizona State seizing momentum and down only 14-13, Kendrick Celestine dropped a 45-yard TD pass that may have returned the momentum.

"Dropped balls frustrate me, but I threw a lot of bad balls, too," Hawkins said. "I'm sure that frustrates the receivers and the O-line."

It's become painfully clear that CU coach Dan Hawkins, in his second year, is paying a steep price for the recruiting restrictions CU's administration placed on the program in 2004-05. The recruiting classes of then-coach Gary Barnett never made a blip on any recruiting geek's well-worn laptop. Then again, how can you convince an All-America wide receiver to sign with your school when the recruiting visit is just long enough to see a locker room, shake a few hands and touch a national championship trophy that is farther away from Boulder today than any of those recruits ever traveled?

Considering the lawsuit of the alleged rape case that launched the restrictions is going to appellate court, it's a painful reminder of how one scandal, true or not, can poleax a program for years. Hawkins is developing a foundation. Despite his bad numbers Saturday, his son has a future. Ron Collins' defense has, even at times Saturday, held up its end,

particularly with its one true senior NFL prospect, cornerback Terrence Wheatley.

But every Friday when Dan Hawkins' assistant coaches hit the recruiting trail, they had better carry a stopwatch and a good recruiting pitch. This program can wait for Charles, Jackson and Smith this year, but the Buffs can't wait any longer to add speed for future years.

NFL scouts have lost their number.

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Buff's succumb to Devils

CU's early 14-0 lead evaporates in desert heat

*By Patrick Ridgell
The Daily Times-Call*

TEMPE, Ariz. – The temperature when Colorado and Arizona State kicked off Saturday night in the desert was 102 steamy degrees, making it the hottest weather in which the Buffaloes had ever started a football game.

Otherwise, the hosts were most hospitable. It became clear early that if the Buffs were going to upset 15-point favorite ASU, they'd have to pounce on the Sun Devils' frequent and glaring errors in the game's early going.

Unfortunately for CU, it could not. Once the Sun Devils stopped bumbling around, its defense, coordinated by former CU secondary coach Craig Bray, overwhelmed the Buffs. And given time to click, ASU's offense had little problem running circles around the Buffs to turn this into a mismatch.

ASU defeated CU, 33-14, before 58,417 at Sun Devil Stadium. CU is 1-1 with Florida State heading to Boulder on Saturday for the Buffs' home opener (8 p.m., ESPN).



Colorado linebacker Jeff Smart, bottom, forces a fumble by Arizona State tailback Keegan Herring in front of Colorado safety Daniel Dykes, left, during the second quarter of a football game Saturday, Sept. 8, 2007, in Tempe, Ariz. **AP/Rick Scuteri**

The Buffs left Tempe saying they failed to capitalize on ASU's mistakes. They were correct. "Good teams have to learn to capitalize," CU coach Dan Hawkins said.

"What happens is when you don't, it almost becomes a reverse momentum thing. When you have opportunities on offense to score some touchdowns and increase the lead and you don't, it becomes a sigh of relief for the other side and they gain a little bit of momentum. Rather than it being 28-0, it was 14-0. You have to give them credit for hanging in there."

Said cornerback Terrence Wheatley: "As a team we got frustrated because we had them where we wanted them, 14-0, a few plays on offense didn't go our way. Even on defense, if you don't play offense, you still get frustrated and kind of lose your composure as a team, which you can't do. We had a chance to be up 28-0. If you have them down, you have to knock them out. And we didn't do it."

The loss marked the first suffered by CU's Cody Hawkins as a starting quarterback since sixth grade Pop Warner. It was a streak of 60 straight wins. CU also dropped its seventh straight road game. This is the program's longest road losing streak since one that went 10 games over the 1980 and 1981 seasons.

Wheatley intercepted a pass and returned it for a touchdown 54 seconds into the first quarter. The Buffs led 14-0 when Hawkins hit Scotty McKnight in the corner of the end zone with 6:21 to go in the first on a drive that ASU helped along with a bad turnover and penalties.

The game's turning point came in the second quarter, after CU converted two ASU turnovers into touchdowns, one coming on Wheatley's 35-yard interception return for a score.

Trailing 14-0 with 9 minutes, 4 seconds left in the second quarter, ASU started using a no-huddle offense and plowed

through the Buffs. Two ASU touchdown drives sandwiched around Troy Nolan's 26-yard interception return for a touchdown gave the Sun Devils a 19-14 lead at halftime.

Hawkins said the no-huddle didn't affect CU. "It was just a matter of not making a couple of plays," he said. "It's tough when you have one side of the ball, particularly defense, playing really well, and then the offense has to complement that and answer."

The Sun Devils sustained their momentum into the third quarter. After forcing CU to punt on its first possession, they took over at the 46 and needed only four plays to score. Ryan Torain's 7-yard touchdown run made it 26-14, after the extra point.

CU tried a fake punt from its 34 late in the third quarter, but Matt DiLallo's pass missed a wide open Daniel Dykes. Five plays later, ASU's Michael Jones caught a 20-yard touchdown pass, making it 33-14.

Despite an ugly first half during which it committed seven penalties for 81 yards, lost three turnovers and gave CU ample opportunities to open a large lead, ASU outgained the Buffs 241 to 80 before halftime. ASU totaled 146 of those yards on its final two drives of the first half.

Buffs linebacker Jordon Dizon left the game during the first of those drives and later went to the locker room for an I.V. after multiple muscle cramps. Dizon did not come out with the captains prior to the third quarter, but did return. He recorded a sack in the fourth quarter.

CU finished with 204 total yards, about half of ASU's 407. ASU maintained possession for 33:51 and took better care of the ball after the first quarter.

"I thought that we played very sloppy," ASU coach Dennis Erickson said. "Obviously, defensively, we played real well. Offensively, we struggled running the football, and we ended up making some plays in the passing game." For CU, what it needs to do to win is pretty clear.

"We need to learn to put people away," Wheatley said.

Said Cody Hawkins: "We have to keep getting better, and losing hurts, but starting (today) we have Arizona State in our back pocket regardless of whether we won or lost. We're getting ready for Florida State starting right now."

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Arizona fans show no respect

TEMPE, Ariz. – As Colorado quarterback Cody Hawkins trudged off the field Saturday night, Arizona State fans showered him with chants of "60 and 1!"

It was clear they were heckling the redshirt freshman, but they were also showing some unintended respect for a young man who hadn't previously tasted defeat as a starting quarterback. And that record has become the stuff of legend.

Hawkins and CU lost, 33-14, to ASU. Hawkins' streak of winning every game in which he's been the starting quarterback since sixth grade Pop Warner ended. That makes him 60-1. And Hawkins had some interesting perspective on the matter. "It's 60-1, but I've lost before," he said. "In basketball (in high school), we were OK. In baseball we weren't that good, and my brother always beats me in pool.

"But it is a bummer every time you lose, and we're definitely crushed because our defense put us in some great situations, and we didn't really return the favor."

CU's defense gave the Buffs outstanding field position several times in the first half, and Terrence Wheatley's interception return for a touchdown sparked the Buffs to a 14-0 lead.

But offensively, CU struggled, mustering only 15 first downs and 207 yards. Four times in the first half the Buffs took over near midfield and came away with scoreless drives.

Hawkins finished 15-for-42 for 155 yards, with one touchdown and an interception ASU returned for a score.

CU's receivers dropped several passes, including four by Patrick Williams.

"Dropped passes frustrated me, but I threw a lot of bad balls, too. I'm sure that frustrates the receivers and the offensive line, but it's everybody's game and we all had an equal part in every play. There were a lot of times when we might have had a dropped ball, but I wasn't doing my assignment either.

"I have to take lot of blame for that. I have to do a better job of leadership and showing confidence in my guys. We're going to come out next week and play our butts off." Head coach Dan Hawkins didn't have to much to say when asked to critique his son's work. "He made a couple of good throws and they got dropped," the coach said.

Afterward, all the Buffs could do was look ahead.

"I expect Cody to bounce back, our offense to bounce back, our coaches to bounce back," Williams said. "One thing about this team is we're tough and resilient and we're not going to stay down for long."

Said Cody: "It's quite upsetting, but we have a lot of great guys on this team and I wouldn't want to play for anybody else in the country. So we're going to get back to work tomorrow morning and correct our mistakes we made and keep improving."

-Patrick Ridgell