



CU's Devenny ready for first college start

By B.G. Brooks

Tuesday, August 26, 2008

It's understandable if Patrick Devenny appears conflicted.

His work at tight end has been diligent, often exemplary, since transferring from quarterback and adding 15 pounds, then shifting back to quarterback, during his redshirt freshman season (2006) at the University of Colorado.

Now back at tight end and prepared to make it a permanent address, he's poised to start Sunday in the Rocky Mountain Showdown against Colorado State (Invesco Field at Mile High, 5:30 p.m., FSN).

But the emotions he is feeling are poles apart. In the absence of returning starter Riar Geer, Devenny enjoyed a productive spring. He called the prospect of making his first college start "definitely exciting," but never for a moment did he believe that Geer, suspended from spring work for an off-field incident, wouldn't return.

"The way I approached it was that Riar was going to be here, no matter what," Devenny said Tuesday. "That was the biggest thing I had to battle with during (spring) practice - no matter how good I did, I knew Riar could do better. He's proved it.

"So, I planned on the first day of fall camp, Riar's going to be there like he was. And I wanted him to play because Riar's a huge help. He knows what he's doing, knows his blocking. I really wanted him there."

With his legal difficulties in resolution, Geer was set to play - until a knee injury last week called for arthroscopic surgery. He's out until at least the West Virginia game (Sept. 18), leaving Devenny, a 6-foot-3, 240-pound junior, and freshman Ryan Deehan (6-5, 240) as the first two tight ends position coach Kent Riddle likely will use when that set is called for against CSU.

Devenny, whose first (and only) career reception came last season against Miami (Ohio) and yielded a 3-yard touchdown, conceded the mind-sets required to play quarterback and tight end don't have much in common.

"I try to go about it the same - just be relaxed and have fun," he said. "But a lot of times, if you go with that mentality into blocking, you kind of find yourself laying on the ground. So for me, there's got to be a quick transition from being relaxed and focused for passing plays and then the aggressive side for running plays. With our offense, you need an on/off switch. . . ."

How difficult is it to find?

"Sometimes pretty difficult," Devenny said, smiling and adding that Geer, a close friend who also was in CU's 2005 recruiting class, has been helpful with blocking's finer and rougher points.

Depending on sets and the personnel grouping required, CU also can use fullbacks Maurice Cantrell and Jake Behrens

as tight ends/H-backs. Cantrell can be a devastating blocker, a trait Deehan is working to acquire.

"I think I'm doing better," he said. "Coach has really been helping me with my pad level, making sure I stay down. That's probably the biggest key; if you're not low enough, you're going to get your butt kicked."

That's something neither he nor Devenny want to experience, and Riddle doesn't expect it. Both players have practiced well, Riddle said, calling Deehan "mature physically and emotionally" for a first-year player.

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CU report: Grimes taking his time

By B.G. Brooks

Tuesday, August 26, 2008

BOULDER — So the season opener is five days away. What's the hurry?

Jeff Grimes, Colorado's running game coordinator/offensive line coach, isn't rushing to name a pair of starting guards for Sunday's Rocky Mountain Showdown against Colorado State.

In fact, in no way does Grimes feel like he's on the clock.

"I could leave it open until the day before the game," he said Tuesday. "Going in, I know three or four guys will play, no matter who starts."

The players competing for the two spots are junior **Devin Head** and redshirt freshman **Shawn Daniels** (right) and redshirt freshman **Blake Behrens** and freshman **Max Tuioti-Mariner** (left).

Grimes said he wasn't concerned about waiting to name a starting pair: "They've all gotten better. The competition has been good."

One more question mark

As if preparing for CSU, featuring a new coaching staff and new starting quarterback, didn't pose enough questions, another was added to CU's list Monday when Rams kicker/punter **Jason Smith** suffered a broken right arm.

Subbing for Smith on field goals and kickoffs will be **Ben DeLine**, a freshman from Steamboat Springs, while junior college transfer **Anthony Hartz** from Santa Barbara (Calif.) College, will punt.

CU special teams coach **Kent Riddle** knows very little about either player. The Buffs have emphasized blocking more kicks/punts this season, as well as getting more out of their return games.

"You don't know if their new guy (DeLine) kicks deep or if the ball goes to the 10-yard line," Riddle said. "It'll kind of be guess as you go."

But the Buffs special-teams goals won't change. While being cognizant of fakes, Riddle wants enough pressure on placement kicks and punts to prevent the Rams from "finding a comfort zone. Our guys know that, no matter who's back there."

Etc.

* Senior quarterback **Nick Nelson** (torn abdominal muscle) said he would try to return to light work during Tuesday's practice. But he remains out this week and probably next.

* Redshirt freshman guard **Mike Iltis** (torn knee ligament) said he is scheduled for surgery on Friday. He is out for the season.

* A handful of walk-ons won't begin practicing until after the CSU game.

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TIMES-CALL

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Guards still battling at CU

*By Patrick Ridgell
Longmont Times-Call*

BOULDER — Jeff Grimes comes across as a straight-forward, no-nonsense, up-front kind of guy. Most of the time.

Tuesday, the offensive line coach at Colorado was asked several questions about who's going to start at the guard spots Sunday when the Buffs open 2008 against Colorado State (Invesco Field, 5:30 p.m., FSN). Grimes wouldn't say.

It wasn't like he was trying to evade anything. It's just that four days before the season begins, Grimes has four guys in the mix for two starting spots, and no idea who they'll be.

"We have not set anything yet, and I kind of want to leave it that way for a little awhile," Grimes said.

When will he decide?

"It'd be before the game," Grimes said. "I can leave it open until the day before. I've done that before. If they're that close, I don't mind them feeling the pressure that they have to compete that long."

If two are doing exceptionally well, will they stay in the game? "It depends more on what they show me this week in practice."

Should all four expect to play? "Not necessarily."

Grimes said the only decisions he has made is to move redshirt freshman Matt Bahr and freshman Bryce Givens back to tackle. They competed at guard in camp, but with a game looming, they're working where the Buffs will most likely need them Sunday, Grimes said.

Grimes said Bahr will be the first tackle off the bench to relieve, if necessary, starters Nate Solder or Ryan Miller.

Givens said he believes he's one of several true freshman whom coaches are preparing to play in 2008, just in case, but hoping they can redshirt.

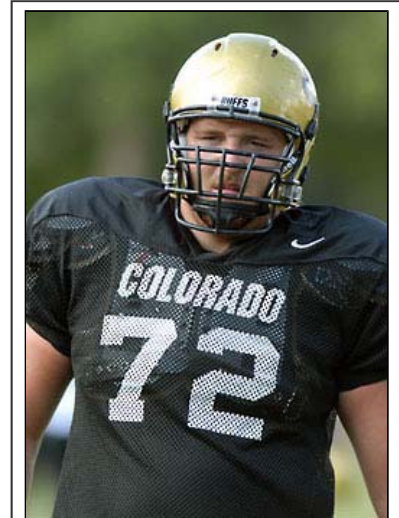
CU lists its starting left guards as junior Devin Head or redshirt freshman Shawn Daniels. On the right side, its redshirt freshman Blake Behrens or freshman Max Tuioti-Mariner. Grimes continues to wait for the right choices to emerge. He doesn't mind waiting.

"I'm not concerned about it because all of those guys have gotten better," Grimes said.

"I'm sure it's a source of anxiety for these four guys who are competing. But that's OK."

The players also say not knowing is not a source of anxiety.

"Not too much," Daniels said. "Whoever he chooses to put in, it's going to be the best for the team, and that's the main goal — to win."



Colorado offensive guard Devin Head is in the running for a starting job. The Buffs have yet to name their starting guards for Sunday's opener against Colorado State.

Lewis Geyer/Times-Call

Said Tuioti-Mariner: "All of us are really good. We're just trying to represent this college. I feel really good. I just have to get the plays down."

Miller said the uncertainty places more responsibility on him, Solder and center Daniel Sanders.

"I think it means we have to be more leaders and know what we're doing even more so," Miller said. "If coach doesn't feel confidence in our guard positions, then he has to have confidence in us three now."

Grimes didn't say he lacks confidence. He just doesn't know yet in whom he has the most.

"They're all trying to get ready to play, whether all four will, we'll find out," Grimes said.

EXTRA POINTS Asked if he prefers to play CSU in Denver or on campus, Hawkins said: "I'm good either way. I really am. I'm not trying to sit on the fence. I see the positives of being down there. I think going to Denver is a good thing for Denver and a good thing for the state. Having the kids play in Invesco is a fun thing. ... I think there are positives to playing on campus and having that home-field advantage and that collegiate environment." ... Hawkins said he thinks his team is fine, not too tense, as the game nears. He said CU's game plan is being refined. "The thing I think you try to avoid is to put too much in at this point," he said. ... CU will add a few walk-ons next week.

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sports

Geer's knee surgery gives Devenny a big role at tight end

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BOULDER — One player's misfortune opens an opportunity for another. That's the nature of football, in which injuries can strike at any time.

Out goes Colorado junior tight end Riar Geer, who is expected to be sidelined until at least the third game after undergoing arthroscopic knee surgery. Moving into his spot as the expected starter Sunday against Colorado State is junior Patrick Devenny, a 6-foot-3, 240- pounder with only one career reception.

"That's why you come here, you want to play," said Devenny, who was originally recruited by then CU coach Gary Barnett as a quarterback.

Tight ends coach Kent Riddle said a true freshman, Ryan Deehan (6-5, 245), will play against the Rams.

"We expect Ryan will do a good job and we'll try to manufacture that," Riddle said Tuesday. "We'll put him in positions . . . where he won't be thinking too much."

Colorado Football

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Deehan, from Poway, Calif., near San Diego, was among CU's highest- rated signees last February, a four- star recruit who picked the Buffaloes over Oregon and Arizona State. Physically imposing, Deehan has shown soft hands in practices and the ability to get downfield.

"I'm excited," Deehan said. "The speed of the (college) game kind of threw me off at first, but I was fine after that."

Riddle said another true freshman, Ryan Wallace (6-5, 230) from Bowling Green, Ky., will be redshirted.

"He does a great job with the mental aspect of the game, but he just needs a year in the weight room," Riddle said.

Footnotes.

Four guards — junior Devin Head, redshirt freshmen Shawn Daniels and Blake Behrens and true

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freshman Max Tuioti-Mariner — continue to battle for two starting jobs. "I want to leave it that way for a while," CU offensive line coach Jeff Grimes said Tuesday. . . . The fact that CSU will be forced to use a new place-kicker and new punter will not change CU's strategy Sunday, Riddle said. "We try to pressure (kickers) anyway," he said.

Tom Kensler, The Denver Post

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college football

CU won't make CSU frosh a target

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

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BOULDER — The fact that Colorado State will be forced to use a new placekicker and new punter in Sunday night's opener will not affect how Colorado plays across the line of scrimmage, CU special teams coach Kent Riddle said Tuesday.

"We try to pressure (kickers) anyway," Riddle said. "That doesn't change. We just want to be sound in what we do."

CSU senior Jason Smith, who handles the kicking and punting duties, suffered an arm fracture on Saturday in practice. That leaves placements to Ben DeLine, a true freshman from Steamboat Springs, and punting chores to Anthony Hartz, a junior-college transfer.

"It's easy to say, 'Hey, we'll just sell out and go get the punter,'" Riddle said. "But then they rip a fake up for 30 yards. That does you no good."

DeLine has excellent bloodlines. His father, Steve, was CSU's kicker from 1984-86 and ranks fifth on the school's all-time scoring list (212 points). His uncle, Dave, was CU's kicker for three seasons: 1984, 1986 and 1987.

Although CSU coaches are sure to be nervous about sending out new kickers, there is an element of the unknown that works against CU, Riddle said.

"Their field goals, we can't control that," Riddle said. "The harder thing for us is just where to play our guys on kickoffs. You don't want to be standing up there at the 5 yard line and (DeLine) is kicking it to the back of the end zone. And you don't want to be standing in the end zone and the ball is coming down at the 15, where you're scrambling to get to it."

Regarding DeLine, Riddle intends to consult CU senior safety Joel Adams, a Steamboat Springs native.

"Joel knows a little bit about him," Riddle said. "But how much that will carry over, I don't know."

CU also has a new place-kicker. But sophomore Aric Goodman has experience as a 2006 starter at Wyoming. After moving to Boulder, Goodman sat out the necessary transfer year in 2007 but was able to practice with the Buffaloes.

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CU vs. CSU

Future of CU-CSU series at stake

By Chris Dempsey
The Denver Post

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FORT COLLINS — Most of the freshmen set to play Sunday in the Colorado-Colorado State game at Invesco Field at Mile High were only 9 years old when Colorado State put a stamp on a renewed rivalry in a 41-14 hammering of the Buffaloes in 1999.

Now it will be some of those new players — particularly those from Colorado State — who may carry the burden of needing to win to positively affect how this rivalry is perceived in the future, or if it's even played at all.

"It's big for the state, it's big for CU, it's big for us," first-year Colorado State coach Steve Fairchild said. "We should play in Denver every year. The whole state knows that, and hopefully that will happen."

But it may not, and aside from the issues of six true home games and game-day revenue, wins could start to play a big role. Colorado State snatched three of four games from Colorado from 1999-2002, injecting energy into a lackluster rivalry.

Colorado State Football

- [Watch](#) video of CSU tight end Kory Sperry
- [Watch](#) video of CSU football scrimmage and interview with coach Steve Fairchild
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Now, Colorado has won four of the last five. A win Sunday would give CU its best run against the Rams since winning eight in a row from 1987-98.

But Colorado State has kept it close. And that, say players on both sides, is all that matters in keeping the flames of this series burning bright.

"It's year to year," Colorado senior defensive tackle George Hypolite said. "As long as they keep having great players and we keep having great players, it's always going to be a rivalry. People get fired up about this game. I think this rivalry is a lot bigger than wins and losses."

Said Colorado State running back Kyle Bell: "Regardless of who wins, I think the rivalry is the same. Whether one team is winning it or it's even, that shouldn't determine what makes a rivalry game or if that's grounds for if it should be renewed or not. I just think you have the last four or five years, games that are hard-fought, coming down to the wire between two good teams."

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None of the last five games in the series was decided by more than a touchdown. Four of the games were decided by four points or fewer, with field goals the margin

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of victory in 2004, 2005 and 2007.

"I think close games are plenty enough (to keep the rivalry strong)," CU safety Ryan Walters said. "The games we have won could have swung either way. A few plays here and there. Luckily, we were fortunate to come out on top. It's always close, and anytime it's close, you're going to be biting your nails at the end of games, and that's what makes a good rivalry."

Invesco Field has provided a supercharged, pro backdrop for the CU-CSU game, though its continuation there in the near future is tenuous at best. Any talk of terminating the series doesn't sit well with players, unless blowouts become the norm, CSU senior tight end Kory Sperry said.

"If it's consistent year after year, us blowing them

out or them blowing us out, then there's no point," he said. "But if you look at the last four games, it's come down to one play. That's a rivalry. "

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In-state rivalries

CU vs. CSU is one of the few in-state rivalries played at a neutral site. Five famous in-state clashes, all on campus:

Miami vs. Florida State

Hurricanes 6-4 in past 10 Miami's move to the ACC ensured yearly matchup.

Texas vs. Texas A&

Longhorns 7-3 in past 10 But Aggies have won two in a row.

Michigan vs. Michigan State

Wolverines 8-2 in past 10 Michigan has taken the last six games.

Alabama vs. Auburn

Tigers 7-3 in past 10 Series moved solely to campus sites in 2000.

Stanford vs. California

Tied 5-5 in past 10 Cal coach Jeff Tedford is 5-1 against Stanford.

Chris Dempsey, The Denver Post

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CU's Sumler all business

Bufs starter working on own skills, becoming leader

By Kyle Ringo
Wednesday, August 27, 2008

All Demetrius Sumler cares about is winning.

The starting tailback for the Colorado football team has been a patient man since joining the program two years ago after becoming the leading rusher in prep history in the San Diego area. He redshirted in 2006 and saw limited duty backing up seniors Hugh Charles and Byron Ellis last year.

He has shown patience in other ways as well.

Reading and listening to all the attention paid over the past six months to three freshmen members of the 2008 recruiting class might have annoyed other young men with Sumler's ability. He just kept rolling along, taking care of his responsibilities and trying to get better. His attitude paid off during fall camp when coaches named him the starting tailback for the season opener Sunday night against Colorado State.

"I know what I can do and I felt like my play will speak for itself," Sumler said. "I'll go out there on Sunday and I'll play and hopefully there will be something to talk about."

Sumler is no stranger to the Rams. He stepped into the lineup during the first offensive series for the Buffs last season after Hugh Charles suffered a hamstring injury. He ran 16 times for 85 yards and a touchdown in the Buffs' victory.

Sumler has been criticized at times during his first two years in the program for not running hard or hitting the holes with authority. Those criticisms have come from his position coach Darian Hagan, a former CU quarterback who might be the best player in the program's history. Sumler is no fool. He understands that Hagan is just trying to get the best out of him and he understands why he chooses to do so, on occasion, in such a public fashion.

Sumler said the perfectionist inside him hates hearing the criticism and he generally responds with greater focus and effort. He said Hagan discovered this about him relatively soon after he became a Buff. Lately Hagan has been urging Sumler to be more of a leader among the running backs and Sumler said he has embraced that role.

Sumler said he feels an obligation to try to help the young men aiming for his job as much as possible because it's what former CU running backs Byron Ellis and Charles did for him the past two years. Sumler said he learned a lot from those players, including the philosophy of not paying attention to media reports about the team. He said he adopted that philosophy after Charles told him that worrying about what's in the paper adds too much stress to minds already overloaded with school and football.

"I pride myself on working hard and controlling what I can control," Sumler said.

Sumler is an economics major but he doesn't know exactly what he will do with his degree. He said he chose

economics because he plans on having a lot of money. He said he might want to become a small businessman. He is also considering getting into coaching.

He's a relatively quiet young man from a distance, but he is engaging and personable in conversations and interviews. Sumler is family oriented and often hangs out with his girlfriend, Marissa, who he began dating in high school. It was coincidence they ended up at CU together. Sumler said Marissa had applied to CU before he committed to come to Boulder.

Sumler expects to be challenged by freshmen Darrell Scott, Rodney Stewart and even Ray Polk, who has decided to redshirt this year. More experienced players such as junior Kevin Moyd and sophomore Corey Nabors will also put pressure on Sumler to perform. If someone takes the starting job away from him, it won't be because they have outworked him.

"I'm a football fanatic. I usually watch the NFL network," he said. "I know coach Hawk doesn't like that, for football to be your life, but that's what I love to do."

Sumler said he would like to rush for 1,000 yards this season, a feat never accomplished in the regular season by either Charles or Ellis. The last CU running back to run for 1,000 yards or more in a season was Bobby Purify in 2004.

"I just want to be productive," he said. "I'm not really a big stats guy."

"I just want to be productive every time I get the ball. I want to make the right read. I want to make a guy miss. I want to run through a guy in short-yardage situations."

Notable

Offensive line coach Jeff Grimes said he will not choose starting guards for Sunday's game until Saturday night. ... Tight ends coach Kent Riddle said junior Patrick Devenny takes over as the starter with Riar Geer out for the first two games. Riddle said true freshman Ryan Deehan will play as will senior Devin Shanahan. Fullbacks Maurice Cantrell and Jake Duren can fill in, too. ... Riddle coaches special teams as well and said he doesn't know a great deal about the kickers who will replace CSU starting kicker Jason Smith, who is out with a broken arm. Riddle said his primary concern is where to position kickoff return man Josh Smith without knowing how far kickoffs are likely to travel.



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