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terry frei

## Miller's CU roots run deep

By Terry Frei  
The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 09/16/2008 12:31:32 AM MDT

BOULDER — On the day of the Columbine High School tragedy in 1999, Ryan Miller was 9 years old.

Miller never met Matt Kechter, the straight-A Columbine student and junior varsity football player who was one of those murdered in the school library that day — and was among the total of 13 killed, plus 20 wounded, by the two student shooters.

But after attending Columbine himself and venturing to the University of Colorado as one of the top football recruits in the country, Miller still will honor Kechter and the other victims when he suits up for the Buffaloes' nationally televised game against West Virginia on Thursday night at Folsom Field.

"The armband I wear for the games is for Matt," CU's sophomore offensive tackle said Monday. "That's where I come from. That is a big part of my life. I didn't ever know him, but I knew what he represented, and that's real important to me."

Miller is one of the cornerstones of third-year CU coach Dan Hawkins' tear-down-and-rebuild process.

The big tackle's decision to attend CU, announced during his senior season at Columbine in the fall of 2006, was every bit as significant as the landing of heralded tailback Darrell Scott this year.

Maybe even more so.

Miller was the state's most heralded prospect, a young man with the ability, upside and transcript to be able to choose any major program, deciding to stay home. That was far from unprecedented in the annals of the CU program, for prized prospects who both prospered and flamed out, but it was a needed boost for the Hawkins regime during a trying first season.

Actually, the fix was all but in, given Miller's virtual lifelong fascination with all things silver and gold. He probably even knew those are CU's *real* school colors.

His grandfather, David Peterson, played on the CU freshman team and filled in his grandson on the example set by the Buffs' Joe Romig, the two-time All-America guard of that era who finished sixth in the Heisman Trophy voting, was a Rhodes scholar and became a renowned astrophysicist.

"I came up to watch games with my grandfather, and CU has always been a large part of my family," Miller said. "Now it's even a larger part. I don't have a single regret about coming here. This is the most incredible place in the world. This is the total package for me. If I had to make this decision 100 times over, it would be CU 100 times over."

"I thought about this a lot, and it was always my dream school. There was only one part during the recruiting when I wasn't sure that I wanted to come here, and that was before I took my Notre Dame visit. My thinking was that if Notre Dame can really wow me, I'll go there. But it wasn't there. It wasn't home. It

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wasn't the Flatirons. It wasn't running behind Ralphie."

The Buffaloes burned Miller's redshirt in the fourth game last season, and he started in the final half of the year. It was an educational experience, perhaps as difficult as his current course load of sociology, math, chemical engineering and atmospheric sciences classes.

He came from a run-oriented Columbine program, with little straight dropback passing.

"There were definitely times where I was very disappointed in myself," Miller said. "It took a little while to get used to the proper techniques. . . . I'm playing much better now. Learning how to pass block is much easier now."

On Monday, Hawkins said Miller's true freshman experience "was trial by fire,

## Blog

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and you really understand the urgency of it when you play against some really talented people." He added that his young tackle "still is learning the whole pass game part of it, which was new for him coming into college. For all intents and purposes, he should be a redshirt freshman, but he's a true sophomore. He's getting better every game."

To have a shot at beating West Virginia, it will help if the Buffs — averaging 121.5 yards on the ground in the season-opening wins over Colorado State and Eastern Washington — get the running game cranked up.

If it's Scott running off tackle, reacting to a Miller block, the Buffs' future is in play.

*Terry Frei: 303-954-1895 or [tfrei@denverpost.com](mailto:tfrei@denverpost.com)*

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colorado classics

## Moran experienced golden age at CU

Reporter Irv Moss writes about stars from the past

By Irv Moss  
The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 09/16/2008 12:45:32 AM MDT



Mike Moran said his work was "my identity," and that included his years with the United States Olympic Committee. (Special to The Denver Post )

With an Irish limb on his family tree, Mike Moran knew all about limericks and how funny they can be.

But in 1968, as he prepared his first football press release as the newly hired sports information director at the University of Colorado, there wasn't time to think about limericks. He was following in the footsteps of Fred Casotti, an icon in the sports information business, and the football coach was Eddie Crowder, who Moran knew would demand accurate information released to the media.

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"After I sent out the release, I got a bunch of phone calls from the media asking, 'Where were the limericks?' " Moran said. "Fred Casotti always put a couple of limericks at the top of his press releases."

Moran not only survived the limerick omission, but over the next 40 years, he has become a Colorado sports icon in his own right. He promoted CU's teams and athletes for 10 years, then moved to similar responsibilities for the United States Olympic Committee in Colorado Springs and is ending his professional career promoting the activities of the Colorado Springs Sports Corp.

"My work was my identity," Moran said. "With the people I've met, the things I've seen and done, my cup is full. I was stunned when I got the job at Colorado. It was a dream job, but I had been the sports information director at the University of Omaha (now Nebraska-Omaha) for just two years at the time, and I didn't think anyone at CU knew anything about me."

Moran's time at CU was filled with some of the most magical names and memorable games in its sports history.

"Our 1971 (football) season was remarkable," Moran said. "We beat LSU and Ohio State on the road and finished ranked third in the country. The year before, we beat Penn State 41-13 and ended its 31-game (unbeaten) streak."

The associations were life-rewarding. Crowder's death last week closed a chapter. Casotti and basketball coach Sox Walseth also have died. But track coach Don Meyers, baseball coach Irv Brown and trainer Monte Smith are around.

"I got to see the best of the Buffs when they still had baseball," said Moran, a baseball buff. "I was there when Sox became the women's basketball coach

after he was the men's coach. In his first game, he absent-mindedly patted one of his players on the butt when they broke the pregame huddle and then covered his eyes when he realized what he had done."

Moran rubbed elbows with some of CU's all-time greats. Included were John "Bad Dude" Stearns, Cliff Branch, Bobby Anderson, Cliff Meely, Jeff Knappe, Scott Wedman, Larry Brunson, Jay Howell and Dudley Mitchell, to name a few. Moran considers Dave Logan a special athlete because he went from a bowl game to a basketball game and played despite an injury.

"I remember Dave Logan telling me he wanted to be a sportscaster," Moran said of the current voice of the Broncos.

There wasn't a downturn in great administrators, great athletes and classic events when he joined the Olympic Committee in 1979. Don Miller, Bill Hybl, Bill Simon, Bob Kane, LeRoy Walker and Denver's Evie Dennis were the leaders he admired.

A year later, he was at rinkside for the Miracle on Ice in the Lake Placid Olympics when the United States beat the Soviet Union. Fourteen years later, the turmoil surrounding figure skaters Tonya Harding and Nancy Kerrigan highlighted the Lillehammer Olympics.

"That controversy was demanding and interesting," Moran said. "It had us going 2 4/7."

Moran remembers having pancakes in an early breakfast with Wilma Rudolph, a heroine in Olympic sprinting, and giving the fabled Jesse Owens a tour of the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs in 1980. That same year, he endured the U.S. boycott of the Summer Games in Moscow.

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He walked down the Olympic path with gold medalist Bill Toomey (a CU alumnus), Bonnie Blair and Carl Lewis, whom he considers to be incomparable.

Moran is practicing an anticipated move to Maine. He has allotted six weeks of practice time.

"I've enjoyed my time in Colorado," he said. "But today I went sailing in the morning, I went for a walk in the afternoon and took a nap. I'm going out to dinner and will be having lobster. This is the life."

## Mike Moran bio

Born: Jan. 2, 1942, in Omaha

High School: Westside, in Omaha

College: University of Omaha

Family: Brother Jim

Hobby: Writing memoirs

Ambitions: Move to Maine, get a female yellow Lab puppy and finish the show together.

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colorado

## Bufs' run game goes to boot camp

By Tom Kensler  
The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 09/15/2008 11:57:53 PM MDT

BOULDER — Colorado freshman Darrell Scott said drills for the running backs have been like "Pop Warner football" in preparing for Thursday night's game against No. 21 West Virginia.

Scott meant that as a compliment. It's an attention to fundamentals. It's back to basics.

"We've been working on our timing and how everything is supposed to develop," Scott said Monday. "We're trying to get our steps down and get fluid with everything. I think everything is in sync now."

Colorado (2-0) ranks 10th among Big 12 teams in rushing at 121.5 yards per game. Senior center Daniel "Girthy" Sanders said the offensive line and running backs have spent extra time together before and after practices.

"I think it's coming together," Sanders said. "We're building on things."

### Colorado Football

- [View](#) slide show of former CU coach and AD Eddie Crowder, who died Sept. 9
- [View](#) slide show of E. Washington-CU football
- [Watch](#) video of CU fans at the Rocky Mountain Showdown
- [Visit](#) the CU Stats Page for boxscores, Big 12 standings, team leaders and more
- [Visit](#) Tom Kensler's All Things Bufs blog for a behind-the-scenes look at CU sports
- [Play](#) Pick'em for the upcoming CU football game

Coach Dan Hawkins acknowledged Monday during his weekly media luncheon that CU's rushing numbers "are a little behind what we want them to be and thought they should be." The Buffaloes averaged 2.7 yards per carry against Eastern Washington. Scott netted 39 yards on 13 carries.

CU's tailbacks have become a bit antsy rather than waiting on the blocking to develop, Hawkins said. The young offensive line also has struggled during stretches.

"It's just a question of getting (everybody) on the same page, and (tailbacks) reading it and seeing it," Hawkins said. "When that happens, it's going to be electric. I know that."

West Virginia's unconventional 3-3-5 defense sets up with three down linemen, three linebackers and

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five defensive backs.

"It gives you a unique challenge because they can bring anybody (on a blitz) at any time," CU offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich said. "It's different than anything we see."

## Footnotes.

Hawkins said defensive backs Jimmy Smith (back strain) and Anthony Wright (high ankle sprain) will be available Thursday night. They sat out the first two games. . . . Kickoff for Colorado's Sept. 27 game against Florida State in Jacksonville was set for 1:30 p.m. MDT. ABC picked up the TV rights.

Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or  
[tkensler@denverpost.com](mailto:tkensler@denverpost.com)

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college football

## Shanahan's gamble strikes Hawkins

By Tom Kensler  
The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 09/15/2008 04:51:53 PM MDT



Colorado coach Dan Hawkins. (The Denver Post)

BOULDER — "Absolute poetry" is what Colorado coach Dan Hawkins called Mike Shanahan's decision to go for a go-ahead two-point conversion Sunday in the Broncos' victory over San Diego.

"I thought it was totally awesome, for many reasons," Hawkins said Monday following his weekly media luncheon. "Some of the intangible things don't get talked enough about. Mike doing that gets his team to play to win and not to play not to lose. It gets his team to get some swagger. It shows confidence in his quarterback and in his offense.

"If you keep playing not to lose all the time, that's the personality your team takes on. It takes on the safety part of it. That's just never my orientation. Now, granted there are some barriers in that. But, to me, if you really want to develop this philosophy, you have to stick your neck out there a few times and risk failure.

"I thought, 'I've got to call Shanahan because that was money' — not that they got it, but that they went for it. If you don't get it, everybody is going to chastise you. The fans, the media - you're going to get scorned for that. But when the quarterback walks away, he thinks, '(The coach) believed in me. He believed in the offense. Our coaches aren't backing off from anybody. We're on the attack.' In my mind, that's going to serve you down the road."

Hawkins recalled trying "a lot of funky stuff" while coaching at the small-college level at Willamette (Oregon).

"A guy said, 'How come you never see anybody do that at the big schools?'" Hawkins said. "I go, 'That's because, if we try it here and it doesn't work, you go, 'Man, that was a pretty cool idea.' But if we try that (at the major college level) and it doesn't work, everybody goes, 'You're a blipping idiot!'"

"So you have to have enough moxie or confidence in your game to go, 'It's OK if you guys think I'm an idiot, I know down the road what this thing will do.'"

Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or  
[tkensler@denverpost.com](mailto:tkensler@denverpost.com)

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Longmont, Colorado  
Tuesday, September 16,  
2008



Publish Date: 9/16/2008

## **Buffs won't call it 'statement game'**

*By Patrick Ridgell*

*Longmont Times-Call*

BOULDER — Bright lights, a ranked visitor, millions watching. What do the Colorado Buffaloes think?

Been there. Done that.

It's not that the Buffs are downplaying Thursday, when they host No. 21 West Virginia in a nationally televised game. And it's not that they don't acknowledge the grand stage on which they'll perform.

They just say this is the kind of game in which they expected to play the day they signed their scholarship. The hoopla is no big deal.

"It's why you play football," senior safety Ryan Walters said. "Growing up, you watch football on TV and see the games being played and you want to be a part of that. That's why I came here, because you get a lot of TV time and play the top teams in the country."

According to CU, its 11 nationally televised games in 2007 ranked third-most in the country. CU went 4-7 in those games.

This will be the third Thursday night game CU has played, and its first in Boulder since 1990, when the Buffs pulled out a 21-17 win over Stanford before 50,669. The other time came in 1992, when CU made its first visit to Missouri since the fifth-down game, and won 6-0 in a driving rain storm.

CU is 1-7 against ranked teams during coach Dan Hawkins' tenure, which is in its third season. The lone win came last September, when the Buffs beat Oklahoma, which was No. 3. Hawkins went 2-5 against ranked teams while coaching Boise State.

West Virginia has returned around 1,000 tickets of its allotment. As of late Monday afternoon, CU reported fewer than 2,000 tickets remained after brisk sales in the past three days moved around 1,500 to 2,000. All club seats are sold out.

West Virginia will enter still smarting from its 24-3 loss to East Carolina on Sept. 6. Listen to anyone around the CU program these days and they'll fawn over Mountaineers quarterback Pat White and running back Noel Devine. Their offensive line is supposed to be big and physical, and the defense is fast and aggressive, the Buffs say.

CU coach Dan Hawkins called West Virginia one of the best teams in the country. Thursday's result, good or bad, will reveal to the nation where the coach's rebuilding efforts are.

"You want to be to the point where people expect you to win these games ... where you're playing these ranked teams on national TV, and you don't get it done, and everybody's going, 'What'd you do wrong?'" Hawkins said.

Including West Virginia, five of CU's next six opponents are ranked. Missouri and Texas are in the top 10. The Big 12 announced Monday ABC will televise CU's Sept. 27 date against No. 24 Florida State in Jacksonville, starting at 1:30 p.m.

So as Walters said, Thursday is nothing to get in a twist over.

"It's another game. It's another game on our schedule, another week to play football," Walters said. "It's great this game is getting all the recognition it's getting, TV and all the hype. It's going to be great for the atmosphere. But you never over-prepare, you never under-prepare, you're always sure each week is the same."

Hawkins wouldn't call Thursday's matchup a statement game. As he said, if his players find motivation from the decals on an opponents' helmet, CU is in for a roller coaster ride.

"As we continue to move this thing forward and get it back to the (Bill McCartney) era, you're going to have those watershed games. You're going to have about three of them every year," Hawkins said.

"If you get fortunate and beat one team, the next big team will come up and you guys will say, 'Isn't this the biggest game?' And I'll say, 'Yup.'"

**EXTRA POINTS:** Hawkins made a point to show the team film of running back Darrell Scott breaking three tackles on a run against Eastern Washington after the freshman suffered a knee bruise. "We blocked it for seven (yards), and he got 14," Hawkins said. ... CU practiced Monday, which is normally the players' day off. Several had class conflicts. ... Hawkins said he's comfortable letting kicker Aric Goodman try from 55 yards. Goodman is 2-for-3 with a long of 32.

Patrick Ridgell can be reached at [pridgell@times-call.com](mailto:pridgell@times-call.com).



## Shanahan call resonates at CU

By B.G. Brooks

Monday, September 15, 2008

An afternoon practice prevented **Dan Hawkins** from watching Sunday's NFL drama unfold at Invesco Field at Mile High.

But when the Colorado Buffaloes coach saw replays of the Broncos' winning two-point conversion, Denver coach **Mike Shanahan** had a new admirer.

"It was totally awesome for many reasons," Hawkins said Monday, adding the intangibles gained from the gutsy call "don't get talked about enough."

Some of those, Hawkins theorized, are getting your team always to play to win, promoting a winning swagger and demonstrating the utmost confidence in your quarterback.

"That (kind of call) will serve you down the road," Hawkins said. "The whole thing was poetry, absolute poetry."

Of course, had Shanahan been rolled by his roll of the dice, there would be a Monday uproar - but none of it emanating from Hawkins, whose penchant for fourth-and-short attempts backfired last season in a come-from-ahead loss (31-28) at Iowa State that still gnaws at him.

"It worked most of the time (in 2007, when CU was 13-for-26 on fourth-down conversions) but not against Iowa State," Hawkins said, noting a statistical analysis tells coaches never to kick a field goal inside an opponent's 10-yard line.

Instead, Hawkins said, go for six and, failing that, depend on your defense to regain field position and try again.

Hawkins believes even though failure will "get you chastised," that kind of aggressive offensive thinking "becomes part of your mantra."

Sophomore receiver **Josh Smith** said he watched the Broncos' win against the Chargers and was struck by Shanahan's call as much as Hawkins was.

"That inspires a lot of confidence (in your coach)," Smith said.

"You know you don't have a scared leader. I think everyone wants to know the guy in charge is pretty brave and is going to put it on the line from time to time and see how it all works and unfolds.

"I like that about a guy who loves to attack. It's kind of like how going to battle needs to be. I respect

how (Hawkins) rallies his troops."

### **Night to get right**

All the ingredients for a raucous night are in place: A nationally ranked opponent, a national TV audience, the opportunity to step up in a big game.

Hawkins believes teams play "about three watershed games a year," with Thursday's first bout against No. 21 West Virginia at Folsom Field (6:30 p.m., ESPN) certainly qualifying.

But Hawkins also believes the standard the Buffs should adhere to will have them no more hyped for a watershed game than any other. The goal, he said, is to "get to the point where guys have a standard they're used to . . . it doesn't matter who they play. If you're relying on the other team's decal to get you fired up, you're usually setting yourself up for a roller- coaster (ride)."

Hawkins hopes his team, whether playing on TV or not, has been as excited to prepare for the Mountaineers as it will be to play them, although he concedes "maybe a little more (valid) in theory than it is in practicum."

### **Etc.**

\* **Dave Plati**, CU's director of athletic media relations, said there are fewer than 2,000 tickets available for the game.

\* With Monday a normal off day, attendance at the afternoon practice was well below 100 percent because of class conflicts.

\* CU's game against Florida State on Sept. 27 in Jacksonville, Fla., will begin at 1:30 p.m. MDT and be televised in Denver by KMGH-Channel 7.

\* Olympic steeplechase runner **Jennifer Barringer** of Boulder will be the grand marshal of CU's homecoming parade Oct. 3, the day before the Buffs play Texas.

© Rocky Mountain News



## Nearly 2,000 tickets remain for WVU game

By Kyle Ringo

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Colorado football fans might sell out Folsom Field on Thursday when No. 25 West Virginia comes to town for a rare midweek game, but they're sure taking their time doing it.

This is one of the marquee home games of the season and figured to be a hard ticket to come by when looking at the schedule in the spring. CU has dubbed it a "Blackout" game and is encouraging fans to wear black to the stadium for the nationally televised tilt on ESPN.

But even with all the additional hoopla, nearly 2,000 tickets remained available at the close of business Monday. Folsom Field seats 53,750.

Athletic director Mike Bohn said part of the reason so many tickets are still for sale is because West Virginia returned 1,000 tickets from its allotment late last week. Bohn said he is confident the stadium will be filled to capacity at kickoff.

"We had a real furious day today in the ticket office selling well over 500 tickets. We would anticipate frenetic online purchasing overnight and we would anticipate being at capacity by Thursday night."

Bohn said his department was in a similar position at the same point in game week last September before playing host to Florida State. That game fell short of a sellout with 52,951 in the stadium to see the Seminoles eke out a victory.

Bohn said the club seats on the east side of the stadium are sold out and not a contributing factor to the problem as they have been in the past.

Coach Dan Hawkins was not aware about the high number of unsold seats three days before kickoff when asked about it following Monday's practice. Hawkins has said in the past he would like to see additional seating added at Folsom Field by closing in the north end of the stadium.

"The great thing about living in the west is there are so many entertainment options," Hawkins said. "I guarantee you there going to be a lot of people who sit down and powwow and go, 'Let's see, what is there to do this week? Oh, yeah.' That's the way it is out here. They don't plan it months in advance."

Those who do follow that method will sit down at some point in the next 48 hours and see the CU game is the only significant college or professional sporting event going Thursday night. The Colorado Rockies are off and it's unlikely folks will be biking, hiking or rock climbing at night.

Senior defensive tackle George Hypolite spent his summer working as an intern in the CU athletic department and was involved in trying to sell season tickets. Hypolite predicted a sellout Thursday.

Hawkins said he hopes CU fans will arrive early and treat West Virginia fans with class.

**Notable**

The CU game against Florida State in Jacksonville on Sept. 27 will begin at 1:30 p.m. (MDT) and will be broadcast on ESPN to approximately half the country. ... Cornerbacks Jimmy Smith and Anthony Wright are expected to be back in action Thursday. Both have missed most or all of the first two games this season with injuries.



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# Young CU running backs up ante

## Scott, Stewart hope to shine on national stage

By Kyle Ringo

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Football players grow up dreaming about taking advantage of a national stage and playing well on ESPN. A handful of Colorado Buffaloes get their first opportunity in their true freshman season on Thursday against No. 25 West Virginia.

None will be in more prominent roles than running backs Darrell Scott and Rodney Stewart, who hope to finally get the CU running game revved up against a tough Mountaineers defense.

"Big players make big plays in big games," Stewart said. "I guess it's time for me to step up and even though I'm a freshman, I've got to play like a senior."

Scott and Stewart are the leading ball carriers for the Buffs after the first two games, but the ground game overall hasn't functioned at the level coaches and players believe it can. The Buffs have gained 243 yards in two games and are averaging 3.5 yards per carry.

None of the Buffs rank among the top 12 rushers in the Big 12 conference so far and the team is 10th on the conference on the ground.

Coach Dan Hawkins acknowledged the entire offense hasn't operated at the level of efficiency he's looking for, but he singled out the running game as the portion that has under-performed to this point.

"I think our rushing numbers are probably a little behind what we want them to be and what we thought they should be," Hawkins said.

The Buffs changed the offense in the offseason to a system that operates without a huddle and in the shotgun formation a majority of the time. It didn't figure to be running at optimum levels in Week 3. Hawkins said having three young offensive linemen, young tailbacks and being without his starting tight end in the first two games have all been contributing factors.

"We're so green. We're so raw. We're still evolving," Hawkins said. Later he added, "Eventually when we get those five, six, seven guys on the same page, it's going to be electric. I know that."

Scott, who hurdled a defender against Eastern Washington, has shown tantalizing glimpses of his full ability in his first two outings as a Buff. He also took a hard shot to the knee on a separate play in the last game.

Hawkins was impressed with how Scott handled that part of his introduction to the college game. Hawkins said he showed the team video of one of Scott's runs after he suffered the bruised knee. The

run came in the fourth quarter and Scott broke several tackles to gain about 15 yards after his teammates had blocked the play successfully for seven yards.

"That kind of shows you another side of the guy where he gets racked a little bit but keeps playing," Hawkins said.

Scott's uncle, CU wide receiver Josh Smith, played with him for two years in high school and watched many of Scott's games earlier in his childhood. Smith said toughness has always been a part of Scott's game.

"I've never seen him on the sideline hurt," Smith said. "I've seen him playing hurt."

Scott said he is excited for his opportunity to play against one of the elite teams in the country over the past decade.

"I just want to get in there, get comfortable, get used to the speed of West Virginia and roll with it," Scott said.



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