



# Consistency still elusive for Buffs' young offensive line

By Kyle Ringo

Friday, August 24, 2007

Colorado offensive line coach Jeff Grimes has lost his patience more than once this week as he searches for any sign of consistency in a large group of young offensive linemen.

The CU offense ran several plays over and over and over and over during Thursday's afternoon practice as Grimes continuously found errors to correct. Grimes, in his first year at CU, said his players are generally doing pretty well for the third week of training camp, but the learning curve has dramatically increased this week with the introduction of a game plan for the season opener Sept. 1 against Colorado State.

The line will have another opportunity to please its coach this morning in the third major preseason scrimmage at Folsom Field. The scrimmage is closed to the public and coach Dan Hawkins has forbidden media to report on it, though media members are allowed to attend. "When you're playing with a young line and guys that are inexperienced, particularly in a system like ours, it takes some time," Grimes said.

Grimes said he has identified a core group of players he expects to see playing this fall. He said that while there are no true freshmen currently in the starting lineup, there could be by the middle of the season. He said several freshmen are not far behind the starters.

Seniors Tyler Polumbus and Edwin Harrison are expected to start at tackles against the Rams. Junior Daniel Sanders in the starting center with sophomore Devin Head slated to make the second start of his career at one guard and redshirt freshman Wes Palazzi at the other guard.

True freshmen Kai Maiava, Ryan Miller and Mike Iltis will probably be in the mix for playing time at some point this season.

"I think we're getting better, but we've still got a long way to go. We've got a lot of work to do. We've made good progress in fall camp in terms of toughness, aggression, communication, all the things that are most important.

"We need all the time that we've got before the first game."

## Making a move

Markques Simas has been the forgotten man to some extent this month among a group of three true freshmen receivers and one redshirt freshman.

Scotty McKnight, Josh Smith and Kendrick Celestine have captured most of the attention by making plays earlier in camp, but Simas has started to be more visible recently, in part because of a bruised kidney that has kept Smith off the practice field for the past week.

Hawkins said Simas has plenty of ability but he came to Boulder this summer later than most of his teammates and had some catching up to do in learning the system. Simas spent the better part of July visiting relatives in Portugal.

"He's starting to come on," Hawkins said. "I think it's interesting because we always talk to those freshmen about camp legs and what it really takes. They always kind of go, 'Yeah, yeah, I got you.' ...They just really, really get bogged down because they're not used to running as hard or as much and finishing and doing all that kind of stuff. I think he's starting to come back around."

## The Daily Hawkism

On what freshmen are experiencing as coaches try to prepare them to play. "Those young puppies, they're getting put in the fire in a hard way."

### Notable

Hawkins said today's scrimmage will be shorter than the previous two and will focus on plenty of situational work. ... Hawkins said true freshman defensive back Anthony Wright has been cleared by the NCAA Clearinghouse while fellow defensive back Lamont Smith continues to wait for approval from the clearinghouse. ... CU said Ralphie IV will not travel to the Sept. 8 game at Arizona State because of logistical problems. Ralphie made a 1,500-mile journey last September to Athens, Georgia. ... Hawkins was dissatisfied with his team's overall performance on the first Perfect Practice Thursday of the season. Hawkins sets a goal for a perfect practice on Thursday during game week each season because it's the last day of regular practice each week.



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# Jackson's future as Buff on hold: Academic issues could sideline former starting QB

By Kyle Ringo  
Friday, August 24, 2007

It's possible the Colorado football team could lose one of its team captains — the starting quarterback last year — before this season even starts because of academic problems.

It would be an unfortunate ending to a career filled with plenty of twists and turns for Bernard Jackson. But if the bad news comes, fans won't hear coach Dan Hawkins railing about academic responsibility or making an example of Jackson.

Jackson is a father trying to care for a 2-year-old son who lost an eye to cancer. He played most of last season concerned about his father's health as well. Jackson's father lives back home in California and requires regular care from Jackson's siblings.

This is one situation in which Hawkins just has to shake his head at the difficulty of what his player is facing in his personal life.

"Bernard, he's got some extenuating circumstances that would be tough on me," Hawkins said. "We always talk about life not being fair in a sense, but he's got some obligations and some other things that are tough on any person. And then you're a person that's a student, and then you're a person that's a student playing football.

"That's not necessarily an excuse, but my heart goes out to the guy. He's got a lot of irons in the fire."

Jackson has missed the majority of training camp tending to those obligations as well as trying to pass several independent-studies classes. He did not practice again Thursday and Hawkins said it is doubtful Jackson will play against Colorado State.

Jackson said he believes he will pass his classes and play his senior season this fall. He took one final Wednesday and has a final test remaining. He could know sometimes next week whether he is academically eligible for his senior season.

He said if he is not able to play, he will move on with no regrets.

"It's part of life," Jackson said. "You learn from it and move on to more opportunities. It will just be another route to doing what I've been trying to do all this time."

Hawkins said he is waiting to find out what Jackson's final grades will be. That could be a week away.

"He took a final (Wednesday). I think he has another final in a couple days so we just have to wait for all that to sort out," Hawkins said.

Jackson was chosen to be one of three team captains by his teammates during winter conditioning. The others are linebackers Jordon Dizon and R.J. Brown. Hawkins said tackle Tyler Polumbus has been filling Jackson's shoes in practice, leading warmups and rallying the offense.

Polumbus hasn't been named a captain, but he is the most likely candidate to serve as the offensive captain against

CSU and for the remainder of the season if Jackson is not part of the team.

Polumbus said he felt strange even talking about the issue Thursday because he considers Jackson the offensive captain. But he also acknowledged he is trying to provide leadership to his younger teammates.

"It's a good feeling to know that I've gotten myself into a position where guys respect me enough to listen to what I have to say," Polumbus said.

Hawkins said he does not believe any of the three quarterbacks on the roster — including his son Cody, the starter — are ready to serve as captains at this point. Hawkins said in a perfect world, quarterbacks, centers, linebackers and safeties make the best captains because they have the most responsibility on the field.

Jackson earned the starting quarterback job last season going into the second game of the year against Colorado State. He held the position the remainder of the year as the Buffs struggled to move the ball and score points in a new offensive system.

Jackson was shifted from a full-time quarterback to a 'slash' role during spring practices. He is expected to play quarterback, wide receiver and running back as well as kick returner if he plays this season.



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Who has the Wright stuff?

By ELIOT DEMPSEY Colorado Daily Staff Report  
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There has been one question that CU defensive line coach Romeo Bandison has had to answer repeatedly since the end of last season.

How can you replace Abraham Wright?

Bandison's simple answer is, you can't.

"That is nearly impossible. That kind of productivity is very hard to find, one guy with 12 sacks in a year," he said. "You can't duplicate that, and we are not going to try to. But I feel as a group, that we are better pass rushers. That's got to translate over from our drills onto the field, and I feel as though we have not made enough progress there, in my opinion."

Bandison is not a man who is easily impressed. After witnessing Wright rack up 12 sacks last year to lead the Big 12 and then move on to the NFL's Miami Dolphins, he knows what a top notch pass rusher looks like. Bandison himself played four seasons in the NFL for the Browns and Redskins.

Bandison did step out on a limb however, and while he may not boast a single player the likes of Wright, he did say this line as a group has the potential to be better than last season's.

"As a group, we have more guys that are really good pass rushers instead of just one guy," he said. "We give guys roles, and if it is something you do well, then we are going to put you on the field and have you do that. We have some guys that excel in one area, and need some work in some other areas. We are going to try and find roles for a lot of guys. I would like to rotate, but our backups are inexperienced, so they have a lot of work to do."

One of the leaders of the defensive line is junior George Hypolite. At 6-foot-1, 285 pounds, Hypolite is maybe not the ideal body type for a defensive tackle, but as Hypolite says, size isn't everything.

"We are not an overpowering, oversized defensive line," said Hypolite. "That's never going to be our staple with the guys we have right now. But, what we are is very intelligent, we play low, we play fast and we use our techniques to the best of our abilities."

Technique and the ability to use leverage is what both Bandison and Hypolite mentioned when speaking about the strengths of this year's line.

Without a single player over 300 pounds, the line's ability to use their speed and technique to get leverage will be crucial to their success.

The tackles, Hypolite and Brandon Nicolas, return from last season and will start at defensive tackle and nose tackle, respectively. The end positions appear to be more of a committee approach, as Alonzo Barrett, Maurice Lucas and Marquez Herrod look to provide a rush from the defensive end positions.

A brief look at the depth on the CU defensive line.

## PROJECTED STARTERS

### Left Defensive End

#91 - Maurice Lucas, 6-4, 260, Jr - Lucas has the size that is ideal for defensive end. He needs to improve on last years production, when he registered just 14 tackles and one sack.

### Defensive Tackle

#86 - George Hypolite, 6-1, 285, Jr - Hypolite is an undersized defensive tackle, but he makes up for it with his ability to play with leverage, a keystone of coach Bandison's teaching. Hypolite played in 12 games last year and came away with 50 tackles and 2 ? sacks. He said that training with strength and conditioning coach Jeff Pitman has produced a major change in his and his teammates' strength.

"When I take on double teams, they are a lot stronger than they were a few years ago. Now I feel like, and I know my teammates feel like, when we get in the fourth quarter, we are going to be able to go and put our foot on people's throats."

#### Nose Tackle

#94 - Brandon Nicolas, 6-3, 290, Jr - Nicolas came to CU as a transfer from Notre Dame in 2005. He played alongside Hypolite last year, registering 57 tackles and zero sacks. The two should be much improved, thanks to the weight lifting program installed by coach Pitman.

#### Right Defensive End

#47 - Alonzo Barrett, 6-3, 235, Sr - Barrett may be the Buffs' quickest defensive linemen. Bandison said that he is great at using his hands to get off blockers and then use his speed and quickness to get in to the play. The Buffs will need that speed off the edge if they are going to be able to pressure the quarterback.

#### OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

#### Left Defensive End

#90 - Marquez Herrod, 6-2, 255, R. Fr - Herrod figures to get plenty of action this fall, as he is slated as a co-starter with Maurice Lucas at left defensive end.

#### Defensive Tackle

#97 - Taj Kaynor, 6-4, 275, Soph - Kaynor, a defensive tackle, is suspended for the season opener against CSU.

#99 - Chris Perri, 6-3, 270, Jr - Perri is suspended for the first three games of the season for his involvement in a July fight.

#### Nose Tackle

#78 - Jason Brace, 6-4, 265, Soph

#98 - Eugene Goree, 6-2, 285, Fr - "I would like to get a big body in there and I think we got a guy who is going to grow into that (a 300 lb DT). Eugene Goree is 285 as a true freshman so I think he will get in the weight room, put on some more muscle and become that guy," said Bandison.

#### Right Defensive End

#69 - Eric Lawson, 6-3, 275, R. Fr

#93 - Conrad Obi, 6-3, 250, Fr

When asked, coach Bandison summed up his line's strengths in just a few words.

"Technique, pride, drive and strength," he said.

Bandison had already moved past the loss of Wright and his pass rushing ability, even laughing when he was asked how to approach that situation. He is a coach who is only concerned with who is in camp, and who he will see on the field.

"George and Brandon started last year, and they weren't 300 pounds last year. For sophomores, they did a good job for us. I expect those guys to be better. Maurice has size that is ideal, Alonzo is a little smaller but he makes up for that with speed."

Pretty soon, Bandison, the line and the Buffs nation will find out if they are up to the test.

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cu football

## Transfer drawing bead on strong safety

Daniel Dykes bets on his Idaho experience as a way to catch coach Dan Hawkins' eye.

By Adrian Dater Denver Post Staff Writer

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Boulder - His long, dark hair flows only slightly freer than his conversation skills. His current address is Boulder, but the laid-back Southern California persona seems to stay with Colorado safety Daniel "D.J." Dykes.

Dykes, 21, is a Long Beach, Calif., native who transferred to CU last year from the University of Idaho. The junior has the inside track to a starting job at strong safety, which would put senior Lionel Harris on the bench.

Going into this morning's final scrimmage of preseason camp, strong safety is the only position that is up in the air.

A psychology major with a 3.3 grade-point average, Dykes spoke philosophically about what beating out a senior, who started at strong safety much of last season, might do for his and the team's psyche.

"Competition is one thing that just makes everybody

better, and that goes for everything in sports or the workplace," Dykes said. "I think it's really pushed him to get better also. I look at it as a positive thing and

### College Football

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really tried to embrace it."

Still, Dykes said there have been a few awkward moments with Harris.

"We've talked about it a little, and it gets a little uncomfortable at times," Dykes said. "That's just going to be natural. But we know that this is a business, and it's not going to be pretty for everybody. Coach always tells us it's not going to be fair for everybody on a good team. Not every good player is going to play, and that's just the way it is."

Dykes played two years at Idaho, but began to feel stifled. He didn't feel like he fit into the community, or under new coach Dennis Erickson. Dykes liked

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what he saw of Buffs coach Dan Hawkins, whom he competed against when Hawkins coached Boise State.

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"Up in Moscow (Idaho), it's just a slow place. It's a quiet place, and I'm from Southern California. And it just really wasn't the environment for me," Dykes said. "On top of that, this would have been my senior year there, and I would have had three head coaches in four years.

"With Erickson coming in, I didn't see him staying for a while, and I just thought it was my time to get out. I appreciated everything they did for me, but it was time to move on. I played against Boise a couple times, and I was hoping that I could come here and not totally have to re-establish myself as a player. Someone that knew my name a little bit, I thought would be nice."

Hawkins wouldn't tip his hand as to his starting strong safety, but had good things to say about Dykes.

"He's smart, he's tough, he's a playmaker and gets himself into the right position and works hard," Hawkins said. "Those guys usually surface in life, and he certainly has. Like I like to say, he has great countenance. I think that lends itself to productivity."

Chances are Hawkins will make his decision between Dykes and Harris after the morning scrimmage today at Folsom Field.

"Obviously it's an important day, but so is every day of camp," Dykes said. "I just want to go out and have fun and play some ball."

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DAILY TIMES-CALL

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## Buffs' captain is MIA

Jackson absent from Thursday practices

*By Patrick Ridgell  
The Daily Times-Call*

BOULDER — It's eight days before the season starts, and the University of Colorado doesn't know if it will have its offensive captain.

Bernard Jackson, a fifth-year senior voted captain by teammates during the offseason, missed two more practices Thursday.

Head coach Dan Hawkins said Jackson took a final Wednesday. Hawkins thinks Jackson has another Saturday. Hawkins said he does not know how Jackson's situation will turn out, but the coach suggested Jackson is dealing with more than just school work.

"He has some extenuating circumstances that would be tough on me," Hawkins said.

"We always talk about life not being fair in a sense. But he has some obligations and some other things that are tough on any person. And then you're a person that's a student, and a person that's a student playing football.

"That's not necessarily an excuse, but my heart goes out to the guy because he has a lot of irons in the fire."

Jackson has been at some practices during camp, including one earlier this week, and he had a late-afternoon anthropology class during the summer B session that conflicted with practice times.

Still, Jackson has missed more practices than he's attended, and Hawkins said it's "doubtful" at this point CU could even include Jackson in its game plan for Colorado State, which it faces Sept. 1 in the season opener.

Jackson started 11 games at quarterback in 2006, and has been slated to fill a "slash" role in 2007.

He said earlier this month he attends the quarterback meetings daily. He's listed fourth among the X receiver grouping.

No other offensive captain has been appointed to fill Jackson's spot, though Hawkins said offensive tackle Tyler Polumbus leads the team in jumping jacks sometimes.

CU's other quarterbacks, redshirt freshman Cody Hawkins and junior college transfer Nick Nelson, do not appear to be suitable replacements at this time.

"I'm always disappointed if your center, your quarterback, your middle 'backer and your free safety aren't your team captains because they ought to be," Hawkins said. "At quarterback, we're too young for that.

"We're just waiting on Bernard. We have to see what happens with Bernard."

Imperfection: For the offensive line, Perfect Practice Thursday was anything but.

"We just have to get everything perfect, and today was supposed to be a perfect practice — we call it Perfect Practice Thursday — and so if we didn't run the play absolutely perfect, if every single guy didn't do what he's supposed to do, then we run it again at the end of practice," Polumbus said.

"The good news is we have another week. But the bad news is we can't have another Thursday like that. We just have to make sure when



Bernard Jackson, who started 11 games at quarterback for CU last season, may not figure into the game plan for the Buffs' Sept. 1 season opener due to the amount of practice time he's missed this month. **AP file photo/Ty Russell**

we come out here next week every play is perfect.

Hawkins said he got his "horns out" while watching the offense work.

He said its execution was "not even remotely close" to what he expects.

Extra points: CU officials explored traveling Ralphie to Arizona State for the Sept. 8 game, but decided not to based on the heat and the mascot's safety. Arizona State officials were cooperative and would have let her run on the field. ... Hawkins said receiver Markques Simas is rounding into shape. Simas said he spent a month this summer in the Azore Islands before returning to Boulder a week prior to the start of camp. "He's starting to come on and make plays," Hawkins said. "He just needs to build that constant strength those older receivers end up having."

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## CU's Sumler in the running for tailback job

By B.G. Brooks, Rocky Mountain News  
August 23, 2007

BOULDER — Demetrius Sumler can't pinpoint when it occurred, but at some point during the past 10 days, many of the finer points in becoming a Division I-A running back converged for him.

Result: Despite what's shown at tailback on the University of Colorado depth chart, Sumler, a redshirt freshman from San Diego, is neck and neck with Hugh Charles, the incumbent starter.

"He's just giving us a lot more — his speed hitting the hole, his vision, his balance; he's done everything right (in camp)," running backs coach Darian Hagan said of Sumler. "It's just hard to keep him off the field."

A strong showing in last weekend's scrimmage shoved Sumler past senior Byron Ellis and into position to share practice repetitions with Charles in the No. 1 offense. CU's first camp depth chart, released Sunday, shows Sumler behind Charles, Ellis and sophomore Kevin Moyd.

Hagan contends the tailbacks were listed alphabetically, although none of the other offensive groupings were constructed that way. No matter; Sumler, who finished his high school career as the San Diego area's career rushing leader, ignored the listing.

"To be honest, (Hagan) didn't even talk about it and we didn't discuss it with him," Sumler said. "I know I've progressed, but I don't want to relax."

Hagan said he won't hesitate to substitute Sumler for Charles "in whatever we script. If it's a play he does consistently well, and it's the first play coach (Mark) Helfrich (offensive coordinator) calls, he'll be in there."

**ETC.:** Coach **Dan Hawkins** said offensive captain **Bernard Jackson**'s status is "doubtful" for the Sept. 1 opener against . Colorado State. Academic issues have curtailed Jackson's practice time. Hawkins said Jackson took one final exam Wednesday with another scheduled "in a couple of days. He's got some extenuating circumstances that would be tough on me. My heart goes out to the guy; he's got a lot of irons in the fire." . . . Today's final camp scrimmage features situational work and is closed to the public.

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