

College Football

Colorado State 42, Nevada 21

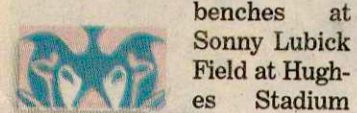
Quick start helps CSU win

Big first quarter pushes Rams past Nevada in home opener

By NICK WALTER
THE GAZETTE

FORT COLLINS • The first sign came on the first play.

Not long after 29,101 fans settled into the seats and benches at Sonny Lubick Field at Hughes Stadium for Colorado State's home opener Saturday, they burst to their feet in a roar as George Bell followed a slew of blockers and nearly took the opening kickoff into the end zone. Even then, it was apparent that the Rams would not be a dysfunctional unit as in their previous two games.



NEXT

Air Force (2-2, 1-2 MWC) at Colorado State (1-2, 0-0), 5:30 p.m. Thursday, ESPN, 740/560 AM

Colorado State built one of the largest first-quarter leads in school history for a 42-21 win over Nevada (1-2).

After being outrushed 468-154 in their first two games, the Rams (1-2) utilized Kyle Bell, whose 183 yards were the most by a Rams running back since Henri Childs piled up 237 against Brigham Young in 2001.

It's safe to say the Rams are ready for their Mountain West opener at home Thursday against Air Force. But Bell isn't taking his breakout performance too far.

"One game doesn't bring it all back," he said. "We've gotta get after it every single game."

Colorado State took advantage of a flurry of big plays and Nevada mistakes: Hill's kickoff return, which was called back because of a hold and gave the Rams possession at their 40; a blocked punt in which Nevada punter Justin Bergendahl dropped a snap that went to his left shoulder and put Colorado State at the Wolfpack 1; and an errant throw by Nevada quarterback Jeff Rowe that was intercepted by Robert Herbert.

The kickoff return and blocked punt led to touchdowns by receivers Johnny Walker and George Hill. Running back Tristan Walker later scored from 2 yards out.

"It was a different kind of game," Colorado State coach Sonny Lubick said. "The first quarter was all us, the second and third quarters were kind of even, and the fourth quarter we got some things going."

The Rams could have taken a 28-0 first-quarter lead after the interception, but their drive fizzled at the Nevada 10.



Rams receiver Johnny Walker was tackled by Nevada linebacker Jamaal Jackson as Kevin Stanley pursued Saturday in Fort Collins.

PHOTOS BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLORADO ST. 42, NEVADA 21	
Nevada	Colorado St.
0 7 7 7-21	21 0 0 21-42
First Quarter	
CSU—J. Walker 26 pass from Holland (Mark kick), 12:31.	CSU—Hill 23 pass from Holland (Mark kick), 5:47.
CSU—T. Walker 2 run (Mark kick), 3:32.	NEV—Mitchell 8 pass from Rowe (Jaekie kick), 9:35.
Second Quarter	
NEV—Sammons 43 pass from Rowe (Jaekie kick), 2:47.	CSU—Bell 1 run (Mark kick), 14:33.
CSU—Bartz 6 pass from Holland (Mark kick), 6:43.	NEV—Darlington 30 pass from Rowe (Jaekie kick), 5:17.
Third Quarter	
Fourth Quarter	

CSU—Morton 40 run (Mark kick), 4:05. A—29,101.		NEV	CSU
First downs	22	24	22
Rushes-yards	31-95	43-257	324
Passing	23-34-2	15-27-0	82
Comp-Att-Int	0	0	0
Return Yards	5-32-0	3-46-9	1-1
Punts-Avg	1-1	1-1	4-20
Fumbles-Lost	4-20	6-48	29-30
Penalties-Yards	4-20	6-48	30-30
Time of Possession	29:30	30:30	
INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS			
RUSHING —Nevada, Mitchell 17-53, Hubbard 6-42, Rowe 7-1, Colorado St., Bell 33-183, Morton 1-40, Johnson 7-20, Green 1-12, T. Walker 1-2.			
PASSING —Nevada, Rowe 23-34-2-324, Colorado St., Holland 15-27-0-223.			
RECEIVING —Nevada, Sammons 7-103, Flowers 5-73, Pudewell 3-34, Spencer 3-28, Darlington 2-48, Brackett 2-30, Mitchell 1-8. Colorado St., Anderson 8-68, J. Walker 4-120, Hill 2-24, Bartz 2-14, Bell 1 (minus-3).			



Colorado State running back Kyle Bell broke loose from Nevada linebacker Scott Garrison during the first quarter Saturday at Sonny Lubick Field at Hughes Stadium in Fort Collins.

To make things worse, Kevin Mark missed a 27-yard field goal and Nevada had touchdown passes in the second and third quarters to cut the lead to 21-14 by the fourth quarter.

Nevada refused to punt on fourth down on two occasions in the third quarter. The first time, on fourth-and-11 at the Rams' 29, Nevada lined up for an apparent pass, had a false start and punted. Later, on fourth-and-7 from the Colorado State 36, receiver Caleb Spencer caught a pass and was stopped a yard short of a first down.

"The defense played fairly well most of the time," Lubick said.

In the fourth quarter, when Colorado State regained its first-quarter form, Rams receiver Johnny Walker re-deemed himself for two drops. After he ran a deep post, Walker outleaped two defenders and made a 48-yard reception that set up Bell's 1-yard touchdown run.

"I saw the ball in the air and I just wanted to catch the ball after those two previous drops," said Walker, who caught four balls for 120 yards and a touchdown. "Justin (Holland) has a strong arm and he has confidence in me."

The Rams' effective passing game was a result of their commitment to the run. Bell was more productive in the first quarter than he'd been all season. One minute in, Bell recorded an 18-yard run, his longest of the season. By the end of the first quarter, Bell had 87 yards, three more than his season total coming in.

"We're not supposed to listen to the media, but (the criticism) gets under our skin," Rams left tackle Mike Brisiel said. "We came out with something to prove. We were playing mean."

CONTACT THE WRITER: 636-0250 or sports@gazette.com

Rams hold top receiver to 28 yards, 3 catches

By NICK WALTER
THE GAZETTE

FORT COLLINS • Before Colorado State's 42-21 win on Saturday, Nevada receiver Caleb Spencer was statistically one of the nation's leading receivers.

He was third in receptions (9.5 per game) and fifth in yardage (135).

Then he ran into the Rams defense and caught three passes for 28 yards. Spencer didn't get his first reception until the third quarter.

The reason, according to Colorado State cornerback Robert Herbert, who was often matched up with the 6-foot, 180-pound Spencer: He's no Johnny Walker.

Walker, a Colorado State receiver, often lines up against Walker in practices.

"We have the best receiver in the conference, so we get to practice against the best every day," Herbert said. "But (Spencer) is good. I'm not trying to down-talk him. After the game I said, 'You gonna make it.' But Johnny is ridiculous."

On the whole, Colorado State's defense allowed 324 yards passing and 95 yards rushing.

"We've got something going," Herbert said. "We're unstoppable, we're on the rise, we're poppin' collars."

The Rams defense had two sacks, two interceptions and a fumble recovery.

"On tape they didn't bluff their blitz as much as they were doing," said Nevada quarterback Jeff Rowe, who completed 23-of-34 passes for 324 yards.

"I didn't want to miss them, so I was calling timeouts because I didn't want to run a bad play."

Misc. Colorado State's 21 first-quarter points is the most the Rams have scored in one quarter since it scored 24 in the first quarter against UNLV in 2004. ... Nevada has lost nine straight road games and is 0-8 against Colorado State. ... The Rams have six sacks on the season. They didn't reach six sacks last season until their sixth game. ... Nevada coach Chris Ault, on punter Justin Bergendahl's drop on a snap that led to a blocked punt and a Colorado State touchdown in the first quarter: "Dropping a snap on a punt, it's not new stuff. No, no it was nothing new. We just didn't execute. They physically beat us in the first quarter."

MWC ROUNDUP

TCU grabs 51-50 victory against BYU

Frogs come back from 18-point deficit, hit extra point for 2nd straight OT win

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

As far as Cory Rodgers was concerned, he got the ball across the goal line before fumbling.

The officials agreed, or at least they couldn't disagree.

Rodgers' fourth touchdown withstood a replay review, and TCU made the extra point that Brigham Young botched in overtime to beat the Cougars 51-50 Saturday at Provo, Utah.

The Cougars took a 50-44 lead in OT when John Beck threw a 25-yard touchdown pass to Todd Watkins. But Justin Luetgerodt's snap on the extra point bounced, and the Horned Frogs wrapped up kicker Jared McLaughlin to keep BYU's lead to six.

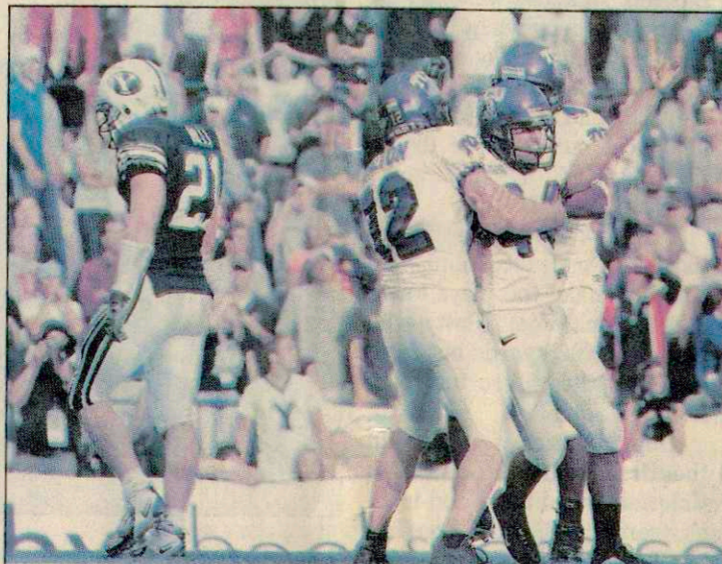
TCU answered with Rodgers' 3-yard touchdown run.

"I thought I was in — definitely in," Rodgers said of the final touchdown, when he was stripped of the ball in a goal-line pileup, but the officials ruled it first crossed into the end zone.

The play was reviewed and replays were inconclusive, so the call stood and Chris Manfredini finished it with the extra point. The Horned Frogs rallied from an 18-point deficit for a second straight overtime win.

Wyoming 24, Mississippi 14 At Oxford, Miss.: Corey Bramlet threw for 220 yards and two touchdowns to help Wyoming beat Mississippi.

Bramlet finished 17-of-33. Wynel Seldon added 124 yards rushing and 78 receiving, including a 5-yard touchdown run.



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TCU kicker Chris Manfredini (44) celebrated with Reeves Dalton (12) after kicking the winning extra point following a touchdown to beat Brigham Young in overtime Saturday.

The Cowboys rolled up 383 yards of total offense and forced Ole Miss into four turnovers.

San Diego St. 52, San Jose St. 21 At San Diego: Kevin O'Connell threw a career-high four touchdown passes as San

Diego State won its first game of the season with a win over San Jose State. O'Connell completed 23-of-29 passes for a career-best 271 yards.

UTEP 21, New Mexico 13 At El Paso, Texas: Joe Fleskowski returned an interception 68 yards for a touchdown, and Nate Draughon recovered a blocked punt in the end zone as UTEP took a win over New Mexico.

New Mexico's DonTrell Moore, with 161 yards on 28 carries, became the 65th player in NCAA history to go over 4,000 yards rushing.

Utah State 31, UNLV 24 At Logan, Utah: Leon Jackson III threw for 212 yards and two touchdowns, the final a 15-yarder in the fourth quarter as Utah State beat UNLV.

Tony Pennyman had 97 yards receiving, including a 12-yard touchdown catch, on a career-high 10 receptions for the Aggies (1-1).

AT A GLANCE

	Conf.	Overall
	W	L
TCU	2	0
New Mexico	1	0
Wyoming	1	0
Utah	1	1
Air Force	1	2
Colorado St.	0	0
BYU	0	1
UNLV	0	1
San Diego St.	0	1

Thursday
Utah 38, Air Force 35

Saturday
TCU 51, BYU 50 (OT)
Colorado St. 42, Nevada 21
Wyoming 24, Mississippi 14
Utah St. 31, UNLV 24
San Diego St. 51, San Jose St. 21
UTEP 21, New Mexico 13

Thursday
Air Force at Colorado St., 5:30 p.m.

Oct. 1
Utah at North Carolina, 11:30 a.m.
UNLV at Wyoming, 1 p.m.
New Mexico at TCU, 5 p.m.
BYU at San Diego St., 8 p.m.