

**WEEK ELEVEN
WASHINGTON ST AT COLORADO**

BOULDER, Colo. -- The 10th-ranked Washington State Cougars weren't in any hurry to bury the Buffaloes. Gardner Minshew II had all day to pick his targets and he overcame a slow start and three fourth-down failures to lead the Cougars past Colorado 31-7 on Saturday. The Cougars (9-1, 6-1 Pac-12, No. 8 CFP) won their sixth straight, but it wasn't as easy as expected against the Buffaloes (5-5, 2-5), who lost their fifth straight despite the return of star receiver Laviska Shenault Jr. Washington State led by three at the half and seven heading into the fourth quarter. They did dominate the clock, however, winning the time of possession by nearly 24 minutes and holding the Buffaloes to an average drive of just 1:38.

"We hogged the ball the whole game," Cougars coach Mike Leach said. "But I thought we could have capitalized on more stuff."

"Our defense was getting them off the field really fast, so hats off to them for getting us the ball," Minshew said.

Washington State led just 10-7 at the break but linebacker Jahad Woods forced and recovered Travon McMillian's fumble at the Colorado 32 on the second play of the second half and Minshew threw a 1-yard dart to Renard Bell, sparking a 21-0 run that finally buried the Buffs.

Minshew, who was hardly pressured all afternoon as Colorado failed to register a single sack for the first time all season, finished 35-of-58 passing for 335 yards and two TDs.

"I was off a little bit but I feel like we figured it out in the second half," said Minshew, who made it 24-7 on a 10-yard scramble in the fourth quarter on a drive was kept alive when Buffs safety Aaron Maddox was flagged for taunting Easop Winston on a key third down stop.

Instead of fourth-and-9, it was first-and-10.

"That was all on me," Maddox said. "I promise you that won't happen again."

In the first half, Minshew didn't look anything like the nation's leading passer that he is.

After having to burn a timeout before the first snap of the game and another one before the first quarter ended with Washington State still scoreless, the Cougars finally got on the board with a 39-yard field goal. They caught a huge break when linebacker Nate Landman, the Buffs' leading tackler, was ejected for targeting after stuffing Minshew for no gain on a second-and-1 keeper in the second quarter. Minshew ran around his left tackle and was ducking when Landman hit him.

"It was a good hit," Minshew said. "But it was a penalty. We're trying to keep players safe and that's what we're doing is throwing a flag when that happens."

"Losing Nate's a tough blow," Colorado coach Mike MacIntyre said. "Some of the mistakes we had underneath, he would have made" those plays.

Without Landman, who was also ejected Oct. 6 against Arizona State, the Buffs couldn't stop the Cougars from taking a 10-7 halftime lead on running back Max Borghi's 28-yard catch and run. Despite their defense holding an opponent scoreless in the first quarter for the fifth straight game, the Buffs didn't capitalize as much as they could have. They only crossed midfield once in their seven first-half possessions, and that came on McMillian's 64-yard scamper to the 3. He ran it in on the next play for a 7-0 lead.

Colorado QB Steven Montez threw for just 67 yards in the first half and finished 20 of 35 for 199 yards and no touchdowns.

"It's a huge win, any win on the road in our conference is hard," Leach said. "It's hard going down the path of real quality opponents. In this conference we don't really have any below average opponents they are all above average opponents. This is a huge win for us."

SHAKING THE RUST

Shenault, who had 11 touchdowns during the Buffs' 5-0 start, was rusty in his return from a right turf toe injury. He caught 10 passes for 102 yards but cost his team dearly with back-to-back drops and a lost fumble.

"I was pretty close" to 100 percent, Shenault said. "I'm feeling fine."

The Cougars didn't act at all concerned about Laviska's return. "Who's that? No. 2?" Washington State defensive lineman Logan Tago said. "Sorry."

THE TAKEAWAY:

Washington State: The Cougars took their time burying the Buffaloes, but in the end, it was a solid rout thanks to their great defense and stout offensive line that kept Minshew's jersey laundry-fresh.

Colorado: Not even the return of Shenault could kick-start the Buffs, who were still missing wide receivers Jay MacIntyre (concussion) and K.D. Nixon (hip). "They both would have made a big difference for us today," Mike MacIntyre said. "There were some balls not caught over the middle that should have been."

POLL IMPLICATIONS

The Cougars should stay in the top 10 with the Pac-12 title in their sights, and they're still the conference's last hope for a College Football Playoff berth.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
WSU	0	10	7	14	31
COLO	7	0	0	0	7

Scoring Summary -----

	WSU	COLO
FIRST QUARTER		
COLO TD 4:14		
Travon McMillian 3 Yd Run (Tyler Francis Kick)		7
3 plays, 80 yards, 0:48	0	
SECOND QUARTER		
WSU FG 13:37		
Blake Mazza 39 Yd Field Goal	3	7
10 plays, 57 yards, 5:37		
WSU TD 8:31		
Max Borghi 28 Yd pass from Gardner Minshew (Blake Mazza Kick)	10	7
7 plays, 75 yards, 3:08		
THIRD QUARTER		
WSU TD 10:56		
Renard Bell 1 Yd pass from Gardner Minshew (Blake Mazza Kick)	17	7
7 plays, 32 yards, 3:30		
FOURTH QUARTER		
WSU TD 14:27		
Gardner Minshew 10 Yd Run (Blake Mazza Kick)	24	7
7 plays, 88 yards, 2:51		
WSU TD 3:46		
James Williams 3 Yd Run (Blake Mazza Kick)	31	7
13 plays, 68 yards, 6:24		

	WSU	COLO
Team Stats		
First Downs	26	12
Total Yards	477	297
Total Plays	94	54
Avg Gain Per Play	5.1	5.5
Net Yards Rushing	131	75
Rushes	33	16
Yards Per Rush	4.0	4.7
Net Yards Passing	346	222
Comp-Att	37-61	21-38
Yards Per Pass	5.7	5.8
Times Sacked	0	3
Yds Lost To Sacks	0	-20
Interceptions	0	1
Punts	4	8
Punt Average	50.0	35.4
Penalties	2	4
Penalty Yards	10	51
Fumbles	1	3
Fumbles Lost	0	2
Possession	41:46	18:14

Individual Stats

RUSHING

	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
WSU					
James Williams	17	60	3.5	1	11
Max Borghi	7	38	5.4	0	22
Gardner Minshew	6	26	4.3	1	10
Keith Harrington	2	4	2.0	0	3
Travell Harris	1	3	3.0	0	3
COLO					
Travon McMillian	9	73	8.1	1	64
Laviska Shenault Jr.	1	18	18.0	0	18
Sam Noyer	1	0	0.0	0	0
Dimitri Stanley	1	-1	-1.0	0	0
Steven Montez	4	-15	-3.8	0	5

PASSING

	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
WSU							
Gardner Minshew	35	58	335	5.8	2	0	120.2
Anthony Gordon	2	2	11	5.5	0	0	146.2
James Williams	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
COLO							
Steven Montez	20	35	199	5.7	0	0	104.9
Sam Noyer	1	3	23	7.7	0	1	31.1

RECEIVING

	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
WSU					
Dezmon Patmon	8	103	12.9	0	48
Calvin Jackson Jr.	5	53	10.6	0	21
James Williams	5	43	8.6	0	16
Max Borghi	3	34	11.3	1	28
Davontavean Martin	3	34	11.3	0	23
Jamire Calvin	3	30	10.0	0	17
Travell Harris	3	19	6.3	0	9
Keith Harrington	1	8	8.0	0	8
Kyle Sweet	1	8	8.0	0	8
Easop Winston	2	6	3.0	0	7
Kainoa Wilson	1	5	5.0	0	5
Renard Bell	2	3	1.5	1	2
COLO					
Laviska Shenault Jr.	10	102	10.2	0	18
Juwann Winfree	4	59	14.8	0	27
Kabion Ento	2	29	14.5	0	23
Dimitri Stanley	3	19	6.3	0	9
Tony Brown	1	7	7.0	0	7
Travon McMillian	1	6	6.0	0	6