

WEEK ONE
 COLORADO ST vs COLORADO

Colorado begins Mel Tucker era by beating Colorado St 52-31

DENVER -- Mel Tucker's debut as Colorado coach was a success in part because his defense created four turnovers.

The real takeaway was this: The Buffaloes still have work to do.

"Winning is good," Tucker said. "We've got a ways to go before I can say that's the type of football team that we want to have."

Tailback Alex Fontenot scored three second-half touchdowns and safety Mikial Onu intercepted two passes as Colorado beat Colorado State 52-31 on Friday night to kick off the Tucker era.

"This is a starting point," Tucker said after a game that lasted 3 hours, 19 minutes and featured a 37-minute lightning delay before the opening kick. "I'm looking forward to getting this film watched and getting these corrections."

Fontenot finished with 125 yards rushing to help the Buffs win their fifth straight over the Rams in what was the final Rocky Mountain Showdown held in Denver. The 83 combined points were the most in the rivalry's 91-game history.

Tucker was hired in December after serving as defensive coordinator at Georgia. He appreciated all the turnovers. He didn't appreciate allowing 505 total yards.

"The yardage and some of the plays we gave up, I'm not happy about that," he said.

Fontenot broke out of several tackles on a 22-yard run with 9:16 remaining to give the Buffaloes a 45-31 lead. Jonathan Van Diest helped seal the win by sacking Collin Hill, who fumbled the ball. Mustafa Johnson scooped it up and scored from 9 yards.

Colorado figured the player wearing jersey No. 2 would make a couple acrobatic catches. He did, too -- Onu, who shares the same number as standout receiver Laviska Shenault Jr.

Onu picked off two Hill passes to thwart drives.

The turning point in a close game was the first play of the second half when Colorado State's Marvin Kinsey Jr. fumbled the ball. Three plays later, Fontenot scored from 7 yards out to make it 31-21.

The fumble infuriated Colorado State coach Mike Bobo, who felt the play should've been stopped. He wasn't pleased with the officiating crew being from the Pac-12, either.

"I don't understand how big this game is that you don't have neutral refs," Bobo said. "It's too big a game not to have neutral refs. That's all I'm going to say about that."

"It's hard to beat anyone when you turn the ball over four times."

Rams freshman receiver Dante Wright made an instant impact. His first career catch went for a 39-yard touchdown in the first quarter and he later scampered 41 yards for a score.

To no one's surprise, Colorado State kept close tabs on Shenault. All he did last season against the Rams was catch 11 passes for 211 yards and two scores.

Shenault made a big impact late in the first half when he blew by cornerback Rashad Ajayi and caught a 25-yard TD pass to give the Buffaloes a 24-21 lead. It was a rough first half for Ajayi, who was called for two pass interference calls while trying to cover Shenault.

Onu did the number worn by Shenault proud with a juggling interception in the end zone during the first half.

"It was a huge stop for us," said Onu, a graduate transfer from Southern Methodist. "I was happy to make the play."

A rivalry that's been played in Denver the last 10 years will move to the Colorado State campus next season. Then, the two schools take a brief break before resuming a home-and-home series in 2023 (Boulder) and '24 (Fort Collins). The plans get a little murkier after that, with a tentative home-and-home series set for '29 and '30 along with '33 and '34.

There are no current arrangements to bring the game back to Denver.

THE TAKEAWAY

Colorado: The defense remains a work in progress. But the offense was rolling behind senior quarterback Steven Montez, who threw for 232 yards and two scores.

Colorado State: Rams coach Mike Bobo falls to 0-5 against Colorado. ... Hill had a big night by throwing for 374 yards and three TDs.

ROAD SCHOLAR

Colorado State receiver Warren Jackson caught his seventh career TD pass in the second quarter. All of his scores have been away from Fort Collins.

NOTABLE ARRIVALS

Broncos running back and former Colorado standout Phillip Lindsay attended the game. So did Hall of Fame cornerback Champ Bailey, whose son Keevan Bailey is a defensive back for the Rams.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
CSU	7	14	3	7	31
COLO	7	17	14	14	52

Scoring Summary -----

	CSU	COLO
FIRST QUARTER		
COLO TD 9:30 Jalen Harris 1 Yd pass from Steven Montez (James Stefanou Kick)		7
10 plays, 75 yards, 5:30	0	7
CSU TD 6:42 Dante Wright 39 Yd pass from Collin Hill (Max Poduska Kick)	7	
6 plays, 80 yards, 2:48	7	7
SECOND QUARTER		
COLO FG 14:13 James Stefanou 41 Yd Field Goal		10
8 plays, 56 yards, 3:14	7	10
CSU TD 8:39 Warren Jackson 8 Yd pass from Collin Hill (Max Poduska Kick)		14
11 plays, 92 yards, 5:34	14	10
COLO TD 5:37 Jaren Mangham 5 Yd Run (James Stefanou Kick)		17
6 plays, 75 yards, 3:02	14	17
CSU TD 1:35 Dante Wright 41 Yd Run (Max Poduska Kick)		21
7 plays, 75 yards, 4:02	21	17
COLO TD 0:25 Laviska Shenault Jr. 25 Yd pass from Steven Montez (James Stefanou Kick)		24
6 plays, 75 yards, 1:10	21	24
THIRD QUARTER		
COLO TD 13:47 Alex Fontenot 7 Yd Run (James Stefanou Kick)		31
3 plays, 27 yards, 0:54	21	31
CSU FG 4:30 Max Poduska 42 Yd Field Goal		24
11 plays, 56 yards, 6:16	24	31
COLO TD 0:00 Alex Fontenot 14 Yd Run (James Stefanou Kick)		38
9 plays, 68 yards, 4:30	24	38
FOURTH QUARTER		
CSU TD 12:13 Cameron Butler 13 Yd pass from Collin Hill (Max Poduska Kick)		31
6 plays, 75 yards, 2:47	31	38
COLO TD 9:16 Alex Fontenot 22 Yd Run (James Stefanou Kick)		45
6 plays, 75 yards, 2:57	31	45
COLO TD 3:57 Mustafa Johnson 9 Yd Fumble Return (James Stefanou Kick)		31
4 plays, 1 yard, 1:55	31	52

Team Stats CSU COLO

First Downs	27	23
Passes for First	18	10
Rushes for First	8	11
Penalties for First	1	2
Third Down Efficiency	5-12	3-9
Fourth Down Efficiency	2-4	1-1
Total Yards	505	475
Total Plays	78	60
Avg Gain Per Play	6.5	7.9
Net Yards Rushing	131	243
Rushes	31	40
Yards Per Rush	4.2	6.1
Net Yards Passing	374	232
Comp-Att	31-47	13-20
Yards Per Pass	8.0	11.6
Times Sacked	2	0
Yds Lost To Sacks	-17	0
Interceptions	2	0
Punts	1	4
Punt Average	59.0	49.0
Penalties	6	4
Penalty Yards	64	43
Fumbles	3	0
Fumbles Lost	2	0
Time of Poss	32:55	27:05

Individual Stats

RUSHING

COLORADO ST	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Dante Wright	3	59	19.7	1	41
Marvin Kinsey Jr.	12	41	3.4	0	10
Jaylen Thomas	7	29	4.1	0	9
Christian Hunter	3	10	3.3	0	5
Collin Hill	4	8	2.0	0	15
COLORADO	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Alex Fontenot	19	125	6.6	3	32
Jaren Mangham	11	40	3.6	1	12
Steven Montez	5	39	7.8	0	19
Laviska Shenault Jr.	3	35	11.7	0	23
Deion Smith	2	4	2.0	0	3

PASSING

COLORADO ST	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Collin Hill	31	47	374	8.0	3	2	81.9
COLORADO	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Steven Montez	13	20	232	11.6	2	0	94.9

RECEIVING

COLORADO ST	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Warren Jackson	8	87	10.9	1	29
Dante Wright	4	72	18.0	1	39
Marvin Kinsey Jr.	5	69	13.8	0	31
Trey McBride	4	52	13.0	0	22
Jaylen Thomas	3	28	9.3	0	17
Adam Prentice	2	20	10.0	0	14
Nikko Hall	2	18	9.0	0	9
Cameron Butler	2	17	8.5	1	13
EJ Scott	1	11	11.0	0	11
COLORADO	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Tony Brown	3	71	23.7	0	38
Laviska Shenault Jr.	3	48	16.0	1	25
Brady Russell	2	44	22.0	0	27
K.D. Nixon	2	29	14.5	0	19
Jalen Harris	2	24	12.0	1	23
Dimitri Stanley	1	16	16.0	0	16