Oklahoma 39, Colorado 7
December 1, 2001 (Irving, Texas)

IRVING, Texas — Texas Stadium just north of Dallas was supposed to be a neutral site for the sixth annual Big 12 Championship game, but it was the 7,000 or so Colorado fans who were making it their own, reveling in the happy fact that the No. 9 Buffaloes claimed their first Big 12 crown with a 39-7 win over the No. 3 Texas Longhorns.

A hostile environment was taken up a notch before the game when it was announced that No. 2 Florida had lost to Tennessee, paving the way to the national championship game in the Rose Bowl for the 10-1 Longhorns if they could beat the Buffs. And UT came out inspired, stifling the CU offense on its first possession and then scoring on its first drive, marching in 85 yards in just 10 plays to take a 7-0 lead.

Two series later, Texas was again driving and had reached the CU 22, but backliner Aaron Kil opponent killed off a Chris Simms pass and raced 73 yards to the UT 12. Chris Brown scored on a 10-yard run two plays later, and it ignored a 2:33 scoring spree for the Buffaloes over the next 15 minutes as the Buffs used four Longhorn turnovers to take control of the game.

On CU’s next possession, Brown got things going with a 24-yard pass to get the Buffs into field goal range, enabling Jeremy Flores to make a good on a 29-yard kick on the second play of the second quarter. The Buffs took a 10-7 lead, one it would never relinquish, and then a 21-14 halftime lead.

Bobby Poppus five-yard field goal, but on the first play of UT’s next possession, DeAndre Fluellen sacked Simms and forced a fumble that Matt McGonigly recovered at the Texas 22.

Bobby Poppus big hit ended Graham’s punt return to lead to 22-10, but the two points try failed. CU finished the scoring blitz when Medford Moore picked up Kil opponent’s first career pass three plays later and returned it 64 yards for a touchdown and a 29-10 Colorado advantage. Moore’s punt returnogue replaced Simms at quarterback for CU and hooked up with B.J. Johnson on a 79-yard scoring play to slice the Buff lead to 29-17 at halftime.

Romann Hollon, the nation’s leading punt returner, brought a short UT punt back to the Texas 48 after forcing the Longhorns into a 16-yard out and out to the second-yard line. Jere McCoy made an acrobatic 33-yard catch of a Pesavento pass to get CU to the UT 15, and two plays later, Brown used an Andy Gurode block to spring free for an 11-yard touchdown run and a 36-10 lead.

Texas added a couple of big plays against Colorado’s field goal get to with 36-23 with 13:42 left in the game, and a CU fake punt that went away saw Roderick Babers return an interception 54 yards for a touchdown, the lead to 36-30 just four minutes later. But the Buffs were back in the 19-14, 51-yard, 16-play, 31-yard drive that produced a 45-yard field goal by Flores to again make it a 19-14 lead.

Colorado got back in the game and had momentum on its side for the first half of the third quarter. The defense came out of the lockerroom and held the Buffs to three-and-out on their first series. Blake Fruhler fumbled at the Buff 20, the freshman back Olympic ran the 20-yard and returned 80 yards for a touchdown, his second punt return score of the year, and Brougham’s extra point cut the deficit to 13-7.

The Longhorns held the Buffs again, and on their next possession, Brandon Druin’s 44-yard field goal was the third and final set of CU in the red zone. But once again the drive stuffer, and Brougham’s 33-yard field goal just missed wide right. The Buffs were a bit deflated after that point, and CU seized the opportunity to drive 80 yards in 11 plays, with Griffin scoring from 36 yards out. The Buffs missed the deuce and took a 19-7 lead into the fourth quarter.

Any hopes of a comeback were all but dashed when Oklahoma drove its tree to the CU 5 over the course of a 16-play, seven-plus-minute drive. Though CU kept OU out of the end zone, Druin made a 29-yard field goal to extend the Sooners lead to 19-7. Griffin’s 27-yard touchdown run late in the game closed the night’s scoring.

Colorado finished with 122 yards, a sterling effort since CU was without the services of Doak Walker finalist Chris Brown and sidekick Bobby Purify, who played a few snaps in special third down situations. The Buffs managed only 67 passing yards and 193 overall, while OU piled up 401 in the turnover free game.

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS


Texas: 10 7 3 7 — 37
Colorado: 7 22 7 3 — 39

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing—Texas: Benson 5 run (Mangum kick) 0-7 9.56 1Q
Colorado: Brown 10 run (Flores kick) 7-7 2.21 1Q
Colorado: Poppus 29 run (Flores kick) 10-10 14.24 1Q
Colorado: Brown 1 run (kick failed) 16-7 11.36 2Q
Texas: Mangum 50 FG 16-10 5.49 2Q
Colorado: Calhoun 22 pass from Pesavento (pass failed) 23-10 3.48 2Q
Colorado: Moore 64 interception return (Flores kick) 29-10 2.32 2Q
Texas: Johnson 9 pass from Applewhite (Mangum kick) 39-29 1.47 2Q
Colorado: Brown 11 run (Flores kick) 36-17 1.11 2Q
Texas: Mann 26 FG 36-20 1.37 2Q
Texas: Mangum 38 FG 36-23 1.42 2Q
Texas: Babers 54 interception return (Mangum kick) 36-30 9.10 4Q
Colorado: Flores 43 FG 39-30 1.58 4Q
Colorado: Johnson 1 pass from Applewhite (Mangum kick) 39-37 0.31 4Q


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The Sooner D stiffened, but the Buffs averted a shutout when Mason Crosby made good Sims picked off his fifth pass of the season and returned it 40 yards to the Oklahoma 32.

extended to 35-0 after Peterson scored on a 3-yard run to cap a 41-yard drive that ensued pass put the Sooners in business at the CU 40. The 28-0 score held at intermission, and when they got the ball back, the duo repeated the feat on OU's next drive in building a pass for a score from White to Mark Clayton.

After the Buffs lost 10 yards on three plays of. A 55-yard punt by John Torp, who was one of few bright spots on the night, got the down conversions, with White getting Oklahoma on the board with a 5-yard TD pass both had plenty of support. Peterson had runs of 18 and 24 yards on OU's first drive, which featured three third down conversions, with White getting Oklahoma on the board with a 5-yard TD pass to Will Peoples, the fifth time CU allowed a touchdown on the game's first possession.

The Buffs' response to the opening score likely could dictate the way the game would play out. CU picked up a first down by penalty on its second play when quarter-back Joel Klett was the victim of a late hit, but two straight penalties against Colorado liners (holding and a false start) set up a first-and-25 that the Buffs could not get out of. A 55-yard punt by John Torp, who was one of few bright spots on the night, got the Buffs out of trouble, or so it seemed.

The Sooners countered with a quick 6-play, 63-yard effort topped off by a 22-yard pass for a score from White to Mark Clayton. After the Buffs lost 10 yards on three plays when they got the ball back, the duo repeated the feat on OU's next drive in building a 21-0 lead. Peterson scored on a 1-yard after an Antonio Perkins interception of a Klett pass put the Sooners in business at the CU 40. The 28-0 score held at intermission, and extended to 35-0 after Peterson scored on a 3-yard run to cap a 41-yard drive that ensued following a failed fourth down punt fake by the Buffaloes.

Late in the third quarter, Colorado enjoyed its best moments of the game. Lorenzo Sims picked off his fifth pass of the season and returned it 40 yards to the Oklahoma 32. The Sooner D stiffened, but the Buffs averted a shutout when Mason Crosby made good on a 34-yard field goal. Peterson added a 32-yard TD run early in the fourth to close the game's scoring.

Oklahoma gained 498 yards on offense, though CU had 10 tackles for loss, but the Sooners limited CU to its third fewest yards in history, as the Buffs netted 46 on just 44 plays from scrimmage.


Passing—Colorado: Klett 26-8-1, Torp 1-1-0. Oklahoma: White 29-22-2, 469 yards, 5 TD; Clymer 1-0-0, 0 yards, none.

Receiving—Colorado: Mackey 3-14, Judge 1-10. Littlehales 1-8, Pardy 1-7, Sprague 1-6, Duren 1-4, Montestari 1-3, Brooks 1-1. Oklahoma: Clymer 8-106, Wilson 7-72, Bradley 4-46, K.Jones 3-12, Runnels 1-13, B.Jones 1-6, Peoples 1-5, Finley 1-2.

Punting—Colorado: Torp 9-43.5 (35 long, 0 in20). Oklahoma: Ferguson 4-38.8 (52 long, 2 in20).


Interceptions—Colorado: Sims 1-34, Wheatley 1-0. Oklahoma: Perkins 1-0.

Tackle Leaders—Colorado: Iwuh 8-4-12, T Washington 10-1-11, Henderson 5-3-8, Hubbard 2-5-7, Brooks 60. Oklahoma: Carrier 32-1-2, Sims 5-0-5, Dawson 3-1-5, Maymonna 3-1-4, Wheatley 3-1-4.


CU IN THE PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — Colorado lost starting quarterback Sefo Liufau for almost the entire first half to injury and the Buffs never found their rhythm in dropping a 41-10 decision to Washington in the Pac-12 Championship game at Levi’s Stadium.

For the first time this year, a CU opponent took the opening kickoff and scored, as Washington went 65 yards on seven plays for the game’s opening touchdown. The big play on the drive was a 26-yard run from Lavon Coleman, which put the Huskies on CU’s 12. Four plays later, Coleman scored from 1 yard out for a 7-0 lead. Colorado took the kickoff and drove into Washington territory before Liufau was injured on a quarterback sack. Steven Montez replaced Liufau and two plays later, threw an incompletion on fourth down.

CU’s defense, however, returned the favor. The Buffs sacked Washington quarterback Jake Browning twice on the Huskies’ next possession, including a fourth-down stop from Jimmie Gilbert and Timothy Coleman Jr. that gave the ball back to Colorado.

Montez then engineered a seven-play, 55-yard scoring drive to tie the game. He completed a 13-yard pass to Kyle Evans on third-and-7 to keep the drive alive and followed that with a 21-yard strike to Shay Fields to the UW 9. Two plays later, Phillip Lindsay scored from 3 yards out and Davis Price’s PAT gave the Huskies a 14-7 lead that held until halftime.

The two teams then traded punts, but the Huskies came out with good field position after CU was forced to kick from deep in its own territory. UW then drove 56 yards (nine plays) for the go-ahead score with Jake Browning throwing a 15-yard pass to Darrell Daniels and the PAT gave Washington a 21-7 lead with 14:44 left in the game.

The Buffs then drove 70 yards (nine plays) for the tie with Jake Browning throwing a 15-yard pass to Darrell Daniels and the PAT gave the Huskies a 21-7 lead that held until halftime. Liufau returned behind center for the Buffs to start the second half, but on CU’s first play from scrimmage, a tipped pass ended up in the hands of Washington’s Taylor Rapp, who returned it 35 yards for a touchdown. The PAT gave Washington a 21-7 lead with 14:44 still to go in the third quarter. UW’s defense then struck again, with Rapp notching his second interception of Liufau and returning it to the CU 25. Colorado’s defense rose to the occasion and held UW to a 24-yard Cameron Van Winkle field goal, but the Huskies still held a 24-7 lead with 11:27 still to go in the third period. And two possessions later, starting at their own 40, UW needed just four plays to go 60 yards to go up 31-7 and essentially put the game out of reach.

The Buffs were outgained 383-163, with the Huskies racking up 265 yards on the ground and winning the turnover battle, picking off three passes, while CU saw its nation-leading streak of games with at least one defensive takeaway end at 25.

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**INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS**

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<tr>
<th>COLORADO</th>
<th>Washington</th>
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**TEAM STATISTICS**

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**Statistics:**

- Washington: Coleman 1 run (Van Winkle kick) 0-7 11:53 1Q
- Colorado: Lindsay 3 run (Price kick) 7-0 0:49 1Q
- Washington: Daniels 15 pass from Browning (Van Winkle kick) 7-14 6:38 2Q
- Washington: Rapp 35 interception return (Van Winkle kick) 7-21 14:44 3Q
- Washington: Van Winkle 24 FG 7-21 11:27 3Q
- Washington: Ross 19 pass from Browning (Van Winkle kick) 7-31 5:21 3Q
- Colorado: Graham 24 FG 10-31 3:43 3Q
- Washington: Van Winkle 20 FG 10-31 14:07 4Q
- Washington: McClatcher 8 run (Van Winkle kick) 10-41 4:23 4Q

**Attendance:** 47,118

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**PUNTING**

- Colorado: Fruend 1-15, McClatcher 1-9, Pettis 1-7, Sample 1-8

- Washington: Vazquez 5-40.6 (62 long, 11:53)

**RECEIVING**

- Colorado: Pettis 8-62, Mckeever 2-45, Fields 2-36, Parker 1-17, Utomi 1-17, Friend 1-13, Bradbury 1-10

- Washington: Lindsay 3-19, Fields 2-18, Davis 1-12, Liufau 1-11, Coan 1-9, Gehrke 1-9, Pitts 1-3, Utomi 1-17, Friend 1-11, Bradbury 1-10

**RUSHING**

- Colorado: Lavon 13-5-1, Fields 2-6, Utomi 1-4, Utomi 1-1, Bradbury 1-12

- Washington: Vazquez 1-11, Davis 1-5, Fruend 1-5, McClatcher 1-4, Fields 1-4, Utomi 1-4, Bradbury 1-12

**INTERCEPTIONS**

- Colorado: Baker/Bierria/Wooching 1,3—4

- Washington: Tupou 1,2—3; Coleman 1,1—2; Franke 0,1—4; Thompson 0,1—4; Awuzie 4,2—6; Carrell 2,3—5; Gamboa 2,2—4; Gilbert 2,2—4; Koaliva 2,2—4; Thompson 3,0—3; Tupou 1,2—3; Coleman 1,1—2; Franke 0,1—4; Jackson 0,1—4; Washington: Bartlett 3,3—7; Burr 1,2—2; McKinney 2,3—5; Baker/Bierria/Wooching 1,1—4

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**PASSES BROKEN UP**

- Colorado: Avanzie 2, Oliver 2, Gilbert, Laguda, Moeller, Thompson, Witherspoon

- Washington: Baker 2, King 2, Bryant