

## Deion “Coach Prime” Sanders



Known as “Prime Time” during his Hall of Fame playing career, Deion Sanders and has since transitioned into “Coach Prime,” and was named the 28th full-time head football coach at the University of Colorado, athletic director Rick George announced Saturday, Dec. 3, 2022.

Coach Prime put the Buffs back on the map, as CU was the center of the college football world through September in his first season. Despite finishing 4-8, Colorado was the most watched team in the nation until the final week of the regular season and finished sixth despite not making the postseason. CU was on network television a record five times and had eight games on either network TV or the flagship ESPN.

In two recruiting cycles, he has recruiting three five-star prospect to the Buffs, matching the total from the previous 21 seasons combined. CU's first five games of 2023 ended up being in five of the top 25 most watched games in college football through the bowl season and playoffs, and five of the top 13 rated games in CU history.

Coach Prime joined the Buffs from Jackson State University, where in three seasons the Tigers compiled a 27-6 record and won back-to-back Southwestern Athletic Conference championships and Celebration Bowl appearances competing on the FCS level; that mark included a 12-1 record this season. This year, Jackson State defeated Southern, 43-24, in the SWAC title game but fell in overtime to N.C. Central, 41-34, in the Celebration Bowl.

At Jackson State, Sanders achieved tremendous success on and off the field as a fierce advocate for additional exposure and a level playing field for all Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Sanders brought national attention to HBCUs, pushing for opportunities to highlight its talent and the culture. In March 2022, Sanders held a Pro Day featuring athletes from four other schools in the state of Mississippi to provide a platform in front of 22 NFL teams and the Canadian Football League. In April 2022, Jackson State became the first HBCU to have its spring football game televised live nationally on ESPNU.

Sanders was named the 21st head coach in Jackson State history on Sept. 21, 2020, but had to wait to coach his first game until COVID-19 restrictions were lifted and several FCS schools opted to play a delayed schedule in the spring. Exactly six months to the day later (Feb. 21, 2021), he led the Tigers to a 53-0 win over Edward Waters (Fla.) to begin the “Coach Prime Era.” It was considered the touch point of the elevation of JSU football and the University into becoming one of the most impactful and recognizable brands nationwide.

JSU was 4-3 in the pandemic-delayed 2020 season before rolling to an 11-2 record in 2021, winning the SWAC title with a 27-10 win over Prairie View A&M in the title game. The Tigers lost to South Carolina State in the Celebration Bowl; otherwise their only other losses over his last 26 games was a 12-7 setback at FBS Louisiana-Monroe in Sept. '21 and this year's bowl.

Seven of his players on the 2021 JSU roster earned a professional opportunity in the NFL, CFL or USFL, including James Houston IV, who was drafted in the sixth round by the Detroit Lions. He also signed cornerback Travis Hunter, considered the top high school prospect in the nation, to an NLI in December 2021, the highest ranked prospect to ever sign with an HBCU or an FCS program.

Sanders was voted the SWAC's Coach of the Year for a second straight season; 12 of his players earned some level of All-SWAC honors. For the 2021 campaign, he also garnered

## Get To Know Coach Prime

### Coaching History

2023	Colorado Head Coach
2020-22	Jackson State Head Coach
2017-20	Trinity Christian HS OC

### NFL Playing History

2004-05	Baltimore Ravens
2000	Washington Redskins
1995-99	Dallas Cowboys
1994	San Francisco 49ers
1989-93	Atlanta Falcons

### MLB Playing History

2001	Cincinnati Reds
1997	Cincinnati Reds
1995	San Francisco Giants
1994-95	Cincinnati Reds
1991-94	Atlanta Braves
1989-90	New York Yankees

### Broadcast History

2001-04	CBS NFL Today
2005-19	NFL Network

### Honors

Pro Football Hall of Fame (Class of 2011)  
 College Football Hall of Fame (Class of 2011)  
 Super Bowl Champion (XXIX, XXX)  
 NFL Defensive Player of the Year (1994)  
 First-Team All-Pro (Six Times, 1992-94, 1996-98)  
 Second-Team All-Pro (Twice, 1991-99)  
 Eight Pro Bowls (1991-94, 1996-99)  
 NFL 1990s All-Decade Team  
 NFL 100th Anniversary All-Time Team  
 Jim Thorpe Award Winner (1988)  
 Two Time Unanimous All-American (1987, 99)  
 BOXTROW National Coach of the Year  
 Eddie Robinson National Coach of the Year  
 Black College Hall of Fame Coach of the Year  
 Two-Time SWAC Coach of the Year

### Statistics

.263	Career Batting Average
22	Touchdowns
39	Home Runs
53	Interceptions
168	RBI
186	Stolen Bases
512	Tackles
7,838	All-Purpose Yards

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honors for the FCS Eddie Robinson National Coach of the Year, BOXTOTOW National Coach of the Year and Black College Hall of Fame Coach of the Year.

Prior to joining the collegiate coaching ranks at Jackson State, Sanders had been involved in coaching for over a decade. He was the offensive coordinator at Trinity Christian School (Cedar Hill, Texas), leading the Tigers to three straight Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) titles and a 42-3 record.

A two-time unanimous first-team All-American at Florida State, he won the third annual Jim Thorpe Award in 1988, presented to the nation’s top defensive back. That same year, he finished eighth in the voting for the Heisman Trophy.

He finished his Seminole football career with 14 interceptions, three returned for touchdowns; those are still tied for third in the FSU record book. He owns the longest interception return in school history when he raced 100 yards for a TD against Tulsa as a freshman. Sanders also racked up a still-school record 1,429 punt return yards with three more scores. Playing for the late Hall of Fame coach Bobby Bowden, FSU was 36-9-1 in his four seasons as a Seminole, finishing as the nation’s No. 2 team as a junior in 1987 and No. 3 his senior season in 1988.

He also played one season of baseball for FSU (as a sophomore in 1987, batting .267 with three home runs, 21 runs batted in and 27 stolen bases) and ran sprints and relays in track (he was the 1988 Metro Conference outdoor champion in the 100- and 200-meter dashes). He was inducted into Florida State’s Athletic Hall of Fame in 1994 and into the College Football Hall of Fame in its 2011 class.

Sanders is the only athlete ever to play in both a Super Bowl (twice) and the World Series.

He appeared in 188 regular season games (157 starts) in the National Football League with five teams: Atlanta (1989-93; the Falcons selected him as the fifth overall pick in the first round in the ’89 Draft), San Francisco (1994), Dallas (1995-99), Washington (2000) and Baltimore (2004-05). He was the NFL Defensive Player of the Year for 1994, was named to its 1990s All-Decade Team and to the NFL’s All-Time Team in 2020, the latter as part of the league’s 100th season celebration.

“Prime Time” made 53 interceptions over the course of his career, with 512 tackles, 19 forced fumbles and 13 recoveries. He amassed 7,838 all-purpose yards, primarily through returns (2,199 punt, 3,523 kickoff). He also caught 60 passes for 784 yards and three touchdowns as in 1996, he became just one of two, two-way starters in the NFL since the platoon days of the 1950s. He set an NFL record with 19 career touchdowns on returns, nine coming via interception returns with six on punts, three on kickoffs and one fumble run back.

In Major League Baseball, he was drafted out of high school in the sixth round of the 1985 draft by the Kansas City Royals and then selected in the ’88 draft by the New York Yankees.

Sanders played a total of 11 seasons in professional baseball, nine in the major leagues with the New York Yankees (1989-90), Atlanta (1991-94), Cincinnati (1994-95, 1997, 2001) and San Francisco (1995). In 641 major league games, he owned a career batting average of .263 with 39 home runs, 168 runs batted in and 186 stolen bases.

## The Prime Effect

- <1** Hour to sell out student tickets.
- 2.932** Best team term GPA on record from last springs semester. It was the first time over a 2.9 and the third time over a 2.8.
- 3** 5-Star Recruits
- 4** First time in CU history appearing on all four major networks in the same season (ABS, CBS, NBC, FOX).
- 5** Games on FOX's Big Noon Kickoff Pregame show, including four of the first five games in 2023.
- 14** Games Completely Sold Out
- 98%** Season Ticket Renewal Rate, both in 2023 and '24
- 783%** Increase in social media followers on CU Football sites, from 226K to 2.36M
- 113.2** Million dollars of impact in the six home games in 2023.
- 2.11M** More Followers On CU Football Social Media Sites Since Coach Prime’s Hiring
- 343M** Equivalent of advertising off of appearances on College Gameday, Big Noon Kickoff, 60 Minutes, as well as being featured on the covers of Sports Illustrated and Fast Magazine.