



Spring Football



For 40 years, spring practice traditionally ended with a game between the Colorado Varsity and Alumni. Back at the turn of the century, an Alumni team usually served as the season opener for the varsity (13 times all told, with the Varsity owning an 11-0-2 edge in those games). The Varsity held a 20-3 edge in the old format of the spring series, which started back in 1953 under then head coach Dal Ward. After a pair of games, the series became dormant until 1963 when it was revived by Eddie Crowder. There was no game between 1974 and 1976, and the 1978 game was cancelled due to a blizzard.

A new format for the Varsity-Alumni game (implemented in 1988) had the alumni playing in the first and third quarters, with the first team of the varsity playing the second and fourth quarters. They were pitted against the second- and third-team members of the varsity, resulting in a competitive and fun game. The alumni and first-team varsity always wore black. This format was discontinued following 1992 for competitive reasons.

The all-time results of the Varsity-Alumni game:

Year	Score	Attend.
1953	Varsity, 6-0	2,300
1954	Varsity, 7-6	1,200
1963	Alumni, 14-6	11,500
1964	Alumni, 10-7	10,000
1965	Varsity, 13-12	6,000
1966	Varsity, 23-6	10,500
1967	*Varsity, 29-16	3,500
1968	Alumni, 23-0	7,500
1969	Varsity, 37-10	9,000
1970	Varsity, 41-12	6,500
1971	Varsity, 13-0	4,500
1972	Varsity, 28-0	8,500
1973	Varsity, 14-13	6,500
1977	Varsity, 43-27	9,000
1979	Varsity, 31-0	5,277
1980	Varsity, 24-14	4,688
1981	Varsity, 24-0	3,369
1982	Varsity, 35-15	4,144
1983	Varsity, 42-0	3,804
1984	Varsity, 14-6	4,023
1985	Varsity, 24-0	4,211
1986	Varsity, 31-7	3,855
1987	Varsity, 24-0	2,235
1988	#Black, 23-14	2,750
1989	#White, 38-35	13,642
1990	#White, 27-25	11,336
1991	#Black, 21-17	10,382
1992	#Black, 44-7	9,618

*—played in Denver due to stadium expansion

#—First-team varsity and alumni wore black jerseys, remainder of varsity white jerseys.

The format for the game in 1993 and 1994 was to pit the first-team offense and defense against the remainder of the squad. The results of this series:

Year	Score	Attend.
1993	White, 24-13	2,500
1994	Black, 45-3	1,650

An intrasquad game was started in 1987 and was dubbed the "Black & White" game (which evolved into the "Black & Gold" game). The format for this has varied through the years, depending on the health of the team; most years, the team is divided by the coaching staff into two units of comparable strength. Injuries in the 2001-03 and 2005 seasons forced an offense-defense formatted game with its own unique scoring system, and in 2006-07 the team scrimmaged due to a lack of offensive linemen. In 2008, the Black team was the first-team offense, the Gold team the second and third-teamers; that year, in response to a challenge by former head coach Bill McCartney, a then-CU spring record crowd of 17,800 turned out for the game. In 2010, 2014 and 2015, the players drafted the teams themselves. Under Deion "Coach Prime" Sanders, the three largest Spring Games have taken place attendance wise, with the 2023 game televised by ESPN, only one of two games televised on a linear network and the only one on ESPN, and in 2025, ESPN2 televised the only linear spring game that year for the Buffaloes. A look at this series:

Year	Score	Attend.
1987	Black, 6-3	—
1988	White, 7-3	—
1989	Black, 14-10	—
1990	White, 14-10	—
1991	Black, 28-9	—
1992	Black, 22-19	—
1993	Black, 17-7	—
1994	White, 14-7	—
1995	Silver, 20-6	2,600
1996	Gold, 30-20	7,500
1997	Gold, 14-0	6,100
1998	Silver, 14-3	7,100
1999	Gold, 13-10	1,400
2000	Black, 15-6	2,000
2001	Defense, 48-9	4,400
2002	Offense, 59-49	3,350
2003	Defense, 32-26	1,500
2004	Gold, 17-13	4,500
2005	Defense, 26-19	2,800
2006	N/A (scrimmage)	6,400
2007	N/A (scrimmage)	5,800
2008	Black, 28-17	17,800
2009	Black, 17-10	11,700
2010	Gold, 37-27	9,100
2011	N/A (scrimmage)	15,655
2012	N/A (scrimmage)	7,150
2013	Black, 17-16	10,244
2014	Black, 21-17	6,350
2015	Gold, 14-10	4,100
2016	N/A (scrimmage)	5,100
2017	N/A (scrimmage)	6,250
2018	N/A (scrimmage)	4,500
2019	Gold, 55-27	7,550
2020	No Game (pandemic)	—
2021	N/A (scrimmage)	1,000
2022	N/A (scrimmage)	1,950
2023	Offense 39, Defense 27	47,277
2024	Defense 27, Offense 26	28,424
2025	Defense 17, Offense 17	20,430