

1991 Orange Bowl
Coach's Quotes
Bill McCartney
Colorado Head Coach
Dec. 28, 1990

"Pritchard's ability to be a big part of our offense was very much of a concern with his broken hand all. What I had in mind yesterday was that we would loft a few passes his way and he would cradle them mostly with his right arm. What happened was that Hagan rifled the ball in there a couple of times and Pritchard caught the ball effectively. We threw to him six times and he caught all six passes. His protection on that hand allows him to have almost complete full use of his left hand."

"Today will be our last day of real heavy work so if we can get through the day without any problems, we should be a full strength. We're working real hard on the kicking game. It's a real concern to us because of the Rocket's prowess. I felt good about our work yesterday. We need to be hitting on all cylinders and we can ill afford to allow Notre Dame to have a big play with the kicking game. And we need some big plays ourselves."

"I'm really glad we came out when we did because I think we needed those days to adjust to the climate. You can do all of the running back home that you want but when you get out here in this heat and humidity it has a way of strangling the kids until they can adjust to it."

"Alfred Williams is fine. His legs are a little fresher than the rest. He'll probably fatigue a little during the week while these other guys will level off. He's fresher than the rest because he hasn't had the three difficult practices that they have. He has more spring in his legs. More bounce."

"For us Pritchard had a remarkable year. When you consider that he hadn't played tailback for three years ~~xxxx~~ and we put him at tailback for one game and he gained 200 some yards, no body ~~xxxx~~ else did that to Tennessee. Then we moved him to receiver and he had never been a full-fledged receiver until this year. You see the progress he's made, he has ~~xx~~ he has become a real legitimate big time receiver. However, the Rocket's faster and that's the difference. The Rocket is a ~~xxxxxx~~ blazer and Pritchard has real good speed. Pritchard is fast but the Rocket is the Rocket."

But don't underestimate Pritchard's speed. He can beat you. That's why he's made so many big plays for us. And on a team where we've had real good quarterback play, we've had a two-time All-American guard, we've had the Butkus Award winner, Pritchard was the overwhelming choice as the most valuable player by his teammates. I think that says a lot. The fact that he'll jump right back out there with a broken hand and catch the ball says a lot about him too."

"With Ismail at flanker you have to worry about him running by you or worry about him running the reverse. When he's at tailback, you worry about him running the sweep or throwing to him out of the backfield. That's not saying he can't hurt you off tackle because he can hurt you running off tackle. And as a kick returner you never relax when he's on the field."

A. ALFRED WILLIAMS. COLORADO LINEBACKER

"I haven't lost much weight and my legs are fresh. I feel good and I should be at full strength. On defense, we will play well and try to keep it simple and play fundamentally sound. mistake free football.

(On his biggest worry about Rocket?) "When he's on the field."

B. JOE GARTEN. COLORADO OFFENSIVE GUARD

"I love to play football and it's especially challenging to play against a great player in Chris Zorich."

"I feel that the offensive line has the advantage because the offensive line attacks and the defensive line reacts."

"This is the best defensive front we've faced all year. We have to play mistake free on Jan. 1. This year we didn't do as much hard work at Colorado before coming to Miami. We have worked hard since coming here."

1991 Orange Bowl
Coach's Quotes
Colorado Coach
Bill McCartney
Dec. 31, 1990

"The two kids that got injuries out here (Mike) Pritchard figures to do most of the things he normally can do and Terry Johnson is looking more like he will be able to play. So we are extremely healthy now. We're in good spirits. As we wind down we're trying to keep them off their feet as much as possible. We checked into another hotel today to get away from the well wishers."

"We're going to take him (Mike Pritchard) off kickoff returns just because it might be a little easier to get a helmet on that hand."

"A national championship for me, personally, would be taking home to the state of Colorado and sharing it with the people...the people at the university. Colorado has a rich football history. We're one of the schools that have won more than 500 games and yet we've never won anything like this. For me personally, I'm looking forward to a lot more years coaching at Colorado so being here two years in a row and playing in a game of this magnitude sure helps us look to the future."

"I don't think there are any particulars we have learned from being here two years in a row other than we were here a year ago. Once you've experienced something you've had time to digest it and sort it out, you're better suited to take it on the second time. I don't recommend that for marriage. For football, it works better."

"Dave McCloughan and Charles Johnson will replace Pritchard on kickoff returns. Pritchard has been a single deep guy the last few games but prior to that we had two-deep guys back there. We've gone back to a two-deep for this game."

"Winning a bowl game would be nice but winning this bowl game would be particularly meaningful. The very fact that I've been to four bowl games at Colorado and haven't won any, really doesn't have a lot to do with this game. But it will if we lose."

"Playing Notre Dame is different. Notre Dame recruits the greatest players, they do as good a job as anybody in graduating players and they play the most representative schedule year in and year out. They hand pick the best coaches. They have tremendous facilities and have the greatest following and they have the greatest exposure on television. So it's the maximum challenge. It's what every college football team wants. As we've looked forward to it - no - we haven't done anything different. It's obvious to me that our players have the highest regard for the Notre Dame program. It's the kind of program we want to have."

"Colorado never wants to think that they've arrived. When this game's over we want to hit the road recruiting. If we're fortunate enough to win, we're not going to take the time to enjoy it. The first time Colorado thinks it's up there with the big boys, that's when Colorado will no longer be up there with the big boys. You can never set on your hands at Colorado."

1991 Orange Bowl
Coach's Quotes
Colorado Defensive Coordinator
Mike Hankwitz
Dec. 30, 1990

"We've been fortunate from an injury standpoint, other than Terry Johnson, and he felt much better today so we are encouraged by that.

"I think the Notre Dame offense is more diversified this year. Of course a year ago they had a great running attack and an outstanding running quarterback in Tony Rice. I didn't feel they threw the ball as well overall last year as they do this year. With (Rick) Mirer I think they are more diversified and they are using all of their people more in offensive balance. In other words on first down this year they are just as likely to come out in a one-back formation with split end out to the wide field, the Rocket in the slot and Watters or Brooks as a third wide receiver and with Culver as the runningback, that gives them a formation in which they can run the ball effectively or throw in a three wide receiver look. They didn't do that as often last year and that's where they have that more diversified look."

"Against the (Notre Dame) middle screen what you hope is the linemen feel they are being let go and turned loose because the receiver has to catch the ball behind the line of scrimmage so you are hoping that one of those guys recognizes that no one is blocking them and we get somebody to retrace and working back to the line."

"I think we've acclimated pretty well to the weather. We've had some good hard workouts and during the course of our practices we've had some good running. I feel good about our conditioning right now. It's something we will keep an eye on. We substituted quite a bit on the defensive line all year."

(On keying too much on the Rocket) "I think you can, but what makes it tough is that they move him around. He isn't always in one position. And they are so talented in the other positions and if you adjust your defense according to where he lines up, you do so at the risk of weakening yourself against other good players."

"What we are thinking about doing is sending the Rocket a notice that there's a press conference at eight o'clock on Tuesday night and maybe he won't show up"

(More on Rocket) "He scares me anytime he gets the ball. As a receiver they get him the ball in the open field a little more. When he gets the ball in the open field with blockers in front of him, that's when he is so dangerous."

"I think he's (the Rocket) is unique. The thing that impresses me so much is his toughness. He's not just a fast guy. He'll make his cut, he'll run north and south and he will take hits and keep coming back hard. He runs just as hard no matter how many times he's carried the ball. He's the fastest and quickest we've played against this year."

1991 Orange Bowl
Player Quotes
Dec. 30, 1990

Colorado TB Eric Bieniemy

"Last year's fumble in the Orange Bowl game weighs a lot on me. I've fumbled more this year than in my other years at Colorado. I've got to concentrate more on ball security coming into this game."

"I received a picture after last year's game from someone in San Diego calling me a moron and saying I ought to give up my scholarship. I've had that picture hanging by my bed all year so I see it every day."

"We're ready to play football. We've practiced hard all week and we're tired of hitting each other. We're ready to hit someone else. We had this same intensity last year, but this year we're more mature."

"Coach McCartney determines what style of runner I am. It doesn't make any difference to me. I love running inside and outside, and with our quarterback, Darian Hagan, you never know what's going to happen on the perimeter."

"There are no hidden secrets about what we do. We'll run inside and use the option."

"This year we're more of a 60 minute ballteam. The game doesn't end until the fat lady sings the blues."

Colorado LB Kanavis McGhee

"We started building momentum two years ago and along with our recruiting, it's gotten us where we are."

"Last year we let Notre Dame make that long drive on us in the fourth quarter. We all made mistakes on the drive. We mentally got lax. We've watched it on film all year and have learned from it. We weren't overwhelmed, we just broke down."

"Being behind in the fourth quarter last year shocked us a little. We'd been ahead most of the year late in the game."

"I don't know how many points they'll score, but our defense will play like we've practiced and that's been intense. We'll give it our best shot."

"It hasn't bothered me that Alfred Williams has gotten so much attention. He deserves it. I had an okay season but it could have been better."

"It's hard to come so close to the National Championship and not take it home. All I thought after last year was just give us another chance and we'll know how to handle it. Playing for the National Championship doesn't come too many times in a player's career, and we've had it two years in a row."

"I don't know how much respect we're getting as a good team, but we're making strides towards being considered as one of the nation's top teams. Hopefully, when I leave, the guys behind me will keep that torch burning."

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1991 Orange Bowl
Coach's Quotes
Bill McCartney
Colorado Head Coach
Dec. 27, 1990

"I said yesterday that personnel-wise I think they are better this year than they were last year. When you play against somebody that has that kind of physical prowess that you really respect them and you know they are so capable of any day of giving a great performance.

"I'm really surprised at the success that some teams have had against them because on paper they don't figure to do it. Notre Dame has been quoted as saying that they feel they match up well against us, they like playing against running teams. When every we play against Oklahoma and Nebraska, we usually have the same discussion. I think Notre Dame feels very comfortable defending Colorado. They feel like their schemes and style of play they have teaches them how to defend. And there is probably a lot of truth to that.

"The only discrepancy that I can see in their defense this year from last year is seasoning or a lot of experience. Statistically, they've giving up more yards through the air this year than last year. I thought a year ago their defensive backs were really good and now I look back there and the talent they have is superb. They have some great athletes. We tried to recruit some of them and couldn't get an audience. I have great regard for their physical talent and I recognize that on a given day they can play on a very high level. It wouldn't matter who we were going to play or what their style of play was going to be we're planning on throwing the ball more in this game than we have in previous big games. And the reason is, there is too much evidence that you can't come into bowl games and be one dimensional. You just can't survive. And the Big Eight has suffered because we've been, maybe, a little stubborn. So Colorado intends to throw the ball.

"There is something about the layoff and retrieving your offense. There is something about the running game that doesn't time up as well after the long layoff. We took 23 days off with no workouts so our attitude is to come in and throw the ball more

"In the case of a receiver, the receiver's greatest resources are his feet not his hands. In other words his ability to get open is the key to a receiver. So if he (Mike Pritchard) drops a ball during the game, we're not going to stop throwing.

(On Hagan's Start) "I think more than anything, Hagan was feeling a lot of pressure going into the Tennessee game. It just took him a little more time to get on track. Plus we had Pritchard at tailback and that took something out of our passing game. He's always had a live arm.

Bill McCartney Quotes

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Dec. 27, 1990

(On the play of Eric Bieniemy) "I always felt Bieniemy was capable of the same numbers last year it was just we had two tailbacks of equal ability. J.J. Flannagan was first team All-Big Eight and ran for 1,000 yards and was sharing time with Bieniemy and then Bieniemy broke his leg so his statistics a year ago were not the same.

(On the team's 1-1-1 start) "We were concerned going into Austin, Texas with a 1-1-1 record and Texas had two weeks to prepare for us. That's a very tough place to play and I knew we had Washington waiting in the wings. I knew that if we stubbed our toes we were going to have to back off and concentrate on the Big Eight portion of our schedule.

(On his bowl record) "My record doesn't concern me as much as this bowl game. I'm sure a lot will be made out of it if we don't win. Last year I thought we were well prepared. We just didn't win the game.

(On playing on grass) "I'm excited about playing on grass. I think it takes a little away from our option game. You practice all year on artificial turf and in an option offense it's such an exact moment it's bang, bang and you hit the point you're looking for. But they have all played on grass all throughout their careers.

"The keys to beating Notre Dame are all of the obvious things. Penalties, turnovers field position. Just the things you normally talk about leading into a big game. Those are the things that are going to determine a big game.

(On the No. 1 ranking) "It has always been my feeling that if a team is ranked number one and plays in a major bowl game and wins, it should hold on to its ranking. I would be surprised if that didn't hold true."