

W4 | Sunday, September 24, 2006 The Honolulu Advertiser

### GAME 3 | BOISE STATE 41, HAWAII 'M 34

## UH will need something special to beat Boise St.



BOISE, Idaho — Boise State's Orlando Scandrick is all over UH holder Kurt Milne, who tries to get off a pass after a failed first-quarter field goal attempt.

**BOISE, Idaho** — The University of Hawaii football team wanted a victory over Boise State in the worst way last night. Unfortunately, at times that was also how the Warriors seemed to go about trying to get it — in the worst way. Three turnovers and three huge breakdowns in the kicking game ultimately doomed the 13 Warriors to their sixth consecutive loss to the Broncos, 41-4. And surely one of their most maddening, which is saying something in this seemingly never-ended series. For a team that had hoped to turn over a new leaf in this Western Athletic Conference opener against defending champion and arch-rival Boise State there were, well, just turnovers. For a team that needed to summon something close to perfection, the outcome was perfection. It was enough to make a team as hot as Boise State's signature sour turf.



FERD LEWIS

There was some anxiety there," admitted Boise tight end Derek Schooman, who scored two touchdowns. But the Warriors made too much of a mess of it in key spots to cash in on what could have otherwise been Boise State's first loss at home in its WAC history (21 games over six seasons). The 26th-ranked Broncos (4-0) might have a new head coach (Chris Petersen) and a largely rebuilt coaching staff after Dan Hawkins' departure to Colorado, but the modus operandi remains the same. The Broncos just don't beat themselves the way the Warriors and other conference contenders continually seem to. Four consecutive conference titles and a big step toward a fifth say the Broncos' secret is really no secret at all. Nowhere, however, can that frustration be higher than with Hawaii, which has seen Boise score 12 points of UH special

teams breakdowns over the last six years. "Our coaches always say they call them 'special teams' for a reason," Schooman said. "And, against Hawaii? They sure have been." After losing by a combined 93 points in their two previous visits to Broncos Stadium, this was one the Warriors could have, should have and probably would have won if not for the telltale breakdowns. After losing six consecutive games to nationally ranked teams, this was one that got away despite another string of conquests. Sort of like the snapper-holder or disconnection in which three point-after opportunities went awry. One of them so badly collapsing that in the worst of details episodes Boise's Orlando Scandrick got his second two-point return of a botched UH PAT in a little over 11 months. Just how tough of a night it became was underscored by UH players high-fiving themselves after the first successful PAT kick. And, it didn't come until 15 minutes, 4 seconds were gone in the third quarter. Unfortunately, the celebration was short-lived because on the next opportunity things broke down again.

from Boise State... they don't make mistakes and we make mistakes, that's how we lost," said UH quarterback Colt Brennan, who threw an interception and coughed up a key fumble at the Boise State 45 with 10 minutes, 17 seconds left. "We have a tendency to hurt ourselves and that's exactly what we did out there today." On ordinary election night in Hawaii the returns on UH are in the Warriors have narrowed the once huge gap between themselves and the conference powerhouse. But they have yet to close it. How often are a thing of the past. Victories, however, are still somewhere over the horizon. New because of it, to get back in the WAC race the Warriors are going to require some help. OK, a lot of help. They are going to have to keep winning, and hope someone else can do what they were unable to do last night and play spatially enough to beat Boise State. One of these days UH is going to beat Boise State. But it is apparently going to take a near-perfect night to do it. And last night wasn't close to it.

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### Warriors

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nerbed a shot from linebacker C.J. Allen-Jones in the backfield and then scooped for the final 10 of his 17 rushing yards. During the preceding timeout, Johnson recalled, "I looked into the eyes of my teammates, and it was as if they were saying, 'this is one play. We've been here for how long? Put everything into it. Don't worry about your aches and pains.'"

Johnson said he saw Allen-Jones approaching, but "I didn't care. I gave him everything I had, and he couldn't take it." Allen-Jones said: "I wish I could have come down at a better angle. I couldn't time it. We knew that would be the last big play."

After that, the unbeaten Broncos ran out the clock for their fourth victory of the season. The Warriors, meanwhile, were left to agonize over the what-if scenarios on the 40-hour charter flight to Honolulu.

Most troubling is the unexpected short-circuiting of the snap-to-hold connection. The Warriors entered without a bad snap on blackboards since the middle of last season, when Jake Ingram was installed as long-snapper.

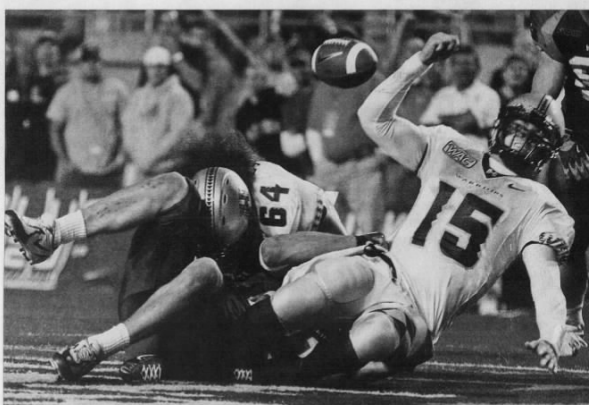
With UH trailing 15-0, holder Kurt Milne could not place a bad snap on a 22-yard field goal attempt, and instead three incomplete on an improvised play.

After Rivers caught the first of his three scoring passes to close UH to 6-6, Milne could not secure a high snap. He retrieved the football, but when he tried to fall down, he was grabbed by a Bronco. The football was knocked free, and UCLA Orlando Scandrick picked it up and raced 18 yards for a two-point conversion. In last year's game, Scandrick scored on returns of a blocked field goal and PAT.

"It wasn't deja vu, it was a lot of practice," Scandrick said. "We work every day on that, and they were struggling in the kicking game, obviously. Maybe they were a little overly concerned, think, and kind of panicked." After cutting the deficit to 34-27 in the fourth quarter, another bad snap on a PAT attempt led to kicker Daniel Kelly throwing incomplete.

"I could have handled all of (the snaps)," Milne said. "I feel really bad for my team. It's pretty much irreparable. I don't know what's going on. I'm having terrible luck." "I think him for saying that," Ingram said. "But there shouldn't even be a question of whether (the snap) is handled or not. I snap good in practice. I wasn't nervous when I was out there. I felt the same as I always do."

Ingram did not blame his problems on Boise's thin air, which can demoralize his grip.



UH's defensive coordinator Jerry Ciavarella is tackled by Boise State's Gerald Alexander.

Hawaii's quarterback Colt Brennan fumbles the ball on a play that was reversed and cost UH a timeout. Boise State recovered the ball.

"I don't want to make any excuses," said Ingram, fighting back emotion. "I feel so bad. I feel let my team down and my coaches down. I apologize. I'll be back. I'll be 100 percent."

But Peters, one of the tri-captains, said: "There were a lot of mistakes in the game, but we talked about it, and we didn't point fingers. We win as a team and we lose as a team."

A significant turning point came in the middle of the fourth quarter, with UH trailing 34-27. On first down at the BSU 48, Brennan scrambled to his right, and while being pulled down by linebacker Colt Brennan, tried to make a pass but lost his grip on the football. Boise State recovered, and UH's hopes shattered the call.

The replay official reaffirmed the fumble, ruling that Brennan's right hand was not forward enough to be considered an incomplete pass. The official also ruled that Brennan's knee was not down before the fumble.

"I was trying to get rid of it, and it just magically came out of my hand," Brennan said. "Unfortunately, it didn't come out right here (in front of his body). It came out back here (behind his head). The call could go either way. Unfortunately, it didn't go our way."

On Boise State's next possession, Johnson fell awkwardly while attempting a cutback run, and the official initially ruled he had fumbled. But upon video review, it was determined Johnson's left hand had touched the ground — ending the play — before he fumbled.

"I slipped and my elbow hit the turf and the ball flew out," Johnson said. "I messed up my (left) knee earlier in the game and I was trying not to make it worse. I was more worried about my knee, about tearing something, than I was about the ball. But, truth, two down. I was 100 percent down."

Four plays later, Jared Zabransky threw to tight end Derek Schooman, whose second touchdown made it 41-27.

"I got to do the sneaky plays," said Schooman, noting UH focused on Johnson and the wide end. "That's part of being a tight end. You block manly, and when you get your chance, hopefully you can capitalize on them. I'm grateful for the opportunities."



More photos from the game. Visit [www.honoluluadvertiser.com](http://www.honoluluadvertiser.com) for more photos.



Boise State's Desiree Bess glazes a two-point conversion pass in the second quarter, making it 24-14.

For the Warriors, each of their breaks came with fines. Karl Nova, a converted defensive end, had a career-high 10 tackles. But he replaced starting left outside linebacker Tyson Kalerstein, who suffered a vertebrae right ankle during warmups.

"Drove Bess kicked past safety Gerald Alexander for a big gain. But Alexander made a U-turn, raced downfield and punched the football away from Bess. And while the Warriors made key defensive plays, they could not contain the Broncos, who rolled up 355 yards in offense."

"They deserved to win. UH defensive coordinator Jerry Ciavarella said: "They kicked our butt. They beat us everywhere, but mostly they kicked our butt."

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