



Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



04/19/2010 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

Brooks: Boyle's Players, Peers Praise His Spirit, Work Ethic

BOULDER - Mark Turgeon is generally credited with luring Tad Boyle into college coaching. Turgeon, though, tells a different story - one of an awakening that, at the time, didn't necessarily make financial sense for his good friend and former college teammate.

But Boyle is not driven by the dollar. If he was, he still might be working on Pearl Street as a stockbroker.

When Boyle was graduated from the University of Kansas, a business career in Boulder beckoned. But after awhile, so did basketball; Boyle worked at Greeley West, Loveland and Longmont High Schools before Turgeon convinced then-Oregon coach Jerry Green that Boyle would be a natural on the Ducks' staff.

Persuading Boyle to come to Eugene was a snap, Turgeon said: "I really think he persuaded himself . . . he wasn't happy doing what he was doing and the timing was perfect at Oregon. Coach Green was looking for an assistant; I told him to bring in Tad.

"I kind of had Coach Green's arm twisted behind his back. Tad jumped at it, but what I couldn't figure was he was

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Tad Boyle Named Head Coach



Brooks: Players Priority No. 1



Quotes

making six figures and he leaves to make about \$15,000 at Oregon."

Turgeon wasn't embellishing either of those salaries, but his point about Boyle was this: "Now, 16 or 17 years later, he's doing what he wants to do - and he's gotten real good at it.

"CU is getting a great person, a guy with great character and a value system, which is most important. He's a very well-rounded basketball ball coach and an excellent recruiter. He's a guy who will be very good with alumni and boosters. He's got great people skills and he develops relationships."

Turgeon and Boyle were together at Jacksonville State (Alabama) and Wichita State - Turgeon as head coach, Boyle as his top assistant. When they arrived in Wichita, the Shockers were foundering. Six seasons later, they played in the Sweet 16 and finished 26-9.

Turgeon ultimately landed at Texas A&M - his current job - and Boyle at Northern Colorado for his first head coaching gig. He was there for four seasons before being introduced Monday as the University of Colorado's successor for Jeff Bzdelik.

"Good coaches never stop trying to get better, and Tad does that," Turgeon said. "He was great as an assistant - extremely loyal, hard working and positive."

Boyle played for two years at KU under Larry Brown, whose hoops resume compares with any on the planet. Brown believes the CU-Boyle fit couldn't be better: "It's an incredible opportunity for him, but a phenomenal hire for them. He's worked hard to get to this point; he's got an amazing background. I'm thrilled to death for him."

Boyle was just as thrilled to land the job. He said he was "very appreciative of (athletic director) Mike Bohn, (search committee chair) Tom McGrath and the search committee for this opportunity."

Talk to enough people in the basketball community and Boyle's deep feelings for his players become a common denominator. Boyle says if there's anything the Buffs will learn about him, it's that he cares about them.

Before driving to Greeley Monday afternoon to tell his UNC players goodbye, Boyle met with CU's returning players. In that meeting, forward Trey Eckloff said Boyle told them of his excitement to be coming to CU, made plans for workouts on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, and started getting acquainted with his new team.

"He's a very intelligent man, he knows the game . . . I think he'll do great things for the university," Eckloff said.

Boyle also met individually with several players, among them freshman Alec Burks, who was among players publicly supporting Associate Head Coach Steve McClain to succeed Bzdelik.

Boyle's chief request of Burks is "get to know me . . . then make whatever decision is best for you." He called Burks "an important piece of the puzzle," but added, "they all are . . . CU basketball is bigger than one coach and one player."

Devon Bietzel, who was among the UNC players listening as Boyle bid them an emotional goodbye, said his former coach "really cared about us as people, not just players. That's what made it so easy to play for him. He was really, really good to play for . . . not only a good coach, but a great teacher."

Bietzel and his UNC teammates weren't stunned to learn that Boyle was leaving. "No, I'm not surprised about it," he said, calling Boyle's exit "a decision he made for him and his family. In coaching, that happens. I back his decision and support him in whatever he does."

Boyle's coaching skills, said Bietzel, are very apparent in his preparation: "He does a good job of breaking things down; he lets you know what you should do in every situation. I think a lot of that comes from playing for Larry Brown in college. Coach Boyle puts you in position to makes plays, showcase your skills."

Boyle is not a devotee of the "Princeton offense," a term that Bzdelik often rebuked by saying his was a "Georgetown offense" - one that was patient yet ran when the opportunity was there. Boyle's offense won't be mistaken for either; he

wants his CU teams to play relentless defense and "score in the 70s and 80s . . . players like that, fans like that."

Don Meyer, a legendary college basketball coaching figure who now is a special assistant to the president at Northern State University in Aberdeen, S.D., called Boyle "a heckuva coach and a lot better guy. I know that for a fact. I know you have to win at that level, and he'll win the right way."

He called Boyle's hiring "a very wise move on Colorado's part; the test of time will show that. I'm not saying that to kiss anybody's butt; I believe it."

Meyer hasn't coached with Boyle, but has Greeley ties. His in-laws live there. Boyle usually went out of his way to make arrangements for Meyer's father-in-law to attend UNC games - and now Meyer jokingly says Boyle is going to have to do the same for all CU games.

"Knowing Tad, he'll do it," Meyer said. "He's that kind of guy."

Moving from competition in the Big Sky Conference to the Big 12 Conference is a leap of faith. Boyle will face his friend Turgeon's team at least once a year, as well as his alma mater twice a year.

Turgeon admitted it would be odd to bring the Aggies to Boulder next season and see Boyle on the opposite bench. "But I'm just so darn happy for him," Turgeon said. "He told me at Wichita that this was the job he really wanted."

Boyle will face challenges of a magnitude he didn't encounter in Greeley, but Turgeon said they won't catch Boyle unprepared: "Everywhere you go there are challenges - whether it's building a practice gym, academic (admissions) challenges, whatever.

"Every fan base expects to win. Players expect to win. And what's more, Tad expects it. That's a good combination. Tad will find a way to be successful."

Brown, who once owned a home in Boulder and says he "kind of adopted the city," called the CU job "one of the most underrated in the country. Now, there's lot of neat things going for it; Jeff did a good there . . . it's got good academics and is in a great conference.

"I've been lucky. I've been around some great basketball minds - Bill Self (Kansas), John Calipari (Kentucky), Alvin Gentry (Phoenix Suns), Greg Popovich (San Antonio Spurs), to name a few. A lot of quality guys have helped me coach.

"Tad has the same qualities those guys have. His kids play hard and unselfishly. They guard and play smart. He had those qualities as a player and he values them as a coach.

"He'll also make that program part of the whole community, and that's important at a school. The football coach, the women's coaches . . . they'll all love him. I love college athletics; it's more of a we thing than (in the NBA). You support everything. Tad will do that. This is an incredible opportunity for him and just as an incredible opportunity for Colorado."

Contact: BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU

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Tad Boyle, a Greeley native who played for Kansas: "I want to be the head coach at the University of Colorado."
Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



04/19/2010 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

Brooks: Boyle Makes His Players Priority No. 1

BOULDER - Tad Boyle falls into that large group of those not being 100 percent certain of how to define "players' coach." But we'll venture onto a limb here and predict that when the anxiety clears and his new group in the University of Colorado men's basketball program sees him for what he is and what he represents, that tag won't be nebulous anymore.

It will size him and his ideals up pretty well.

At 8:15 a.m. Monday, not 12 hours after he'd been offered the CU job, Boyle was in the Coors Events Center meeting the returning Buffs. When the introductions were done, Boyle issued a Day 1 assignment, an ice-breaker really: Write down the names of three people who have impacted your lives the most.

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Brooks: Peer, Player Reaction



Quotes

Of course, he's older (47) than his new players, but Boyle's list can go about six deep - deeper if he desires. There's his former high school coach (Greeley Central's Larry Hicks); one of his former college coaches (Larry Brown of Kansas); KU teammate and boss at Wichita State, Mark Turgeon, now at Texas A&M; former Jayhawks student John Calipari, now at Kentucky; ex-KU assistant and NBA coach Bob Hill . . . he could go on.

Boyle has stayed particularly close to the well-traveled Brown, now the coach of the Charlotte Bobcats. In fact, after informing Northern Colorado President Kay Norton on Sunday night that he was leaving for CU, Boyle's second telephone call went to Brown, whose endorsement of Boyle proved mighty for the CU search committee deliberating on a successor for Jeff Bzdelik.

Boyle's telephone call made Brown's night, and he was still reveling in the good news on Monday. "I've had a lot of nice things happen to me, but this is one of the greatest things, one of the greatest compliments . . . It's a great day for me, but an unbelievable day for Colorado," Brown said.

Lots of incoming coaches talk of landing their "dream job." It happened a week ago at CU when former Buffs player Linda Lappe returned as the women's coach. It happened a couple of days later when the mercurial Bzdelik was introduced as Wake Forest's head coach.

But it seemed a bit more natural, a bit less contrived, coming from Boyle, a Coloradan (yes, he "defected" to KU out of Greeley Central, but that's not to be held against him) who returned to the business world in Boulder, worked as a high school coach to try and placate his hoops Jones, then began the college ascent that brings him to CU.

"This is it, there's no doubt," Boyle said. "I remember Mark Turgeon and I talking when I was working for him at Wichita State. He said where do you want to be 10 years from now? I told him I want to be the head coach at the University of Colorado.

"This absolutely is a dream job for me; it's a destination job. Being a Colorado guy, growing up in this state, playing high school basketball and coaching here, to be at the flagship university, I'm humbled and honored.

"This is where I want to be . . . Nobody, nobody will put more of their heart and soul and passion into this job than I will. And that's one thing I tried to convey to the committee I interviewed."

Boyle has returned to KU's storied Allen Fieldhouse only once since he left Lawrence in the mid-1980s. He's made more trips than that to the Events Center; he and his upwardly mobile UNC team visited in late October for a scrimmage against what would be Bzdelik's last CU team - and by all accounts, the guys from Greeley enjoyed a happy bus trip home.

Boyle remembers the Buffs as being in an early season, still-formative stage. Honestly, he was more "dialed in" to how his team was progressing, but he couldn't help but notice there being talent on team he would inherit six months later.

"(CU) had some guys grow and develop as the season went on," Boyle said. "I just want to grow and continue that, continue to build on the momentum that's been built here."

But during his high school years and upon his return to Boulder after graduating from KU, momentum and CU hoops often were mutually exclusive terms. He knows he hasn't signed on at a

school that exudes recent glowing basketball tradition.

"It's always been a little inconsistent . . . there have been pockets of success here and there," he said. "You've had teams and players who've been successful here and there, but what they've lacked is stability. What I bring is a love and a passion for this state. Previous coaches, they've certainly had their successes along the way, but sustainable success is what I'm looking forward to achieving here."

At his first team meeting early Monday morning, Boyle emphasized to the Buffs that he knew the emotion upheaval they were feeling after the coaching change. He lived it in Lawrence, playing his first two years for Ted Owens and his last two for Brown.

Boyle's October trip to the Events Center had been as a visiting coach; Monday's return was as CU's head coach - a "very, very ironic" turn of events that he conveyed to the Buffs.

"It was something I talked to them about . . . you never know what's going to be around the corner in your life," he said. "Our lives can all change very quickly. Change can be unsettling at times, but from my experience it's been very positive as well - if you take the right attitude.

"I've been in their shoes. After my sophomore year, I went through a coaching change; I understand what they're going through. It's going to take time for them to get to know me and me to get to know them. I'm going to try and speed that process up as quickly as I can. Nobody is more important to me right now than the players in this program - to retain them and get them excited about the future and the vision I have for Colorado basketball."

Although Boyle has recruited in the Big Sky Conference for the past four seasons, he believes his background at Oregon, Tennessee and Wichita State has prepared him to recruit in the Big 12 Conference.

"It's certainly a different animal than what I've faced the last four years," he conceded. "I'm very comfortable at this level, but, yeah, it is a different level than what I'm coming from recently. What makes it challenging right now is where we are in the recruiting process (the spring signing period began last Wednesday and runs through mid-May).

"We're going to salvage what we can salvage, and there will be some opportunities to get involved with some players - I just don't know how many at this point."

He calls making something of the spring signing period "priority No. 1A," with assembling a staff No. 1B. Topping both of those is re-recruiting the players already on the roster, convincing them that growth can come through change and that although his might not have been the face some of them expected to see early Monday, he is willing and capable of pushing them to an NCAA Tournament berth next March.

"Those kids will understand the difference between coaching and criticism," Brown said. "Tad doesn't have a negative bone in his body, but you'd better believe there's a toughness, a real competitive nature, there."

At mid-afternoon Monday, Boyle returned to Greeley for a meeting he termed "probably the hardest thing I'm going to have to do in my life." UNC was his first head coaching job. Telling the nucleus of

players that climbed from 4-24 in his first season to 25-8 this season - it was the most wins in school history - that he was leaving weighed heavily on him.

"I don't know how to define 'players' coach,' but I care about our guys, I care about kids and trying to make them better," he said. "The one thing the Colorado players will learn about me is that I care."

He cares about them, cares about being at CU - and staying put. Mentors and peers believe his stay will be lengthy.

Contact: BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU

SHOW MENU



Tad Boyle turns focus to CU Buffs basketball team

Coach turned around Northern Colorado in four years

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 04/19/2010 09:17:35 AM MDT



Dan Hawkins is back on the clock.

For the second consecutive Monday, Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn completed a basketball coaching search with an introductory press conference in a picture-perfect setting under the Flatirons.

One week after Linda Lappe officially replaced Kathy McConnell-Miller as the CU women's head coach, Tad Boyle took the podium to talk about his "dream job," which unexpectedly opened up when Jeff Bzdelik bolted for Wake Forest after only three seasons in Boulder.

Boyle agreed to a five year contract, the terms of which will not be disclosed until it is approved by CU's Board of Regents.

Boyle - a Greeley native who played in the old Big Eight at Kansas while Bohn was in the Jayhawks football program - led Northern Colorado to 25-8 record last season, the most wins in the program's history.

During Boyle's four seasons, the Bears went from the very bottom - a 4-24 finish during his first season that included the worst Ratings Percentage Index ranking among Division I teams - to an appearance in the College Insiders Tournament.

UNC's final RPI for the 2009-10 season was 118. Colorado State came in at 119, and CU finished at 120.

"When he took over the job at Northern Colorado he inherited a job that was dead last in the nation," Bohn said. "To take the lowest-ranked team and put it right up to us is really ironic in a lot of ways, that it was that close. ...

"That was an eye opener for us."

The Bears were close to making the NCAA Tournament last season but had to settle for a second-place finish in the Big Sky and a postseason berth in the CIT after losing in their conference tournament.

Two weeks ago the Buffs were convinced they were built for March madness entering Bzdelik's fourth season.

"The players know that first and foremost we're going to do what's right for them," Bohn said. "It is all about them and we're providing a coach that we believe can help them continue to make progress on a journey that they're very excited about."

Boyle beat out CU associate head coach Steve McClain and former Metro State head coach and Denver Nuggets assistant Mike Dunlap for the job. And now his focus during this critical transition period is threefold:

1. Try to keep the current roster intact.

Boyle plans to establish relationships with all of the players, including Big 12 Freshman of the Year Alec Burks, who has not made his mind up whether or not to remain at CU.

"The main thing is we have to retain the players we have in the program right now," Boyle said. "That has to be our goal from Day One."

Boyle met with the current Buffs at 8:15 a.m. on Monday before driving to Greeley for an emotional farewell session with the Bears.

"There is some anxiety amongst them," Boyle said of the players he is inheriting at CU who hoped McClain would get the job. "I've got to get to know them in a short period of time and we both have to take a leap of faith in trusting each other."

2. Hire a staff.

Boyle said he will consider retaining the assistants left behind by Bzdelik but that he also has a short list of candidates from outside the program that he might try to bring in.

Derrick Clark, Drew Long and Tom Abatemarco worked players out on Monday afternoon before attending Boyle's press conference. McClain plans to take a job as the top assistant at Indiana under Tom Crean.

"That will be next in line as we get the players hopefully shored up," Boyle said.

3. Recruit some rebounders.

Bzdelik and McClain had been scouring seemingly every gym in the country looking for a couple of power forwards/centers to solve the Buffs' rebounding woes. Boyle is set to hit the road today looking for the same answers to the problems that plagued CU the past three seasons.

"The cornerstones of our basketball program are going to be defense and rebounding," Boyle said. "If we do those two things we'll give ourselves a chance every night out."

Boyle, 47, is the 18th CU head coach in the program's history. Prior to rebuilding the UNC program, he served as the top assistant to Mark Turgeon at Jackson State and Wichita State.

"Tad is the best assistant I've ever had. He was like a co-head coach when I had him and he helped me build two programs," Turgeon, now the head coach at Texas A&M, said during a recent telephone interview with the Camera. "Tad is ready to take a program to the next step and he knows how to build a program."

"Jeff did a good job there and they're close. Everybody's pointing to next year for them, and I think Tad can get them there."

Last October, Boyle brought the Bears to the Coors Events Center for a closed-door scrimmage against Bzdelik's Buffs to get the teams prepared for the season. A source who watched the action told the Camera that if a score was kept UNC

would have driven back to Greeley victorious.

UNC did beat Air Force, Colorado State and Denver last season during non-conference play.

"They played hard. That was my impression of them. They scrapped," CU forward Austin Dufault said when asked what he remembered about Boyle's team. "They weren't the most talented team or the most athletic, but they played hard and they enjoy playing the game a lot."

Boyle, who played for Larry Brown at KU, will not be retaining Bzdelik's Princeton-style offense. He believes the Buffs should play at a frenetic pace to take advantage of the altitude of Boulder.

"That was something that was exciting to hear," Dufault said.

By the time Boyle returned from Greeley for his introductory press conference, the sun was about to set behind the Flatirons, and greater Denver hoops fans were getting ready to focus on the Nuggets' playoff game against Utah.

Chauncey Billups, a very loyal and beloved Buff, was still paying attention.

"Well, I just hope that he can bring us some players, man, and try to keep us going," Billups told reporters during Monday's shoot-around at the Pepsi center. "He's done a wonderful job at UNC. He did a remarkable job up there, so hopefully he can continue doing that and get us back on the right track again."

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Burks mulling his options

Higgins, other Buffs supportive of new men's coach Boyle

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 04/19/2010 05:21:26 PM MDT

The players wanted it to be Steve McClain who walked into the locker room at 8:15 on Monday morning ready to talk about finishing the rebuilding job at Colorado together next season.

Enter, Tad Boyle.

The Northern Colorado head coach beat out McClain, the Buffs' associate head coach under Jeff Bzdelik, and former Metro State head coach Mike Dunlap, to become CU's next head coach.

"He was definitely in a tough spot coming in to talk to us," CU forward Austin Dufault said of Boyle, who was hired five days after Bzdelik was named head coach at Wake Forest. "I thought he handled himself really well. He had some good things to say. He was pretty short and to the point and he didn't talk to us a whole lot. It was a good 15 minutes."

It had been a bad 10 days for the Buffs since reports surfaced that Bzdelik was planning to abandon the team and move to ACC country.

The players made it clear to the administration that they wanted McClain to take over the program and lead them into a promising 2010-11 season.

Alec Burks, the Big 12 Freshman of the Year, isn't completely sold on Boyle after just one brief meeting.

"I might explore my options, I might not," Burks said after a workout on Monday afternoon at the Coors Events Center. "If I explore my options, that doesn't mean I'm not coming back to CU. It's just seeing what's out there for me. It's still possible I will be here, I'm just saying I might explore my options. ..."

"(Boyle) could be a great dude, I'm just going to see how it plays out."

All Boyle asks of Burks is to give him a chance to settle in before the gifted sophomore-to-be moves on.

"I told Alec, 'You just have to try to get to know me. Just make the effort to get to know me. And after you've come to know me a little bit, then you have to make the decision that is best for you,'" Boyle said. "Alec has to do what's best for Alec. But I think with the year he had and the kind of career that's in front of him, I want to help him continue to grow and make him a better player."

"He's an important piece to the puzzle, but they all are. Colorado basketball is not bigger than any one coach or any one player. But Alec Burks is a very integral part of our future."

Cory Higgins, Bzdelik's first recruit, was impressed with the man who will coach him during his senior season.

"He made a good first impression. He came in and seemed like a good-hearted guy. He just wants to earn our respect," Higgins said. "I thought that was real respectful of him to come in trying to earn our respect, even though it should probably be the opposite. I'm looking forward to seeing what he has to offer."

Boyle -- who was 56-66 in four seasons at UNC, including a 25-8 record last season -- inherits a much better situation at CU than Bzdelik did three years ago. The facilities have been upgraded and so has the talent on the roster.

If the new coach can keep the existing players together and add a quality rebounder or two during the ongoing spring recruiting period, the Buffs should still be a program on the rise in a rugged Big 12.

"I think there are quite a few guys who can coach us," Dufault said. "As long as we stay together and continue to grow, that's the most important thing to us."

Higgins is confident that the team will be able to avoid serious attrition as soon as the emotions of the coaching change fade and the possibilities of next season reappear on the horizon.

"You have to get over that initial reaction. Those are just emotions and you're never going to get what you want in life," Higgins said. "After you get over that initial reaction you have to look at what's ahead of you. And coach Boyle seems like he's fired up about his position and he's going to try to take this team to where it didn't get to the past few years."

Last week McClain told the Camera that schools were already calling Burks, even though that would be a violation of NCAA rules. Burks said he does not plan to turn pro this summer and that if he decides to transfer to a Division I program, sitting out a year might help his maturity.

Burks could also play right away at a Division II school or at a junior college. More likely, Burks will decide making a run at an NCAA Tournament with the Buffs is the best route to make his NBA hoops dreams come true.

"It has been tough to lose a coach, then you want somebody to get it and they don't get it, then they bring somebody totally new in," Burks said. "It's a tough environment to be in, but it's business and I'm just taking it like that."

Boyle understands how emotional coaching changes can be. He described his final meeting with the UNC players as "the hardest thing I think I've had to do in 16 years of coaching."

The new CU head coach also believes staying in this program is the right decision for all of Bzdelik's players.

"I'm confident that we can get that done," Boyle said. "If they're truly Colorado Buffaloes, we shouldn't have any



issues."

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Woelk: CU takes a step forward with Boyle

Neill Woelk Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 04/20/2010 12:04:05 AM MDT

Make a list of the coaches and players who have said "money isn't the driving force for me," and you'll need lots of paper and more than a few grains of salt.

But when new Colorado basketball coach Tad Boyle says it, you can believe it.

Why?

He's already proven it. Tad Boyle follows his passion, not his pocketbook.

In the early 1990s, Boyle lived in Boulder and was enjoying a successful career as a stockbroker -- a career that was providing a six-figure income and the promise of much more.

But deep down, Boyle knew his passion was basketball, not bonds. His jones was the dribble-drive, not the Dow.

So Boyle left his job and the security it provided. Left Boulder and packed for Eugene, Oregon, where a job as the restricted-earnings coach for Jerry Greene's Oregon staff awaited him.

His salary that first year? A whopping \$16,000 per year. Boyle went from rib-eyes to ramen -- and he couldn't have been happier.

"It was a major life decision, but I knew it was what I wanted to do," Boyle said Monday afternoon at his introductory press conference. "I followed my passion."

He's been following it ever since. From Oregon to Tennessee to Jacksonville State to Wichita State and finally back home to Greeley and Northern Colorado.

At every stop, Boyle left the program in better shape than when he arrived. He hasn't chased a check; he's sought challenge.

He's found exactly that in Boulder. Boyle on Monday took over a program that has been to the NCAA Tournament just twice in the last 40 years, a place where expectations are almost always the same: fans expect the team to finish closer to the bottom than the top of the conference standings.

But it's also an interesting time in CU hoops history. A rarity. Boyle takes over just when expectations -- at least by CU standards -- are relatively high.

A decent nucleus of players is in place. Crowds were uplast year. And, in the last interview the former head coach gave before leaving town, Jeff Bzdelik said he expected to be in the NCAA Tournament next season.

Fans heard that, and won't forget. Those expectations didn't leave town with Bzdelik. No matter what happens, no matter who goes or stays, CU fans will expect the Buffs to be an improved team next year. They'll expect CU to actually ... gasp ... be in the running for an NCAA Tournament berth.

"There's some excitement about CU basketball," Boyle allowed, "and that's great.

"But the only expectations that are important are the internal expectations. That's what I'm concerned about. And right now, the main thing is we have to retain the players currently in the program."

Most of the players appear ready to give their new head coach a chance. But one player -- and one of the most important pieces of the puzzle -- hasn't made up his mind. CU sophomore-to-be Alec Burks, the reigning Big 12 Freshman of the Year, said he's still studying his options.

Here's hoping Burks takes a deep breath and studies them closely. Burks has a very good chance of being a high NBA draft pick one year from now. Sitting out a year of competition as a transfer wouldn't exactly enhance those chances.

Boyle will have a weeklong window to get to know his players -- and for them to get to know him. NCAA rules allow limited postseason workouts, and Boyle will use those workouts to help his players get acquainted with his style, and hopefully sense the passion he brings to the game.

Meanwhile, CU officials will take a deep breath. In the span of eight days, they've replaced basketball coaches for their men's and women's program. It's been a whirlwind couple of weeks.

For athletic director Mike Bohn, it's an especially important hire. Bohn's first basketball coach at CU was a good one. Bzdelik helped turn the direction of the program, but left before he finished the job. His departure was seen as a major step back for the program.

Bohn now must hope that this coach goes beyond the first one. Bohn needs this one to succeed -- and stay.

That's been a rare combination at CU, but in terms of matching the man with the job, Bohn could have searched for months and not found a better fit.

Boyle knows basketball, he knows Colorado and he knows how to win. Everywhere he's been, he's been successful, and he's done it with integrity and passion.

That's a formula Colorado needs -- and because of all those things, the Buffs changed directions in a hurry on Monday. One week after a major setback, they took a step forward.

That's a good



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From Bzdelik to Boyle: A timeline

By **Ryan Thorburn** Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 04/20/2010 12:02:22 AM MDT

April 9 -- A report surfaces that Colorado head coach Jeff Bzdelik is a candidate to be the next head coach at Wake Forest. Former Buffs and current Nuggets star Chauncey Billups informs CU athletic director Mike Bohn via text message that he might need to begin a coaching search. A source close to the situation tells the Camera: "I do know there is interest. And I do know it is serious."

April 10 -- Citing a source close to the situation, the Camera reports that Bzdelik leaving for Wake Forest is "a done deal." CU players make it clear that they would prefer associate head coach Steve McClain be promoted than start over with a new head coach in 2010-11.

April 11 -- Bzdelik meets with his CU players at McClain's house and tells them a decision on his future has not been made. After leaving the awkward meeting he prepares to fly back to Winston-Salem, N.C., with Wake Forest athletic director Ron Wellman. Alec Burks, the Big 12 Freshman of the Year, tells the Camera: "I'm going to stay with McClain. If McClain isn't here, I don't know. It's still all up in the air right now. I'm just going to go about my business until all this is final."

April 12 -- Bzdelik and Wellman arrive on the Wake Forest campus for formal interviews and to finalize a contract. After introducing Linda Lappe as the new CU women's basketball coach, Bohn prepares for another coaching search, saying: "We have been taking steps since we learned of Jeff's interaction with Wake Forest to be prepared to do everything we can to sustain the momentum that has been built behind the program. We know we have a great group of young men that understand that."

April 13 -- Bzdelik calls Bohn to confirm that he will accept the Wake Forest job after compiling a 36-58 record in three seasons at CU.

April 14 -- At his introductory press conference at Wake Forest, Bzdelik says: "This is my dream job and I embrace it with all I have." Back in Boulder, Bohn and the search committee begin fielding calls from around the country. Denver Nuggets head coach George Karl recommends Mike Dunlap for the job, and Charlotte Bobcats head coach Larry Brown endorses Northern Colorado head coach Tad Boyle. McClain turns down an opportunity to join the Wake Forest staff as an assistant so he can pursue the CU job. Bzdelik's first recruit, Cory Higgins, expresses anger over the situation but vows to try and keep the team together moving forward.

April 15 -- Billups puts his support behind McClain as the Nuggets prepare to open their playoff series against Utah, saying: "I think Bzdelik did a great job of getting that program off to a good start to where it needs to be at, getting some good players in there like Cory and Alec. My only concern would be that if they don't stay in-house with McClain and those guys leave, now you're back at ground zero again. It's kind of tough." McClain is interviewed for the job, and Northern Colorado athletic director Jay Hinrichs tells the Camera that Bohn contacted him seeking permission to interview Boyle.

April 16 -- Boyle and Dunlap both interview with the search committee. Dunlap tells the Denver Post: "Colorado is the job I really want" after working as the associate head coach at Arizona and Oregon the past two seasons. Texas A&M head coach Mark Turgeon tells the Camera that Boyle, his former assistant, is ready to take CU to the next level.

April 17-18 -- All is quiet at the Coors Events Center as the CU search committee, chaired by senior associate athletic director Tom McGrath, weighs the pros and cons of Boyle, Dunlap and McClain.

April 19 -- The Camera reports that Boyle is the choice to become the 18th head coach in CU history. Boyle meets with his new players at 8:15 a.m., drives back to Greeley to say goodbye to the Bears, and finally returns for a 6 p.m. press conference at the Coors Events Center where he says: "There will be nobody that has coached at the University of Colorado that is going to give you more of their heart and soul than I will. Because this job means everything to me. This is a destination job to me. This is a dream job for me."

-- Ryan Thorburn

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New man for the Buffs

CU names local icon Boyle men's basketball head coach

By Gino Figlio on April 20, 2010

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The wait is over. There is a new big man on campus, and his name is Tad Boyle.

Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn announced the hiring of the University of Northern Colorado head basketball coach to the same position at CU in a news conference on Monday afternoon outside the Coors Event Center.

"It is with great pleasure and honor and pride that I introduce the next men's basketball coach here at the University of Colorado, Tad Boyle," Bohn said as part of his opening statement.

Bohn then reiterated what he said many of Boyle's supporters already believed.

"Poised leadership says an awful lot about Tad Boyle," Bohn said. "There is no question to me that [he] represents everything that is right about college basketball. He cares deeply about his players."

"If you want to talk about someone with an industrious work ethic, that's Tad Boyle; he has a competitive edge."

There was a substantial crowd present surrounding the podium next to the buffalo statue. When the new coach finally approached the podium, he was welcomed with unanimous applause from the crowd.

Boyle paused a moment to take in the music, the TV cameras and, most importantly, the excited faces.

"Wow," Boyle said. "That's all I have to say is wow. I'm humbled and honored to be here; for a guy who grew up in Greeley, Colorado to be standing here as the head coach at the University of Colorado is surreal for me. I cannot tell you how excited I am to be here."

Boyle replaces Jeff Bzdelik, who was introduced last week as the new head coach at Wake Forest. He will be the 18th head basketball coach in CU history.



Tad Boyle (left) is introduced as the 18th head coach in University of Colorado at Boulder men's basketball history by athletic director Mike Bohn on Monday evening outside of the Coors Events Center. (CU Independent/Patrick Ghidossi)

Much speculation circulated in recent days about Bohn, along with the rest of the selection committee, potentially promoting current associate head coach Steve McClain to the position. It was a move some players on the team openly backed.

But the committee opted for a new hire who, along with a new practice facility, could bring new excitement to the community for a young team on the brink of an NCAA tournament berth.

Despite being relatively unknown around campus, Boyle is a product of the state of Colorado. He hails from Greeley and played high school hoops for Greeley Central high school, where he helped lead the school to a state championship in 1981.

Boyle returns to Boulder, where he lived before his coaching career started, having led the UNC Bears to a 56-66 overall record in four years, including a school record 25 wins last season with a second place finish in the Big Sky conference.

Bohn lauded the fact that Boyle essentially turned the program at UNC around in four years. He made special note of how the Bears' RPI rating skyrocketed from 336th in the country when Boyle took over, up to 124th in 2010, which was only one position behind CU.

"When he took over [at UNC] he inherited a job that was dead last in the nation," Bohn said. "To go from 336 to 124 is an eye-opener for us."

Boyle won the Big Sky coach of the year award in 2010 where his Bears nearly upset Oklahoma, losing by only one point in the final seconds.

Prior to coaching in Greeley, Boyle was the assistant coach at Oregon (1994-'97), director of basketball operations at Tennessee ('97-'98), assistant coach at Jacksonville State ('98-'00) and Wichita State ('00-'06) where they reached the Sweet 16 one year.

While the Big Sky is a smaller, less competitive conference, Boyle is no stranger to the Big 12. He played his collegiate ball at the University of Kansas during the 1980s under the tutelage of legendary basketball coach Larry Brown, who reportedly endorsed Boyle for the job at CU.

One of the key motivating factors for speeding up the hiring process is the fact that offseason recruiting for next year had already begun at around the same time that Bzdelik chose to leave, and the Buffaloes are in dire need of some big men on the roster.

The Buffs have already lost out on some notable potential recruits such as seven-foot center and junior-college transfer Aziz N'diaye, a four-star rated recruit who at one time considered CU, but instead signed with Washington, according to Scout.com.

But Boyle said he was not too worried with the short-notice recruiting assignment on which he is about to embark.

"One of the philosophies I'm going to have with this program is that we're going to get better every day," Boyle said. "We're trying to find big guys at this time. We're going to salvage the best we can here late."

While Boyle's coaching staff is yet to be determined, he acknowledged that it is a top priority along with getting better acquainted with the student-athletes and hitting the recruiting trail.

Boyle wrapped up his inaugural address with a promise to all CU fans:

“My vision for Colorado basketball is one that is going to make us competitive in one of the best conferences in the country. I will not sleep, I will not do anything until that goal is accomplished. Go Buffaloes! I’m going to try to make you proud,” Boyle said.

As Boyle continued his rally cry to the crowd of onlookers, a large wind gust hit him from the back.

“I forgot that we’re in Boulder,” Boyle said.

Contact CU Independent Staff Writer Gino Figlio at Gino.figlio@colorado.edu.

Posted in [News, Sports](#) / Tagged [CU Men's Basketball](#), [Tad Boyle](#)

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Jeers to cheers: Buffs hire Boyle as men's basketball coach



New CU coach Tad Boyle chats with athletic director Mike Bohn, far right, Monday in Boulder. [More photos.](#) (Mark Leffingwell, The Daily Camera)

New era begins with meeting between coach, players

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 04/20/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

Updated: 04/20/2010 03:27:50 AM MDT

BOULDER — It will be nice — even "surreal" — for Tad Boyle to hear cheers rather than jeers at the Coors Events Center next season.

The newly hired Colorado men's basketball coach received a quite different welcome Monday night during his introductory news conference on campus from the earful of boos spewed by Buffs fans almost three decades ago.

A high school All-American at Greeley Central and the 1981 Colorado prep player of the year, Boyle turned down overtures from CU back then to play for Kansas. Each time the Jayhawks played in Boulder, Boyle was sure to hear about it.

"Backhanded compliments," as Boyle calls them now.

Beginning with Monday's official announcement,

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Boyle hopes

Tad Boyle's Basketball Pedigree

- **1981:** Leads Greeley Central High School to a Class 3A state championship as a senior.
- **1981-85:** Plays at Kansas under Larry Brown. Helps the Jayhawks to a Big Eight tournament championship in the 1983-84 season; captains the team a year later.
- **1986-93:** Begins his coaching career at the high school level, including stints at Greeley West (sophomore coach), Loveland (varsity assistant), and Longmont (varsity coach).
- **1994-97:** Assistant coach at Oregon under Jerry Green.
- **1997-98:** Follows Green to Tennessee as director of basketball operations. Volunteers go 20-9, make the NCAA tournament.
- **1998-2000:** Assistant coach at Jacksonville State under Mark Turgeon, a former teammate at Kansas.
- **2001-06:** Moves with Turgeon to Wichita State as an assistant. Helps Shockers to four consecutive postseason trips, including an appearance in the Sweet Sixteen in 2006.
- **April 25, 2006:** The Greeley native hired as head coach at Northern Colorado. Goes 4-24 in first season.
- **2007-08:** UNC finishes 13-16, including a win over San Diego State.
- **2008-09:** Northern Colorado qualifies for the Big Sky Conference tournament for the first time in school history. The Bears finish 14-18.
- **2009-10:** Coaches Bears to 25-8 record, the most wins in school history.
- **April 19, 2010:** Hired as head coach at Colorado.

to earn all Buffs fans' support after switching to the CU side of the court, after four years at Northern Colorado. He said that as far back as 10 years ago, he told folks CU is the job he dreamed about.

"I cannot tell you how excited I am to be here," Boyle said at an evening news conference. "I promise you that there isn't a coach at the University of Colorado that is going to give you more of their heart and soul than I will. This job means everything to me. It's a destination job for me."

Boyle, 47, was selected as the school's 18th men's basketball coach over current CU associate coach Steve McClain and Mike Dunlap, a former Metro State coach and Nuggets assistant. Boyle replaces Jeff Bzdelik, who left last week for Wake Forest.

"Tad's love for the game is unparalleled," CU athletic director Mike Bohn said.

This season at UNC, Boyle earned district coach of the year by the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) after compiling a 25-8 record and setting a school record for victories. Northern Colorado (No. 118) led the state in the NCAA's final regular-season RPI power rankings, just ahead of Colorado State (119) and Colorado (120).

Boyle said he was "humbled and honored" for the opportunity.

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Blog: All Things Buffs



The Post's Tom Kensler posts analysis, notes and minutiae on this blog devoted to CU athletics.

"He's done a remarkable job at UNC," CU legend Chauncey Billups said Monday during a Nuggets shootaround. "I just hope he can bring us some players and keep us going."

Boyle said he will head out on the recruiting trail today to do just that. But "job one," he said, will be to "recruit" current members of the team. Player transfers often follow coaching changes. Boyle knows it's imperative that star guards Cory Higgins and Alec Burks remain on board. Higgins, a senior-to-be, isn't going anywhere. But Burks, the 2009-10 Big 12 freshman of the year, said Monday that he will "explore" his options.

During a Monday morning meeting with the CU players, Boyle said he told Burks: "You just have to get to know me. And after you get to know me a little bit, you have to make a decision that's best for you."

"He's an important piece of the puzzle, but they

all are," Boyle added. "If they're truly Colorado Buffaloes and want to be here, we shouldn't have any issues."

Boyle said he plans to turn up the tempo on offense and have CU play at a faster pace than it did under Bzdelik, who employed a variation of the Princeton offense.

"I want to run. I want to take advantage of playing at altitude," Boyle said. "We want to play an exciting brand of basketball."

Texas A&M coach Mark Turgeon, Boyle's boss for six seasons at Wichita State, said his former Kansas teammate "is the whole package as a coach" in handling coaching, recruiting and interaction with fans and boosters. Boyle and Turgeon played in the Kansas backcourt for legendary coach Larry Brown.

"Tad is as well-rounded as there is out there," Turgeon said. "I've been around a lot of great coaches: Roy Williams, Larry Brown, Kevin Stallings. Tad is as good as any of them. He's a Colorado guy that knows the area, knows all the right people. He will be able to sell the university and sell the state."

One of Boyle's top coaching rivals in the Big Sky Conference, Weber State's Randy Rahe, said Boyle's UNC teams were known for their toughness.

"They competed their ever-lovin' butts off every single game," said Rahe, a former assistant at

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CU (1989-90) and Colorado State (1991-98). "I think he's one of those coaches that can take a bunch of guys and make them better, and make them better than probably what they should be."

Kansas coach Bill Self said it speaks volumes that Boyle was named a Jayhawks team captain for the 1984-85 season as a senior despite not being an impact player.

"Being named captain at some places is anointed," Self said, "but with Coach Brown, it's something that Tad would have had to earn over time and on a daily basis."

Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or tkensler@denverpost.com Staff writers Natalie Meisler and Benjamin Hochman contributed to this report.

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CU freshman star Burks to consider other schools

By Natalie Meisler
The Denver Post

Posted: 04/20/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

Updated: 04/20/2010 01:01:57 AM MDT

Blog: All Things Buffs



The Post's Tom Kensler posts analysis, notes and minutiae on this blog devoted to CU athletics.

BOULDER — Big 12 freshman of the year Alec Burks said he hasn't made up his mind whether he will stay at CU or transfer.

"I'm going to look at a couple of schools," he

said Monday after Tad Boyle was hired as the new CU coach.

Burks, who like many of his teammates supported Steve McClain's candidacy for the head coaching job, said: "I might explore other options. I might not. . . . It's still possible I will be here."

Other Buffs liked what their new coach told the team in his first meeting with them.

"I like the coach. He's a great guy. He has a great pedigree and he's going to bring a lot to the program," junior forward Trey Eckloff said.

Burks could have his pick of transfer destinations after making several freshman All-America teams. He made it clear he has nothing personal against CU's new leader.

"He could be a great dude, I just don't know," Burks said. "It's tough to lose a coach and then you want someone to get (the job) and he doesn't get it."

McClain was the top assistant for former CU coach Jeff Bzdelik.

Burks won't test the NBA waters, with or without an agent this summer. He would have to sit out a transfer year if he goes to another Division I school.

"That redshirt year is a killer," Burks said. "But it could make me a better person and a better

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student if I sit out a year."

Division I schools cannot talk to a scholarshiped student-athlete at another institution until a scholarship release is granted. CU athletic director Mike Bohn said it would be "premature" to discuss the issue.

CU junior forward Austin Dufault said: "I'd be wrong to say we were not disappointed that Coach McClain isn't here. . . . It's tough to deal with losing two coaches."

Boyle said he wants Burks to try to get to know him before making a decision. "He has his whole career in front of him and I want to help him grow."

Several Buffs said they were impressed by how hard UNC played under Boyle in informal preseason scrimmages the last two years.

Financial matters.

Bohn said the terms of Boyle's five-year contract will be announced the same time as newly hired women's coach Linda Lappe is, probably after the June Board of Regents meeting.

Recruiting update.

While assistants Tom Abatemarco and Derrick Clark worked the phones to keep interest from prospects while the coaching search was open, Boyle said he has done some homework on recruits too. "If you can't recruit to Boulder, you

can't recruit anywhere," he said. Boyle said he hasn't made a decision on staffing. Unlike Bzdelik, who was told to keep two Wake Forest assistants, Bohn said it's up to Boyle to hire his staff.

McClain eyes Indiana.

McClain said discussions to join Tom Crean's Indiana staff "are in the works." He already turned down an invitation from Bzdelik. As for not getting the CU job, McClain said, "I have no interest in staying, and I'm sure Tad has no interest in me."

Goodbye, Bears.

Boyle met for half an hour with his UNC team before returning to Boulder for the news conference. He called the farewell "the hardest meeting as a coach in my 16 years."

Natalie Meisler, The Denver Post

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All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post

APRIL 19, 2010, 4:55 PM

CU hire extends Higgins-Brown connection

By **TOM KENSLE** |  1 Comment

After a team weight-lifting session, Colorado star guard Cory Higgins said Monday afternoon he found some irony in CU's hire of Tad Boyle as the new men's basketball coach.

Consider:

Boyle, who coached the past four seasons at Northern Colorado, played college basketball at Kansas for Larry Brown.

Larry Brown is coach of the NBA's Charlotte Bobcats, where he works for general manager Rod Higgins, a former pro who happens to be Cory's father.

"It is interesting," Cory said. "When I go back home, I'll have something more to talk about."

A prep All-American at Greeley Central, Boyle became KU captain during his final year with the Jayhawks in 1984-85.

And, of course, Brown was head coach of the ABA's Denver Rockets in the 1970s.

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Monday, April 19, 2010

Boyle leaves behind legacy at Northern Colorado

By Diamond Leung

Colorado is [set to announce Tad Boyle](#) as its head coach, and it's expected to come the day after Northern Colorado held its postseason awards ceremony to celebrate a memorable year.

"Northern Colorado basketball set an incredibly high standard this season, and we've got a lot of work to do to maintain that," Boyle said that night. "I said that the best was yet to come after our last game this season and I truly believe that."

Usually when a comment like that is made and then a coach jumps for a bigger and better opportunity, its sincerity can be questioned.

But Boyle is a Greeley, Colo. native and led his high school team to a state championship as a senior. One of his first coaching jobs was at a high school in town.

After playing at Kansas and 11 years as a college assistant, Boyle came home for his first head coaching job, and it wasn't easy helping a team transitioning into Division I. In 2007, the Bears finished 4-24.

"It's not about me, it's about the players and this program," Boyle said after picking up career win No. 1.

Fast forward to today, and Northern Colorado finished second in the Big Sky this year, playing in a Division I postseason tournament for the first time at the CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament. The Bears knocked off Portland in the first round for its 25th win, the most in school history.

Guard Will Figures was a freshman during that rough 2007 season grew up to be the Bears' leading scorer and Team MVP.

"The MVP award is what it is -- every team gives it out, because there's always one player who is a team's rock, and that was Will for us this season," Boyle said. "But the MVP of our team this year was our team. Our unselfishness, competitiveness and toughness is why we had so much success this season, and that was something that all of our guys did."

That's what Boyle now hopes to bring up the road in Boulder.

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- Associated Press

UNC loses successful men's basketball coach

Boyle headed to CU

BY [MATT SCHUMAN](#),

Tad Boyle called getting the job as the new head basketball coach at the University of Colorado his "dream job." However, the former University of Northern Colorado basketball coach can't forget what he left behind.

Boyle was named the new head man at CU on Monday in a press conference held outside the Coors Events Center with the picturesque backdrop of the Boulder flatirons behind him.

However, Boyle couldn't help but think about those back in Greeley that he leaves after four years at the helm of the Bears program in which he guided UNC to a school-record 25 wins this season.

There was a clear shake in Boyle's voice as he talked about the UNC players he departed only hours after informing them Monday afternoon that he was leaving for Boulder.

"It was the hardest meeting I think I have ever had as a coach in 16 years," Boyle, 47, said. "It was very emotional on both sides and we had a tremendous year and we built a lot of relationship with those kids. When a coach leaves, it is emotional for them and it is very emotional for me, quite frankly."

It was also a bittersweet move for his family, especially his wife Ann. Not only is she a native of Greeley and still has family members who lived here, but she had developed a close bond with the UNC players.

"I love them all," Anne said. "They are like family to me. So I am definitely going to keep in touch with them and cheer them on."

However, it was clear Boyle is where he always wanted to be. He lived in Boulder for nine years as a stockbroker and loved the community. He played his last high school game for Greeley Central at the CU Events Center and dreamed of one day coming back.

At the press conference, he told of a conversation he had with Texas A&M coach Mark Turgeon when the two were together at Wichita State in which Turgeon asked him where he wanted to be in 10 years. Boyle told him he wanted to be the head coach at CU.

"I promise you this," Boyle told the media and crowd of people gathered outside the Coors Events Center.

"There will be nobody that has coached the University of Colorado that is going to give you more of their heart and soul than I will. This job means everything to me. This is a destination job for me. It is a dream job for me."

It's that same heart and soul that he put into the UNC program that helped him get the job at CU. CU athletic director Mike Bohn said the decision to hire Boyle came down to "making sure we had the coach that would do it right." He was also impressed how Boyle had taken UNC from a 336 RPI rating four years ago to 124 this season, only one spot behind the Buffs.

The Boulder Daily Camera reported Monday that Boyle had agreed to a five-year deal, but terms hadn't yet been disclosed.

Former CU women's basketball coach Ceal Barry, a member of the search committee, said the committee was just as impressed with Boyle's abilities as a communicator.

"I felt by the end of the interview you had known him for a lot of years and I think that is important now in this

job," Barry said. "It is not just coaching a basketball team."

Bohn knows that UNC was disappointed to lose him.

"They were very cooperative (in the hiring process), but they obviously recognized the gem that Tad is and they weren't too excited about losing him," Bohn said. "But they understand he gave them four good solid years and he is leaving their program in a great space."

Even though UNC will miss Boyle, athletic director Jay Hinrichs was happy for Boyle and his family.

"I couldn't be more pleased for coach Boyle and his family and his wife and kids," Hinrichs said. "What a great spot to be in, Big 12 basketball. It is a great opportunity for him. We certainly wish him the best here from all of us here at Northern Colorado."

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AID=/20100420/SPORTS/100429997/1012&parentprofile=1010&template=printart](http://www.greeleytribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100420/SPORTS/100429997/1012&parentprofile=1010&template=printart)

Proud mom watches as Tad Boyle takes big step

[MIKE PETERS,](#)

It was about 10:30 Sunday night when she got the call. Usually, Alice Boyle is in bed by that time, but she was up this time.

It was her son, Tad. He said he had a new job. University of Colorado head basketball coach.

"It's hard to leave," he told his mother, "but I can't pass this up."

So, Monday afternoon, Alice Boyle got all dressed up and went to Boulder to be there when her son accepted his new job. Tad's brother, Hugh, drove in from Rapid City, S.D., for the event.

Tad Boyle grew up in Greeley, was an all-state player at Greeley Central High School and was on the state championship team in 1981.

"He and his big brother, Hugh, were always into sports," Alice said. "My husband was an odd combination of intellectual and a sports nut. He coached both boys as they were growing up, and they both played on his teams with the Greeley Boys Club."

Tom Boyle, an English professor at the University of Northern Colorado, died of a sudden heart attack in December 1980. The family regrets that he wasn't able to see Central win the state championship three months later.

Tad Boyle's skill and knowledge of basketball came from trying to play with older kids, Alice Boyle said.

"Hugh was six years older, and he'd let Tad tag along with him. He grew up playing against kids who were six years older than he was," Alice said. "He had to prove himself over and over."

Tad Boyle went to the University of Kansas after high school and played for famed coach Larry Brown. It was Brown who called CU last week and recommended his former player.

"Larry always liked Tad," Alice said.

Tad Boyle coached at UNC for four seasons and built a 25-8 record this year.

And as far back as the state championship game in 1981, there was a glimpse of how he could handle a game.

Under his head coach at the time, Larry Hicks, Boyle was a leading scorer in the state, and in the semifinal game, he scored 33 points. In the championship game, Boyle willingly became a decoy. As the Broomfield team focused on him, he passed off to his teammates.

Boyle only scored nine points that night, but the Greeley team won the state championship, 70-43.

And Alice Boyle was proud Monday, also. She was on the phone a lot, taking calls from friends and relatives.

"Everybody seems happy for Tad," said his mother with a smile.

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UNC players attend emotional meeting with former coach

BY [SAMUEL G. MUSTARI](#),

Tad Boyle stated — matter of fact — that he was about to take on one of the toughest tasks he's ever done in his life Monday afternoon.

It wasn't easy for his University of Northern Colorado basketball team either.

Boyle met with the members of the UNC men's basketball team for one last good-bye before hightailing it back to Boulder, where in a matter of hours he would officially be named as the new head coach for the University of Colorado.

Like everybody closely following the situation for more than a week, the Bears held out hope that Boyle would remain in the driver's seat of the UNC program, continuing one of the biggest and fastest turnarounds for a Division I basketball program in decades.

Junior Devon Beitzel, who credits Boyle for his signing with UNC four years ago and his rise as one of the team's best players, received a text message at 10 a.m. from his brother (Zach Loust) in California, informing him of the news that hit the Internet and newspapers' Web sites before Boyle had a chance to talk to his players.

"I felt kind of lost," Beitzel said. "I called my roommate and close friend Taylor (Montgomery, the Bears' starting center) to let him know."

Knowing that Boyle was leaving the program before Monday's meeting didn't make the scenario any easier.

"Oh yeah, it was real emotional," said Bears junior forward Neal Kingman when asked if there were tears during the meeting.

Kingman, a former standout at Greeley West who was Boyle's first signee four years ago, made sense of the situation with his own analogy.

"I'm a business major, and I look at it as though Coach Boyle made a business decision," Kingman said.

In June 2008, Boyle signed a contract extension worth \$110,000 in annual base salary through 2012. Former CU coach Jeff Bzdelik was making a guaranteed annual salary of \$655,000, plus performance incentives.

Boyle apologized to his UNC team for the news leaking out before he had the chance to meet with them, but did have the chance to update the Bears on Saturday as the team worked at an athletic department event.

"I think, as a team, we were all a little (upset) at first," Beitzel said. "Coach Boyle did explain that he didn't want the story to break before he told us. We understand it. He made his decision because of the business end of things and what is best for his family."

Beitzel dealt with the ongoing news the past week as "speculation," banking on the fact that CU officials weren't going to make an official announcement until Monday, at the earliest.

"For me, I kind of have mixed emotions," Beitzel said. "I'm upset and sad to see him leave. If it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be here or playing at this level. I understand his situation though."

Boyle became a candidate for the CU job when Bzdelik left to become the head coach at Wake Forest, officially making the move last Wednesday.

With a sense of urgency to name a new head coach, the CU administration quickly came up with a short list of Boyle, former Metropolitan State College of Denver head coach Mike Dunlap and CU assistant coach Steve McClain.

The CU team had openly supported McClain, who was the first to interview for the job.

Likewise, UNC took less than a few hours to name UNC assistant coach B.J. Hill as the new head coach, a move that the Bears have already approved.

"It's great for us to already know who our coach will be," Beitzel said. "We know now much he (Hill) cares, and that he's a hard worker. He'll work to make us the best team we can be."

The Bears finished this season with the best record in school

history at 25-8, and played in

the postseason in the CollegeInsider.com Tournament, advancing to the second round.

Boyle's name had surfaced as a possible candidate at the University of Hawaii and the University of Oregon, but neither situation had advanced past the preliminary stages.

"It's been kind of tough lately," Kingman added. "Honestly, I was kind of hoping that Boyle would be back here. I was his first recruit, and he's been the only coach I've had in college.

"Right now, I couldn't think of a better situation for us to have Coach Hill in charge. I'm excited for Coach Boyle and Coach Hill, and am looking forward to next season."

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AID=/20100420/SPORTS/100429992/1012&parentprofile=1010&template=printart](http://www.greeleytribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100420/SPORTS/100429992/1012&parentprofile=1010&template=printart)

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Longmont, Colorado
Thursday, April 22, 2010

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TAD-AH! CU unveils Boyle as new coach; players waver

By Patrick Ridgell
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BOULDER — With plenty of fanfare, Colorado athletic officials on Monday unveiled Tad Boyle as the program's 18th men's basketball coach. The announcement came outside the Coors Events Center, under the majestic Flatirons on a beautiful late spring afternoon. Fans in attendance cheered heartily.

It's unclear if CU's returning players shared the feeling.

Some Buffs said earlier Monday that they were unsure if they would return to the program for the 2010-11 season. Boyle, 47, is aware of their uncertainty, and plans to do something about it.

"The main thing is we have to retain the players in the program right now," Boyle said. "That's going to be our goal from Day One."

The players wanted associate head coach Steve McClain to succeed Jeff Bzdelik, who last week bolted for Wake Forest, and they said so. McClain is expected to be named an assistant coach at Indiana this week. Assistants Derrick Clark and Tom Abatemarco were working Monday at the program's offices, but declined comment.

The team met with Boyle and athletic director Mike Bohn early Monday morning at the Coors Events Center, where Bohn revealed the criteria by which Boyle became the top candidate. CU also interviewed former Metropolitan State College coach Mike Dunlap in addition to McClain. Boyle sensed tension in the room.

"There's some anxiety among them, so I have to get to know them in a short period of time," Boyle said. "We both have to take a leap of faith and trust each other."

"Getting to know them in a short period of time is sometimes difficult, but I'm confident we can get that done. If they're truly Colorado Buffaloes and they want to be here, we shouldn't have any issues. Hopefully that's the case."

Alec Burks, last year's Big 12 freshman of the year and a projected lottery pick for 2011, shrugged his shoulders when asked if he plans to return.

"I don't know," Burks said. "We'll see what happens. I might explore my options, I might not. I'm just going to talk to my mom and see what happens."



Tad Boyle has been hired as the University of Colorado's 18th men's basketball coach, replacing Jeff Bzdelik. **Paul Dorweiler/University of Northern Colorado file**

Get to know your new CU men's hoops coach

Bio info

Name: Tad Boyle

Hometown: Greeley

College: Kansas (1985)

College head coaching career

Northern Colorado (2006-10): 56-66

College assistant coaching career

Oregon (1994-97): 52-33

Jacksonville State (1998-2000): 25-29

Wichita State (2000-06): 111-97;
NCAA Sweet 16 in 2006, MVC
champions.

Playing career

Said Boyle: "I told Alec you have to try to get to know me ... and after you've come to know me a little bit, you have to make a decision that's best for you. Alec has to do what's best for Alec, but I think the kind of year he had and the kind of career that's in front of him, I want to help him continue to grow and help make him a better player.

"He's an important piece of the puzzle, but they all are. Colorado basketball is not bigger than one coach or any one player, but Alec Burks is a very integral part of the future."

Junior guard Nate Tomlinson said the past week has been jolting, saying, "This is definitely not what we wanted heading into probably our best season here so far. We're a pretty resilient team. If we all stick together, this isn't going to harm us."

Tomlinson said he had no plans at the moment.

"I'm at Colorado right now," he said. "I have two more weeks left of school, and we got workouts next week, so my mind is set on Colorado right now."

Austin Dufault, who'll also be a junior next year, shared similar sentiments.

"I'd like to be here, but I got to talk to him and see what his vision is and what he has in store for us," Dufault said. "I'll probably have a better idea Wednesday or Thursday."

Sophomore Shane Harris-Tunks and junior Trey Eckloff both said they plan to stay.

Boyle comes to CU after a four-year stint at Northern Colorado. Last year, he coached the Bears to a program-record 25 wins. He's a Greeley native, former Kansas player and was a Jayhawks captain in 1984-85. Boyle was two years younger than Bohn when both were at Kansas, where Bohn played football. Bohn said they did not know each other then.

Boyle agreed to a five-year contract. CU will release the financial figures after its Board of Regents approves the deal, Bohn said. Bzdelik was paid \$750,000 plus incentives. Bohn said it'll probably be June when the deal is announced, and it will probably announce the pay for new women's coach Linda Lappe's at the same time. CU hired Linda Lappe last week.

Boyle coached Longmont High school from 1991 to 1994. The Trojans went 27-37 during his tenure there.

Boyle took over at Northern Colorado in 2005-06, when it was transitioning to Division I, and struggling, and coached it to respectability in four years. The program went from 14-18 in 2008-09 to 25-8 this past season. The Bears had an RPI of 118 at the end of 2009-10. CU's was 120.

Boyle said he wants his team to run and take advantage of the altitude. He wants to score in the 70s and 80s. While evading specific questions about recruiting, he also said he knows rebounding and defense must improve. Today, he plans to start seeking players who can help.

"We want to play an exciting brand of basketball, that our fans will like watching and players will like playing," Boyle said.

"The one thing I can promise you is our teams are going to play hard and they're going to play smart and they're going to play together. We're going to tear the nails out of the floor. When they walk out of the Coors Events Center, I want everybody to say that team played hard."

Patrick Ridgell can be reached at pridgell@times-call.com.

Kansas (1981-85): Team captain as a senior; played in two NCAA Tournaments and won the 1984 Big 8 Tournament.

Awards

NABC Division I All-District Coach of the Year, 2010.

Big Sky Conference Coach of the Year, 2010 (The Sporting News; collegeinsider.com).

National Mid-Major Coach of the Year finalist, 2010 (collegeinsider.com).

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Boyle's roots stretch back to Longmont

By Patrick Ridgell
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BOULDER — Colorado hired Tad Boyle on Monday to be its men's basketball coach, and Boyle is no stranger.

A Greeley native and the coach at Northern Colorado the past four seasons, Boyle, 47, was the head boys basketball coach at Longmont High School from 1991 to 1994. He went 27-37 over those three seasons and was named the Times-Call's boys basketball coach of the year in 1993-94.

Speaking Monday after his introduction, Boyle remembered his time in Longmont with some humor.

"Well, every time I see one of our players that played for me at Longmont, I offer to pay for their first three or four therapy sessions," Boyle joked.

"I was young, energetic, kind of a mad-man of a coach, and I've matured and grown a lot since then. But that's where I cut my teeth and where I made my mistakes, and I learned and I grew."

Longmont boys coach Jeff Kloster succeeded Boyle in summer 1994, when Boyle accepted a job on the staff at Oregon. Boyle visited Kloster the day he accepted his new position, and the two coaches talked hoops for three hours. Kloster remembers it well.

"He passed the torch to me," Kloster said. "We did not have a lot of success for a few years at Longmont, but when he came here, his goal was to build a huge program that would be successful for years. He did an outstanding job putting the building blocks in place when we first came together at Longmont High."

Kloster said CU is making a good decision.

"It's outstanding," Kloster said. "This is going to be a great opportunity for Tad."

"You could always see the passion the guy has for basketball. ... You knew he would move on to bigger and better things. I always felt that when he was at the high school level, the right level for him was the college game. He had paid his dues."

Kloster said he hopes Boyle will keep Colorado high school players in mind as he recruits.

"I know he has to do what's best for the program and the future of CU, but it's great to have someone at that level that is a Colorado-bred basketball player."

"I just wish him all the luck."

Boyle also worked as a stock broker for eight years in the area, prior to going to Oregon.

ON STAFF: Boyle said he has a "short list" of candidates for his staff at CU. He'll discuss the job with the remaining

assistants from Jeff Bzdelik's staff at CU.

Associate head coach Steve McClain, who interviewed for the job, is expected to be named an assistant at Indiana this week. CU assistants Derrick Clark and Tom Abatemarco were working Monday at the program's offices, but declined comment.

ON RECRUITING: Boyle said he'll be on the road recruiting today, and he has "a few plans in place." He said rebounding is an area that needs addressing.

If Casey Crawford goes through with plans to forgo his final year of eligibility, CU has three open scholarships. The spring signing period ends May 19.

"Going out trying to find big guys at this time might be a little challenging, but we'll turn over every rock," Boyle said. "If there's a kid that's good enough to compete in this league, we'll go after him. If there's not, we won't sign somebody just to sign them."

MONEY COMING: Athletic director Mike Bohn said CU has yet to receive the \$500,000 buyout included in former coach Jeff Bzdelik's contract.

Bzdelik left last week for Wake Forest, and Wake Forest has said it does not pay buyouts, leaving Bzdelik responsible for the money. Bohn said the "communication process" going on with the buyout is standard, and he's not worried about receiving the money.

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Longmont's Kloster lauds CU's decision to hire Boyle

By Patrick Ridgell
© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

Colorado is expected to announce it has hired Tad Boyle as its men's basketball coach later today, and that sounds great to Longmont High boys coach Jeff Kloster.

Kloster succeeded Boyle as Longmont's coach in the summer of 1994, when Boyle accepted a job on the staff at Oregon. Boyle visited Kloster the day he accepted his new position, and the two coaches talked hoops for three hours. Kloster remembers it well today. Kloster has been Longmont's coach ever since.

"He passed the torch to me," Kloster said. "We did not have a lot of success for a few years at Longmont, but when he came here, his goal was to build a huge program that would be successful for years. He did an outstanding job putting the building blocks in place when we first came together at Longmont High."

Boyle, a Greeley native, Kansas grad and former Jayhawk captain, has spent the past four seasons coaching Northern Colorado, which last season won a program-record 25 games. Kloster said CU is making a good decision.

"It's outstanding," Kloster said. "This is going to be a great opportunity for Tad."

"You could always see the passion the guy has for basketball. ... You knew he would move on to bigger and better things. I always felt that when he was at the high school level, the right level for him was the college game. He had paid his dues."

One of Boyle's first challenges will be retaining the Buffs' current roster. Players said last week they wanted associate head coach Steve McClain to succeed Jeff Bzdelik, whom Wake Forest hired away from CU last week.

Senior guard Cory Higgins said it was possible the roster could splinter.

Kloster said he hopes Boyle will keep Colorado high school players in mind as he recruits.

"I know he has to do what's best for the program and the future of CU, but it's great to have someone at that level that is a Colorado-bred basketball player."

"I just wish him all the luck."

For more, read Tuesday's Times-Call.



Colorado picks Tad Boyle as Bzdelik's successor with Buffaloes

Updated 2d 2h ago



By Douglas C. Pizac, US Presswire

Tad Boyle cheers on his Northern Colorado team during a game on March 9. Boyle was hired Monday by the University of Colorado to become Jeff Bzdelik's successor as coach of the Buffaloes.

BOULDER, Colo. (AP) — Now that [Tad Boyle](#) has been placed in charge of Colorado's basketball program, he's practicing his sales pitch.

Not so much for bringing players to Colorado as convincing those already here to stay.

He's just hoping they'll give him a chance.

The Buffaloes hired Boyle on Monday to replace [Jeff Bzdelik](#), who left for [Wake Forest](#) last week after three seasons with Colorado.

Boyle sold Colorado on his ability to rebuild a program, elevating neighboring Northern Colorado from one of the bottom teams in the nation a few seasons back into a squad that had a school-record 25 wins last season.

Still, Boyle may not have been the first choice among the Buffaloes.

Several Colorado players, including Big 12 freshman of the year Alec Burks, had lobbied for CU associate head coach [Steve McClain](#)'s promotion, hinting that some players might leave the program if another coach were hired.

"There's some anxiety among them," said Boyle, who agreed to a five-year deal with the financial terms pending approval by the board of regents. "We both have to take a little bit of a leap of faith, in trusting each other."

Boyle's up-tempo style is a stark contrast to that of Bzdelik, who ran a version of the Princeton offense. That could be a selling point to players like Burks, an athletic guard who averaged 17 points last season.

"I told Alec, 'Try to get to know me, make the effort to get to know me,'" Boyle said. "The year he had and the career that's in front of him, I want to help him continue to grow and make him a better player. He's an important piece to the puzzle."

Before his departure, Bzdelik had said he thought the Buffs could reach the NCAA tournament next

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season if he could land a couple of taller recruits to go along with his strong backcourt.

Boyle shares that feeling, hoping to lure a few big men to campus. That's an important order of business, once he squares away his coaching staff and gets his current players on board.

So far, some of his players like what they've heard.

"I'm sure he's a great guy. Once everyone gets to see that and understand him, I'm sure everyone will understand that sticking together is a lot better than flying solo and trying to do their own thing," said Trey Eckloff, who watched Boyle's introductory news conference Monday from the back of a crowd that included family, fans and boosters. "I think it will probably work out for the best."

Nuggets All-Star and former Colorado standout [Chauncey Billups](#) said he hopes Boyle can keep the Buffs together and growing while bringing the same success Boyle enjoyed in Greeley, Colo., an hour's drive from Boulder.

"He's done a wonderful job at UNC," said Billups, who remains the face of the program. "He did a remarkable job up there, so hopefully he can continue doing that and get us back on the right track again."

The 47-year-old Boyle is used to reclamation projects, having been hired to do just that with the Bears in 2006. Each season under Boyle, Northern Colorado gradually improved, culminating with a 25-8 mark last season.

Before joining the Bears, Boyle was an assistant coach at Wichita State on the staff of friend and former teammate [Mark Turgeon](#), who has since left the Shockers to take over at Texas A&M.

Boyle played at Kansas with Turgeon under the direction of Hall of Fame coach [Larry Brown](#), who's now with the [Charlotte Bobcats](#). Boyle was captain of the Jayhawks his senior year on a team that featured [Danny Manning](#).

"It was way back when, a long time ago," Boyle said, laughing. "I'm certainly familiar with this level of basketball. It's a step where we're coming from at Northern Colorado, but I've been here before. ... I like where this program is right now and certainly like where it's heading."

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