

Tribune Opinion: We hate to see Boyle leave, but he was a great asset for UNC

TRIBUNE OPINION,

At first glance, it appears as if the announcement that Tad Boyle is leaving Greeley to become head coach at the University of Colorado is bad news for the community and the university.

We don't view it that way.

Sure, we hate to see Boyle leave the University of Northern Colorado basketball team and the program he built. If you're like several of us on The Tribune's editorial board, it's been awhile since we had as much fun at a sporting event as we had at UNC basketball games this winter.

The Bears played with passion, energy and enthusiasm, and several sellout crowds reacted with the same kind of emotion. Outside of this fall's success of the UNC volleyball team, which won the Big Sky Conference and advanced to NCAA regional play, it's been awhile — more than a decade, to be exact — since Greeley residents have had reason to get excited about a UNC athletic team. But both the volleyball and men's basketball teams were just the tonic Greeley needed as we worked our way out of the economic doldrums and a long, snowy winter.

We wish the native-son Boyle would be staying to finish his coaching career at UNC.

But in the world of collegiate athletics, that may be wishful thinking for any UNC coach who is successful. And in our glass-is-half-full way of thinking, let's not forget the statewide and even national recognition that Boyle and the men's basketball team brought to UNC and Greeley.

The exposure that this year's Bears hoops team brought to the university and the community is invaluable. We can't remember the last time UNC and Greeley were in the national news as often. (Well, actually, we can — it was a backup punter with a knife. We're thinking that's not the kind of exposure we want.)

We happen to think that the kind of positive recognition that the UNC men's basketball team brought to Greeley and UNC this year is invaluable. It's also the kind of exposure that can contribute to a more positive image for the school and the city at a time when we need it the most.

We say hats off and congratulations to Tad Boyle and the UNC men's basketball team. We're proud to call him one of our own. We're hoping new head coach B.J. Hill — and all the other UNC athletic coaches — experience the same kind of success that makes them vulnerable to a major college job offer.

We believe that would be good for Greeley and UNC.

<http://www.greeleytribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100427/OPINION/100429706/1029&template=printart>

Hornbuckle leaving CU Buffs

Freshman forward wants to be closer to California home

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 04/26/2010 04:33:41 PM MDT

Alec Burks and Cory Higgins had some great moments above the rim last season.

Shannon Sharpe, a slam dunk sensation on YouTube as a prep prospect, is expected to rock the rim next season.

But the best dunk on the 2009-10 Colorado hoops highlight reel was provided by Keegan Hornbuckle.

The 4,898 at the Coors Events Center for the blowout win over San Francisco on Dec. 1 remember the play when the 6-7 athletic freshman took a lob pass from Nate Tomlinson and nearly brought the house down.

"Keegan has great skill. I think you got evidence of that with his dunk," Jeff Bzdelik said that night. "I mean, he's very athletic. He just needs to get ticked off. He needs to have that ticked-off attitude, and we've talked about that."

The talented forward isn't ticked off yet. But Hornbuckle is leaving CU.

Hornbuckle told the Camera on Monday that he plans to transfer to a school closer to his home in Westlake Village, Calif. He added that Bzdelik abandoning the Buffs for Wake Forest is not the reason for the decision but "put the nail in it."

"I want to get back closer to home," Hornbuckle said. "When coach Bzdelik left that kind of added to it and made my decision easier to make."

Hornbuckle's request to be released from his scholarship has been granted by the CU athletic department. The list of schools he has contacted includes Arizona State, Loyola Marymount, San Diego, St. Mary's, UC-Santa Barbara and UC-Irvine.

Tad Boyle, who was introduced as CU's new head coach on April 19, was able to convince Burks to remain in Boulder after the Big 12 Freshman of the Year expressed frustration when Steve McClain did not get the job.

With Burks, Higgins and Sharpe returning, the Buffs should contend for an NCAA Tournament berth in 2010-11.

"That's probably the hardest part," Hornbuckle said of leaving a solid nucleus behind in Boulder. "I think they will do really well next year with all the guys coming back. We showed a lot of improvement this year and they should be able to do even more next year."

Hornbuckle, who averaged 2.4 points, 1.6 rebounds and 11.4 minutes as a true freshman, will have to sit out next year at his new school per NCAA transfer rules.

"I think just getting a year older and getting stronger and practicing for a year not stressed about playing time will help me a lot," Hornbuckle said.

Boyle now has four scholarships available. The spring recruiting period began April 14 and runs through May 19.

"We wish Keegan nothing but the best of luck in his future endeavors," Boyle said in a prepared release.

Hornbuckle is the fifth Bzdelik recruit to leave CU after only one season on campus, joining Caleb Patterson, Kyle Wright, Toby Veal and Ryan Kelley.

After Bzdelik was hired on April 4, 2007, four Ricardo Patton recruits -- Kal Bay, James Inge, Sean Kowal and Marc Van

Burck -- made a hasty exit from the program.

Xavier Silas and Jeremy Williams also left CU after playing briefly for Bzdelik.

A midseason shoulder injury kept Hornbuckle from suiting up for six games and the ongoing pain limited his contribution throughout the Big 12 schedule. He finished the season shooting 24-of-53 from the field (.453), and 9-of-18 from the 3-point arc.

"I was happy with my year," said Hornbuckle, who plans to move home when his final exams are completed. "The only thing I was disappointed about was my injury. I feel like if I would have not gotten injured I would have played more minutes."

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CU hoops loses freshman guard Hornbuckle

By The Denver Post

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Keegan Hornbuckle has decided to leave the Colorado basketball program. (THE DENVER POST | HYOUNG CHANG)

New Colorado men's basketball coach Tad Boyle lost his first player since his takeover of the program last week.

Freshman guard Keegan Hornbuckle left the team, Boyle said Monday, likely with an eye toward playing somewhere in California.

"Keegan has decided to pursue his college basketball career closer to home," Boyle said. "We wish Keegan nothing but the best of luck in his future endeavors."

Hornbuckle, a native of Westlake Village, Calif., was one of four freshmen on CU's roster last season. In 24 games, he averaged 2.4 points in 11.4 minutes. He missed six games with a right shoulder injury.

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