

No. 9 Kansas St. pulls away to rout CU Buffs

Burks cites lack of heart in latest loss

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

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MANHATTAN, Kan. -- The Pac-10?

Colorado might have to move to the RMAC to get a road victory.

The Buffs dropped their 34th consecutive Big 12 road game here on Saturday, a 68-51 loss to No. 9 Kansas State at Bramlage Coliseum

Jeff Bzdelik, in his third season, is still left wondering what it will feel like to fly back to Boulder victorious. CU is 0-21 in road conference games under his watch.

"I don't think we played with heart," Alec Burks said after scoring 17 points and grabbing a team-high six rebounds for CU. "You have to have heart to play this game, and I felt like we lost it."

The Wildcats (20-4, 7-3) cashed the Buffs' season-high 22 turnovers in for 26 points and used a 23-8 run at the start of the second half to turn a two-point game into a purple slam dunk contest.

Cory Higgins (21 points) joined Burks in double figures. However, the already fragile visitors took the floor without Marcus Relphorde (knee tendinitis), the team's third leading scorer (10.4 ppg).

"We have a lot of basketball ahead of us and we wanted to get him healthy," Bzdelik said.

The training staff says Relphorde is day to day. The junior forward had started the previous 23 games and scored 18 points on 5-for-7 shooting during the Buffs' 87-81 loss to K-State on Jan. 16 in Boulder.

The Buffs (11-13, 2-8) -- who have dropped seven of their last eight games and stretched their road losing streak against Division I opponents to 26 games -- were just 19-for-49 (38.8 percent) from the field.

"We just have to make shots. We had good looks and we didn't knock them down," Nate Tomlinson said. "We just weren't as aggressive. We were kind of tentative."

Tomlinson didn't attempt a shot or a free throw in 34 minutes. The sophomore point guard finished with four turnovers and three assists.

Trey Eckloff, who made his first career start for Relphorde, was barely noticeable. The 6-11 sophomore finished with three turnovers, one rebound and no points in 12 minutes.

"I'm not going to be one of those coaches to say, 'We didn't do this.' We didn't do it, but half of that is the result of Kansas State's good play," Bzdelik said. "They're as good as anybody we've played and we've played a very difficult schedule. I believe our schedule is going to be ranked as one of the top 25 most difficult at the end."

K-State broke open a close game when Luis Colon made three point-blank hoops in the first two minutes of the half after the Wildcats had struggled to get the ball inside CU's zone defense for the first 20 minutes of the game.

Denis Clemente, the reigning Big 12 player of the week, stretched the home team's cushion to 11 points with a 3-pointer, and Jacob Pullen capped the 9-0 run with a rhythm jumper behind the arc to make the score 51-34 with 13:18 remaining.

Curtis Kelly put an exclamation point on the win for the Wildcats with a SportsCenter-quality dunk to make the score 64-46

with 2:04 left.

"Our inability to make shots, our inability to take care of the basketball, and our inability to put bodies on people gave them that separation early on in that second half," Bzdelik said.

The Wildcats out-rebounded CU 44-27 in the first meeting but only 36-28 on Saturday. However, 15 of K-State's rebounds were offensive boards.

The Buffs controlled the tempo and the crowd early on. A jumper by Dwight Thorne gave the visitors a 9-5 lead with 13:48 remaining. At that point K-State was 1-for-7 from the foul line, where they finished 14-for-26.

Kelly answered with a dunk over Eckloff, and Clemente made a 3-pointer from NBA distance to give the Wildcats a 10-9 lead with 11:57 left.

The Buffs continued to force bad shots and turnovers with their aggressive zone defense and led 20-16 after a left-handed reverse layup by Levi Knutson and a dunk by Burks.

K-State closed the half with a 12-6 run and led 28-26 at the break.

The Buffs were also without true freshman Keegan Hornbuckle, who is still dealing with a right shoulder injury. He sat on the end of the bench next to Relphorde and Shannon Sharpe, the talented true freshman point guard who will miss the entire season due to a knee injury.

"We played kind of hard in the first half but we lost that heart that we were playing with in the second half and let them blow the game open," said Burks, a Grandview, Mo., product who played in front of family and friends. "They started making shots, getting offensive rebounds and just breaking our zone. Basically, just making plays and feeding off their crowd. They're a great team and you have to give credit to them."

Notable

K-State now leads the all-time series 97-44, including a 54-10 advantage in Manhattan and a 17-14 edge since the formation of the Big 12. ... Bzdelik is 0-6 against the Wildcats, who have won the last nine meetings and five in a row vs. CU at Bramlage Coliseum. ... Four Wildcats scored in double figures, led by Pullen's 15 points, and Colon added nine points. ... K-State outscored CU 40-26 in the paint, 17-9 in fast-break points and 16-10 in bench points.

Kansas St. 68, Colorado 51

COLORADO

FG FT Reb

Min M-A M-A O-T A PF PTS

Dufault 20 1-4 1-4 1-3 1 4 3

Eckloff 12 0-0 0-0 1-1 0 1 0

Tmlnsn 31 0-0 0-0 0-0 3 2 0

Burks 34 7-16 3-4 5-6 1 4 17

CHggns 38 6-15 6-6 1-4 1 0 21

Thorne 23 2-6 0-0 0-3 1 3 4

Knutson 16 1-3 0-0 0-0 1 1 2

Crwfrd 26 2-5 0-0 0-3 0 4 4

Totals 200 19-49 10-14 12-28 8 19 51

Percentages: FG .388, FT .714.

3-Point Goals: 3-10, .300 (C.Higgins 3-4, Burks 0-1, Crawford 0-1, Knutson 0-1, Dufault 0-1, Thorne II 0-2).

Team Rebounds: 8.

Blocked Shots: 0.

Turnovers: 22 (C.Higgins 6, Tomlinson 4, Eckloff 3, Knutson 2, Burks 2, Thorne II 2, Crawford, Dufault).

Steals: 9 (C.Higgins 4, Burks 2, Crawford 2, Thorne II).

Technical Fouls: None.

KANSAS ST.

FG FT Reb

Min M-A M-A O-T A PF PTS

Colon 18 3-5 3-7 5-6 0 1 9

Sutton 29 3-6 0-0 1-4 1 4 6

Kelly 29 5-7 2-4 6-11 0 2 12

Pullen 31 5-10 4-6 0-1 10 1 15

Clmnte 27 4-14 0-0 0-2 5 2 10

HZ-Rbts 3 0-0 0-0 0-1 0 1 0

Irving 19 1-2 0-0 0-0 0 1 3

Ojeleye 2 0-0 0-0 0-1 0 0 0

Russell 2 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

McGrdr 11 0-2 0-0 0-3 1 2 0

Samlis 22 4-5 4-7 2-5 0 3 12

Judge 7 0-0 1-2 0-0 0 0 1

Totals 200 25-51 14-26 15-36 17 17 68

Percentages: FG .490, FT .538.

3-Point Goals: 4-19, .211 (Clemente 2-9, Irving 1-2, Pullen 1-5, Sutton 0-1, McGruder 0-2).

Team Rebounds: 2.

Blocked Shots: 4 (Kelly 3, Sutton).

Turnovers: 17 (Judge 3, Kelly 3, Sutton 3, Clemente 2, Pullen 2, Samuels 2, Russell, Colon).

Steals: 10 (Sutton 3, Kelly 3, Clemente 2, Judge, Pullen).

Technical Fouls: None.

Colorado 26 25--51

Kansas St. 28 40--68

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cu basketball

Wildcats regroup, rebound vs. Buffs

No. 9 Kansas State 68, Colorado 51

By John Marshall
The Associated Press

Posted: 02/14/2010 01:00:00 AM MST

Updated: 02/14/2010 01:45:00 AM MST



Colorado's Alec Burks fouls Kansas State forward Jamar Samuels in the second half Saturday. The Wildcats struggled in the first half before reverting to their old offense to gain a rout of the Buffaloes. (Jeff Tuttle, The Wichita Eagle)

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Frank Martin was determined to stick with his new offense against

Colorado's 1-3-1 zone. Even as his team threw away the ball and struggled to get good shots, Kansas State's coach didn't back off his plan.

Martin is stubborn that way. He's also smart enough to realize when he's wrong.

Uncomfortable with Martin's new offense in the first half, the ninth-ranked Wildcats reverted to their aggressive, effective style in the second to turn an ugly game into a 68-51 rout over Colorado on Saturday night.

"I was trying to force us to do something obviously they weren't comfortable with because I'm stubborn," Martin said. "These games are too big to continue to fail at something, so we had to go back

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to what we did well, what we understand well. That's on me in the first half."

Kansas State (20-4, 7-3 Big 12) seemed to get the hang of Martin's new scheme with a week off to work on it in practice. Once live action started, the Wildcats seemed out of sorts, fumbling and throwing away the ball during a tentative first half against Colorado.

Kansas State pulled it together after switching to its old offense, starting the second half with an impressive run and dominating the rest of the way to win its ninth straight over Colorado (11-13, 2-8).

Jacob Pullen found seams in Colorado's zone to finish with 15 points and 10 assists, and Curtis Kelly had 12 points and 11 rebounds to help Kansas State dominate inside. Jamar Samuels added 12 points to give the Wildcats 20 wins in four straight seasons for the first time.

Colorado was uncharacteristically loose with the ball in a sloppy first half and struggled defensively in the second to lose its 34th consecutive Big 12 road game.

Alec Burks had 21 points and Cory Higgins added 17 for the Buffaloes, who have lost 26 straight road games against Division I teams and seven of eight overall.

"We've got to play harder, play with heart and execute," Burks said. "No more turnovers. We turned the ball over a lot today when we played

one-on-one. We just need to regroup and get this out of our system."

Kansas State clung to a 28-26 lead after a first half that featured three more turnovers than field goals — an ugly game that favored the Buffaloes.

"I thought we put ourselves in a good position after the first 20 minutes," Colorado coach Jeff Bzdelik said.

After that, the Wildcats got better. Colorado didn't.

The Buffaloes kept throwing away the ball, finishing with a season-high 22 turnovers.

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Wildcats claw out win

CU proves no match for No. 9 K-State in second half

By David Starcer on February 14, 2010

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At halftime the CU men's basketball team trailed the ninth-ranked team in the country by two points on the road. But the final score told a different story.

Trailing 28-26 heading into second half, Colorado couldn't get any closer, and a 20-6 run by Kansas State to begin the final 20 minutes doomed the Buffaloes as they dropped their 26th straight road game, 68-51 at Bramlage Coliseum in Manhattan, Kan. on Saturday.

Junior Cory Higgins led Colorado (11-13 overall, 2-8 Big 12) with 21 points while freshman Alec Burks chipped in 17. The loss not only marked the Buffaloes' 34th straight in conference play, but also their ninth straight to Kansas State (20-4 overall, 7-3 Big 12).

The Wildcats had a balanced scoring attack for the game, led by junior guard Jacob Pullen's 15 points and 10 assists. Forward Curtis Kelly added a double-double of his own, scoring 12 points and adding 11 rebounds to help Kansas State sweep the season series from Colorado.

The first half of the game resembled the first matchup of the two teams, full of sloppy play and lots of turnovers on both sides. But the Buffaloes were unable to capitalize off of the Wildcats' poor shooting and K-State's hot start to begin the second half was too much for Colorado.

The Buffs were without junior forward Marcus Relphorde, who has tendinitis in his left knee and is listed as day-to-day. Relphorde had started all 23 games for Colorado going into the game and was replaced in the starting lineup by sophomore Trey Eckloff, who made his first career start as a Buffalo.

Colorado returns home to host Oklahoma at 7 p.m. on Wednesday at the Coors Events Center.

Contact CU Independent Staff Writer David Starcer at David.starcer@colorado.edu.

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Junior guard Cory Higgins goes in for a lay-up during a game against Baylor on Jan. 12, 2010. Higgins scored 18 points during the game, leading the Buffs to their 78-71 victory. (CU Independent file/Sara Fossum)



Posted on Sat, Feb. 13, 2010

Colon sparks K-State past Colorado

By KELLIS ROBINETT
The Kansas City Star

MANHATTAN, Kan. | Coming off a week in which it played no games — and a first half that was memorable only for its complete lack of highlight reel moments — No. 9 Kansas State needed a spark.

Nineteen seconds into the second half, it received that spark from an unlikely source: Luis Colon.

A senior forward who has been quiet for much of the season, Colon made a layup on the opening possession and quickly scored six straight points for the Wildcats.

That brought the crowd at Bramlage Coliseum to its feet for the first time all day, and K-State suddenly had the momentum it needed to pull away from Colorado for a 68-51 victory.

“He played with a lot of passion,” coach Frank Martin said of Colon.

That’s something that certainly wasn’t present during the first half. In the opening 20 minutes, K-State and Colorado combined for 24 turnovers and shot 29 free throws.

Colon went on to score nine points and grab six rebounds after coming up scoreless in the first half. Leading up to that spurt, the Wildcats led 28-26.

That made for an interesting halftime speech from Martin.

Junior guard Jacob Pullen said he walked in and told the team, “We can make or break our season with a game like this. You want to just throw your whole season — that you worked hard for and could be a special season the way we were playing — away, that’s fine. Just let me know.”

Martin said he was much calmer.

“I told the guys at halftime, ‘We’re ranked as the ninth-ranked team in the country, and we’re all running around like we all lost our little puppy dog. What are we hanging our heads about? What are we looking all depressed about? Go out there and play. Do what you do.’ ”

However it happened, K-State responded.

“A lot of us upperclassmen took that to heart and took it to another level in the second half,” Pullen said.

Behind Colon’s initial burst, the Wildcats stormed to a 23-8 run and pushed their once-minuscule lead to 51-34.

The game was never again close.

In the process, Martin became the first coach in program history to begin his career with three straight 20-win seasons. He said he appreciated the accomplishment, but credited his assistant coaches and players for the wins.

“It is not about me,” Martin said. “It is about us.”

K-State appeared to carry that team-first attitude throughout the second half. Early on, Martin said the Wildcats struggled with their offense because he asked them to run newly-designed plays they had not yet perfected in practice.

Going up against Colorado’s zone defense, they appeared lost at times, and Martin realized a change needed to be made. So on top of challenging his team at halftime, he sent them back out to the court ready to run their traditional offense.

The change helped Colon more than anyone else.

“Luis just did a great job of putting people on his back and staying active around the rim,” Pullen said. “When he does that, we’re hard to guard.”

Junior forward Curtis Kelly recorded his first double-double of Big 12 play with 12 points and 11 rebounds, Jamar

Samuels added 12 points and Denis Clemente recorded 10 points and five assists.

Pullen led K-State with 15 points and also dished out 10 assists, proving to Samuels that the Wildcats collectively improved as the game went along.

"That was very important," Samuels said. "Because we tried to make a statement in the second half and show people we're not that kind of first-half team."

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