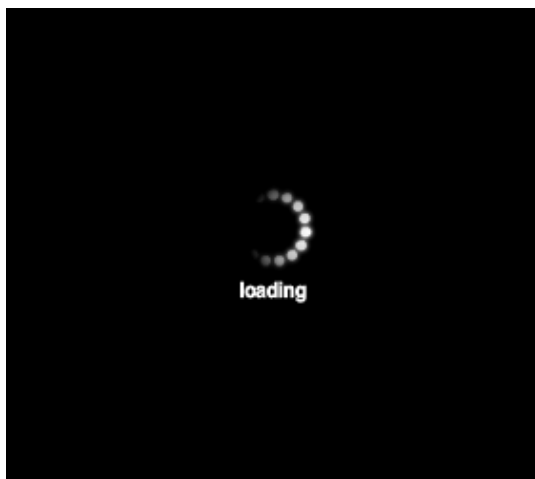


CU Buffs fall to No. 1 Kansas in overtime

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

Posted: 02/03/2010 09:41:23 PM MST



Click on any photo to see full gallery

It had the feel of March Madness.

The Jayhawks were in town. The Coors Events Center was sold out and shaking like Allen Fieldhouse. A national television audience stayed tuned to see if the No. 1 Jayhawks would survive and avoid the upset of the season in college basketball.

Colorado was thisdarnclose to leading SportsCenter, but in the end the students left quietly without storming the court as the Buffs suffered a 72-66 loss to KU on Wednesday night in front of a split crowd of 11,027.

Instead of enjoying the madness that almost was, the latest gut-wrenching defeat just left Jeff Bzdelik and his players plain mad at themselves for not finishing off the Jayhawks.

"Trust me, I want so bad for this to happen here. And our players do, too," Bzdelik said after the 27th single-digit loss of his CU career. "It's coming. I really and truly believe it is."

The Buffs (11-11, 2-6) had chances to beat Kansas State (lost 87-81), Texas A&M (lost 67-63) and Iowa State (lost 64-63) last month before stumbling at the finish line. But you get the feeling letting KU off the hook will haunt the coaches and players longer.

This time, Cory Higgins has a history-making opportunity in his hands with the score tied 60-60 in the final seconds of regulation. But after a timeout, the Buffs' best player settled for a 3-pointer with two seconds left that didn't draw iron.

"With a team like that you have to take advantage of the chances that you have, and we missed a big one at the end of regulation," Higgins said. "I think I waited too long and the clock got too close to zero and it was a bad shot."

The Jayhawks (21-1, 7-0) took a deep breath and then scored the first seven points in overtime to secure their 14th consecutive victory over CU. The Buffs are now 0-13 all-time against top-ranked teams, including an 0-6 record against KU.

"We kind of settled there the last couple possessions," Bzdelik lamented. "We needed to just drive the basketball."

KU led 59-54 with 3:53 remaining but did not score again until a free throw by Sherron Collins, who missed his first attempt at the line, tied the score with 38.2 seconds left.

Marcus Relphorde -- who missed a shot as time expired in the one-point loss at Iowa State last Saturday -- made a layup with 2:40 remaining to cut the deficit to one point and gave the home team a 60-59 lead with a pair of clutch free throws with 56 seconds remaining in regulation.

"Everybody on the team believed that we were going to win," Higgins said. "It just didn't go our way."

Marcus Morris capped the Jayhawks' spurt in overtime with a key offensive rebound and basket to give the visitors a 67-60 lead with 2:40 remaining.

The Buffs were playing without talented freshman Alec Burks, who sustained a sprained knee at Iowa State. Levi Knutson picked up the slack in spectacular fashion, scoring 13 points on 5-for-8 shooting with four rebounds, an assist and a key steal.

"I feel every night out we play to win and it doesn't matter if you're playing the No. 1 team in the country or the 300th ranked team in the country," said Knutson, who was 3-for-4 behind the arc. "We expect to win every game we play. We just didn't pull it out."

Knutson started the second half and splashed a pair of 3-pointers to tie the score 34-34, forcing Bill Self to grab a timeout with

18:38 left to play.

Speaking of unlikely heroes, Trey Eckloff checked in moments later and drilled a shot from behind the arc without hesitation to bring the Buffs within 44-43.

KU appeared to seize control after building a 52-45 lead during a CU scoring drought of 3:34, but CU refused to go away and finished regulation with a 15-8 run.

"They really played well out there," KU center Cole Aldrich said after finishing with 16 points and 14 rebounds. "We had quite a bit of fans out there but their fans were really good."

CU trailed 34-28 at the intermission despite making only 11 of 31 shots (35.5 percent). The worst rebounding team in the Big 12 had a 22-18 edge on the glass through 20 minutes and scored nine points on eight offensive boards.

The Buffs took a 6-4 lead after back-to-back 3-pointers by Casey Crawford and Austin Dufault three minutes into the game.

That would be the final lead for the home team until Relphorde put the Buffs up in the final minute. KU answered the initial jab with a 20-2 pounding capped with a driving layup by Collins that made the score 24-8 with 9:19 remaining.

A 3-pointer by Knutson ended CU's shooting slump and started a 7-0 run that cut the deficit to nine points in just 30 seconds. A transition basket by Relphorde brought the Buffs to within 30-26 with 3:21 left in the first half.

"We took some quick shots early in the game," said Bzdelik, whose team shot 44.4 percent in the second half but only made one of its six shots in overtime. "Kansas doesn't want to guard our stuff. They hate that. You can't accommodate them by taking quick shots and letting them off the hook. You have to make them defend."

By the end of the game the Jayhawks won the battle of the boards 45-41, outscored CU 36-24 in the paint and 16-12 in second-chance points.

Relphorde (18 points) and Higgins (13) also scored in doubled figures for the Buffs, who have to find a way to bounce back emotionally for another tough game against Missouri on Saturday against at the Coors Events Center.

"We've known we can play with anybody, it's just a matter of beating those teams now," Higgins said. "We've been in enough close games."

Kansas 72, Colorado 66

KANSAS

FG FT Reb

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

MrcMrris 30 6-14 2-7 5-8 0 3 15

Aldrich 35 6-8 4-7 4-14 0 3 16

XHenry 17 0-4 3-4 1-4 1 3 3

Collins 41 6-17 4-6 0-3 5 2 16

Mrngstr 37 2-5 1-2 0-4 6 4 6

Robinsn 3 0-0 0-0 0-1 0 1 0

Teahan 2 0-0 0-0 0-1 0 0 0

Taylor 25 2-4 1-3 0-3 1 1 6

Reed 21 1-1 0-0 1-3 0 2 3

MrkMrris 14 2-3 3-9 1-2 0 2 7

Totals 225 25-56 18-38 13-45 13 21 72

Percentages: FG .446, FT .474.

3-Point Goals: 4-13, .308 (Reed 1-1, [Marc.Morris](#) 1-1, Taylor 1-1, Morningstar 1-2, [X.Henry](#) 0-3, Collins 0-5).

Team Rebounds: 2.

Blocked Shots: 6 (Aldrich 5, Morningstar).

Turnovers: 11 (Collins 3, [Marc.Morris](#) 2, Aldrich 2, [Mark.Morris](#), [X.Henry](#), Morningstar, Taylor).

Steals: 7 (Morningstar 2, [X.Henry](#), [Mark.Morris](#), Robinson, Collins, Taylor).

Technical Fouls: None.

COLORADO

FG FT Reb

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

Dufault 27 2-9 1-4 2-6 2 4 6

Crawford 10 1-3 0-0 0-2 0 4 3

Tmlinsn 38 2-4 0-0 0-1 5 4 5

Rlphrde 39 7-15 3-5 4-11 1 4 18

CHiggins 38 4-15 6-6 3-7 3 3 14

Thorne II 12 0-4 0-0 0-0 3 0 0

Hrs-Tnks 15 1-2 0-1 1-3 0 3 2

Knutson 34 5-8 0-1 0-4 1 4 13

Hrnckl 9 1-2 0-0 2-4 0 1 2

Eckloff 3 1-2 0-0 0-0 0 0 3

Totals 225 24-64 10-17 14-41 15 27 66

Percentages: FG .375, FT .588.

3-Point Goals: 8-27, .296 (Knutson 3-4, Crawford 1-2, Eckloff 1-2, Tomlinson 1-3, Relphorde 1-4, Dufault 1-5, Hornbuckle 0-1, Thorne II 0-3, [C.Higgins](#) 0-3).

Team Rebounds: 3.

Blocked Shots: 2 (Harris-Tunks, Relphorde).

Turnovers: 13 (Tomlinson 3, [C.Higgins](#) 3, Harris-Tunks 2, Hornbuckle, Relphorde, Crawford, Dufault).

Steals: 3 (Crawford, Dufault, Knutson).

Technical Fouls: None.

Kansas 34 26 12--72

Colorado 28 32 6--66

A -- 11,027.

Officials -- Gerry Pollard, Terry Davis, Terry



Close Window

Send To Printer

Woelk: Moral victories don't cut it for Buffaloes

Neill Woelk Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 02/04/2010 12:16:22 AM MST

One of these days ...

One of these days, the Colorado basketball team will get a break in its favor.

They'll make that shot in the final seconds to end a much-too-long road losing streak.

They'll hit a shot in the final seconds to knock off the No. 1 team in the nation. (At least, they'll have all their best players available when they play the best team in the nation.)

They'll do something -- anything -- to break the ice.

But until then, the Buffs have to continue to learn one of the harshest lessons in life: battling from the bottom is the toughest task in sports. Until you absolutely, positively prove you don't belong there, you're going to get kicked at every turn.

The Buffs had their chances Wednesday night against Kansas. Oh, did they have their chances. They had the chance that everyone dreams of having against the best team in the nation.

Ball in their best player's hands, eight seconds on the shot clock, tie ballgame and just 10 ticks remaining in the contest.

Air ball.

Surprised? Not really. If you've followed Colorado basketball for any length of time, you know this much: nothing comes easily for the Buffs.

Given a second chance at life, the Jayhawks didn't waste it. KU dominated the overtime period. They took care of business, walked away with a 72-66 win, and left the Buffs shaking their heads.

Once again, close but no victory cigar. These are the Buffs that had a chance to win in the final minute at Texas A&M. Ditto at Iowa State. And now, the biggest heartbreaker yet.

Don't even mention moral victories to the Buffs. In the post-game press conference, a reporter made the mistake of asking Jeff Bzdelik about the concept.

"Not into that," Bzdelik said forcefully. "We are not into moral victories. We've got to learn how to close out games. It's about winning. I know that. I embrace that. And we're going to bust through. I really, really believe that."

It's not like the Buffs can come any closer and NOT win a close game. They've already found just about every way possible to let them slip away. A missed rebound in the final seconds. A missed shot -- twice in the same week.

And those are just the final minutes.

Leading up to the final few seconds of regulation on Wednesday, the Buffs also let some chances get away. There was an ill-advised 3-point attempt from Nate Tomlinson. There was a turnover. There was another missed shot.

"There's no magic formula," said Buff guard Levi Knutson. "We just have to realize that every possession counts, no matter when it is in the ballgame."

Knutson certainly did his part. With freshman Alex Burks on the bench with a knee injury, Knutson scored 13 points and grabbed four rebounds in 34 minutes. He also had a huge steal down the stretch that gave CU the opportunity to take the lead.

There were plenty of contributions from other corners. Cory Higgins, who will be remembered for missing the last shot in regulation, should also be remembered for his 14 points, seven rebounds and three assists. Marcus Relphorde notched an 18-point, 11-rebound double-double.

"I thought they were the better team," said KU coach Bill Self. "I am not going to say we played poorly because it doesn't give them the credit they deserve."

But it wasn't enough.

"We've been in enough close games," Higgins said. "We know we can play with anybody. It's just a matter of beating those teams now."

Bzdelik knows it's not for a lack of effort. He knows his players hurt. Two heartbreaking losses in a row has left an ache that won't go away -- at least not until they win a game or two.

"I believe in them," Bzdelik said. "I hurt for them. We just have to keep banging."

With eight conference games remaining, plus the Big 12 tournament, the Buffs still have plenty of opportunities ahead of them. The chance at postseason play still exists.

But sooner or later, they need to prove to themselves that they can win one of these close ones.

"We had our chance to win," Bzdelik said.

One of these days?

One of these days very soon, the Buffs have to take advantage of those



Close Window

Send To Printer

Bzdelik makes Burks rest knee

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 02/04/2010 12:07:55 AM MST

If Alec Burks didn't get hurt ...

Well, Colorado fans have to think the Buffs would have ended their Big 12 road losing streak at Iowa State and knocked off a No. 1 team for the first time by taking care of Kansas.

After all, CU lost 64-63 in Ames and squandered several opportunities on Wednesday night with empty possessions during a 72-66 overtime loss to KU at the Coors Events Center.

"Wouldas, couldas and shouldas," Bzdelik said. "I'd like to think if we had (Burks) at Iowa State, we only had him for two minutes, that might have been different, too. But it's part of the game."

The Buffs actually could have had Burks in the lineup against the Jayhawks. The talented freshman, who is averaging 16.3 points per game, was cleared to play by the medical staff on Wednesday.

"Alec Burks was cleared by the doctor, and I'm the one that said no because he wasn't 100," Bzdelik said. "He's a young, talented guy and that was my decision strictly from the standpoint that I want the risk when he steps back on the court to be as minimal as possible."

So what was Burks' reaction to the decision?

"He wanted to play but he understood why (the decision was made)," Bzdelik said.

Burks was suffered a sprained left knee two minutes into CU's loss at Iowa State last Saturday. Only Chauncey Billups (17.9 ppg) has averaged more points per game at CU as a true freshman than the 6-6 guard from Grandview, Mo.

Levi Knutson helped make up for Burks' absence by scoring 13 points off the bench. The junior guard was playing so well that Bzdelik left him on the court against the nation's top-ranked team for 34 minutes.

"I'm always ready to play," Knutson said. "I just try to take advantage of the time I'm out there and help the team win. It wasn't enough today."

Bzdelik said Burks remains day-to-day when asked if he would return to the lineup against Missouri on Saturday.

Bumps and bruises

Marcus Relphorde (bruised hip) and Nate Tomlinson (bruised leg) needed treatment after the physical game against KU.

Keegan Hornbuckle, who missed the previous three games with a right shoulder sprain, returned to the rotation and had two points and four rebounds in nine minutes.

Glass half full

CU, by far the worst rebounding team in the Big 12, made a dramatic improvement on the boards against Kansas.

The Buffs out-rebounded KU 22-18 in the first half and scored nine points off eight offensive boards. KU finished the game with a 45-41 rebounding edge.

Close Window

Send To Printer

- [News](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Opinion](#)
- [Speak Out!](#)
- [Multimedia](#)

- [Subscribe](#)

Close and getting closer

Bufs drop chance to knock off No. 1 Kansas

By Richard Londer on February 4, 2010

0
tweets

The Coors Events Center was packed with all the raucous fans decked out in black and gold, placing No. 1 Kansas in an unfamiliar spot Wednesday night.

tweet

The atmosphere and attitude were ripe for any team to thrive, and no one realizes it more than the men's hoops team.

One second away from upsetting college basketball's top contender, Buffs' senior Cory Higgins could have made the underdog's dream come true. Instead, overtime followed a missed opportunity and they fell 72-66.

"When you have those opportunities you have to take advantage of them, and we missed a good one at the end of regulation," Higgins said of his last second shot.

While the Buffs lost a game they were expected to lose, the team showed CU sports fans something they haven't seen in a while—a team on the verge of breakthrough.

Wednesday, the Buffs took No. 1 Kansas into overtime and lost by only six. On Jan. 30, they lost 64-63 to Iowa State.

Following the Buffs' upset of No. 22 Baylor, they lost again by six to No. 13 Kansas State. Falling to Texas A&M by four, they let yet another close one slip away. Losing by 12 to Oklahoma State was the same story.

"Since I've been here we've lost 28 games by single digit margins," said head coach Jeff Bzdelik.

Losing may seem like the recurring theme, but look again. By putting themselves in the position to win just about every game on their schedule, these Buffs look ready to run, Bzdelik said.

"We've just got to break through, and keep believing in ourselves. We just need to keep battling. These guys, they battle themselves to exhaustion," Bzdelik said after the Kansas loss.

Hype and talk can only do so much for a team following a loss, but these Buffs seem to be aware of what it's going to take to finish off these "close ones."



Kansas Jayhawks' Sherron Collins (4) drives to the basket against Buffs' junior Cory Higgins (11) during the CU versus Kansas basketball at Coors Events Center on Wednesday. (CU Independent/Stephanie Davis)



Junior forward Marcus Relphorde (5) goes for a layup in the CU versus KU basketball game in the Coors Events Center on Wednesday. CU lost in Overtime 66-72. (CU Independent/Bianca West)

"It's just a few possessions, there is no magic formula," said Colorado junior guard Levi Knutson. "It's just doing what we did all game, just doing it a few more times"

To foster success, a team needs confidence, and their home court.

The Coors Events Center resembled that advantageous home court Wednesday night against Kansas.

Looking and sounding like some of college basketball's most coveted atmospheres, Buffs fans have bought into what this program is selling.

"Our student body is absolutely awesome. Our fans are awesome and I want so badly for this to happen here, and so do our players. I believe it's coming here," Bzdelik said.

You can see it in the faces of the players and coaches, you can hear it in the consistently larger crowds, and you can feel it when they take the court.

Contact CU Independent Staff Writer Richard Londer at Richard.londer@colorado.edu.

GRAND Flash Album Gallery

Skins for GRAND FIAGallery, Photo Galleries, Video Galleries

developed by CodEasily.com - [WordPress Flash Templates](#), [WordPress Themes](#) and [WordPress plugins](#)

The Flash Player and a browser with Javascript support are needed..

Posted in [Front Page](#), [Sports](#) | Tagged [CU Men's Basketball](#)

Copyright © 2010 CU Independent

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

cu men's basketball

Jayhawks escape Boulder with OT win over Buffs

Kansas 72, CU 66 (OT)

By Chris Dempsey
The Denver Post

Posted: 02/04/2010 01:00:00 AM MST

Updated: 02/04/2010 04:25:18 PM MST



Colorado's Cory Higgins buries his face in his jersey while leaving the court after Wednesday's overtime loss to No. 1 Kansas (John Leyba, The Denver Post)

BOULDER — KU night is the night the politically blue city of Boulder becomes literally blue inside the Coors Events Center. CU's efforts to reduce KU fans' presence changed some of that. Rarely has it been less blue here.

But this is what never really changes — KU wins. And wins. And wins.

On Wednesday, the Buffs displayed hope for the future, but the No. 1 Jayhawks put a 72-66 overtime statement on the present.

"We keep knocking on the door," guard Cory Higgins said. "We've got to break through."

Kansas has beaten Colorado 14 straight times,

Advertisement

Kodak

IF YOU'RE NOT PRINTING ON A KODAK ESP ALL-IN-ONE PRINTER, CHANCES ARE
YOU'RE PAYING TOO MUCH FOR INK.

FIND OUT HOW MUCH YOU'RE OVERPAYING FOR INK AT PRINTANDPROSPER.COM

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

41 of the last 42 overall and seven straight at the Coors Events Center. But not every Big 12 victory is an easy one, and the newly crowned top-ranked team

CU Basketball

View slide show of former CU men's basketball coach Jeff Bzdelik .

- **View** slide show of CU women's basketball coach Linda Lappe .
- **Visit** the CU Stats Page for men's boxscores, Big 12 standings, team leaders and more .
- **Visit** the CU Stats Page for women's boxscores, Big 12 standings, player pages and more .
- **Visit** Tom Kensler's All Things Buffs blog for a behind-the-scenes look at CU sports .

found Colorado was not willing to let those numbers grow without a substantial fight.

The Buffs pushed Kansas to the brink and to overtime, but the good times stopped there. Kansas scored the first seven points of the extra frame, finally playing the kind of basketball expected of the best team in the nation, and put an end to CU's upset bid.

It would have been the signature win of the Jeff Bzdelik era.

Instead it was CU's 11th loss this season. A heartbreaker, given the circumstances, yet a definite sign the men's basketball program may actually be on the mend. No one, however, was willing to take anything other than a real win.

"We're not into moral victories," Bzdelik said. "We have to learn how to close out games. It's about winning."

Colorado was hurt by the absence of Alec Burks, the freshman phenom who is second on the team in scoring and tops in rebounds. But he could have played. Burks, who has a left knee sprain, was cleared by doctors. Bzdelik chose not to play him.

"I want the risk, when he steps on the court, to be as minimal as possible," Bzdelik said.

So Burks watched.

"It was very tough not to be able to play with your teammates," Burks said. "It was tough to watch. It was close. I feel like I could have helped them out. We could have maybe gotten the 'W.' They fought hard. I was proud of my teammates. They keep working hard even though some people are down."

Two quick 3-pointers gave CU an early 6-4 lead, but things fell apart swiftly. Cole Aldrich blocked shots on one end and the Jayhawks turned them into points on the other. By the time Colorado could gather itself, Kansas had gone on a 20-2 run to turn that deficit into a 24-8 lead.

Advertisement



Florida Tech
UNIVERSITY ONLINE

Bring the Classroom to Your Home
With a Degree Online From Florida Tech

APPLY TODAY!
FloridaTechOnline.com/FD | 1-888-253-5946



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

But a composed CU started to find the range.

The Buffs used a deadly stroke from behind the arc to spark an 18-6 run to climb within four at 30-26 with 3:18 left in the first half. All of this without a big contribution from the Buffs' leading scorer, Cory Higgins, who finished the first half a frigid 1-of-7 from the field for two points.

In the second half, the Buffs battled. When Marcus Relphorde made a layup at 2:45, they were down just one at 59-58. Two Relphorde free throws with 57 seconds left gave CU a 60-59 lead. Sherron Collins hit one of two free throws with 37 seconds left that eventually sent the game to overtime.

Colorado was outscored 12-6 in the extra period. Relphorde led CU with 18 points and 11 rebounds.

"Our guys care," Bzdelik said. "They really, truly care. I believe in them. I hurt for them. We're just going to have to keep banging away."

*Chris Dempsey: 303-954-1279 or
cdempsey@denverpost.com*

Advertisement

 UNIVERSITY of SAN FRANCISCO	End-to-End Training as It Should Be: 100% ONLINE!	
	Earn Your Master Certificate in Internet Marketing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ SEO & Paid Search→ Online Branding→ Web Analytics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Internet Law→ Media Buying→ Social Media
		1-800-268-9943 USanFranOnline.com/FD

Print Powered By  **FormatDynamics™**



Posted on Wed, Feb. 03, 2010

No. 1 KU barely escapes big upset at Colorado

By J. BRADY McCOLLOUGH
The Kansas City Star

BOULDER, Colo. | Here's how ownership can be defined in basketball terms: On Wednesday night, Kansas made 18 of 38 free throws, Sherron Collins missed every outside shot attempt he took except one and KU surrendered a 16-point lead to Colorado.

The Jayhawks were so unimpressive in their 72-66 overtime victory over the Buffaloes at the Coors Events Center that Colorado's student section chanted "Overrated!" as the seconds ran off the clock on KU's 14th straight victory over their team.

The freshly-minted top-ranked Jayhawks did not look like the No. 1 team in the country during regulation once the first 10 minutes had passed, but they returned to form for the five-minute overtime period, holding off a Colorado team that has to feel snake-bit against KU. Highlights of the Jayhawks' second straight overtime win included two great defensive plays and a jumper off the glass by Brady Morningstar, and a possession in which Marcus Morris grabbed three offensive rebounds before giving KU a 67-60 lead with a layup.

"That was the best basketball play of the game," KU coach Bill Self said. "From a competitive standpoint, guys are really tired, and he goes after his own ball three times and gets the put-back."

Such a struggle for Kansas against Colorado was nothing new; it is a tenuous ownership at best. In 2008, the eventual national champion Jayhawks were tied at halftime with a bad Colorado team. The last time the teams played at Allen Fieldhouse, the Buffaloes turned a 21-point hole into a two-point deficit, and the Jayhawks still won the game. The games in Boulder are just about always close.

"Coach jokes, 'Once you guys are indoors, the altitude doesn't matter,'" KU center Cole Aldrich said. "All the freshmen believe it, but the veterans just laugh at him. It's a little different up here."

KU can only hope that its free-throw struggles had something to do with the altitude.

"We're gonna be shooting free throws tomorrow," Aldrich said.

On this night, Aldrich made up for the multitude of things going wrong with 16 points, 14 rebounds and five blocks for his fourth straight double-double.

Wednesday night's game couldn't have started better for the Jayhawks, who stormed out to a 24-8 lead behind the defense of Aldrich. Before the Buffaloes could even get on the scoreboard, Aldrich had two blocks.

But Colorado battled back in front of one of the more raucous Coors crowds in recent memory. Colorado tied the game at 34 minutes into the second half. From there, it was back-and-forth basketball between two teams that, on paper, should have been playing in different universes.

Colorado had just found out during the day Wednesday that its standout freshman, guard Alec Burks of Grandview, would not be playing because of a sprained knee. But there the Buffaloes were, surmounting the odds as usual to hang with the Jayhawks.

KU, now 21-1 and 7-0 in the Big 12, was plagued by sloppy possessions and turnovers late, giving Colorado the chance to take a 60-59 lead on two free throws by Relphorde with less than a minute left. Collins brought the ball up the floor, and, of course, everyone in the building knew what was coming. Collins drove the lane, drawing a foul and would head to the free-throw line with 38.2 seconds left.

Collins is one of the top free-throw shooters in the Big 12, but he has not been Mr. Clutch at the line. He missed two free throws in the final minute against Michigan State in KU's Sweet 16 loss last season, and he missed what could have been the clincher in overtime against K-State on Saturday. Sure enough, Collins missed the first one. With an unbeaten Big 12 record on his shoulders, Collins made the second.

Kansas forced Colorado's Cory Higgins into a wild three-pointer at the end of the shot clock, and the game went to overtime.

"I think the altitude took that one too far, too," Collins said.

Self sounded relieved more than excited about KU's fourth Big 12 road win.

"We made it hard on ourselves," Self said, "but it's still a good win."

To reach J. Brady McCollough, e-mail jmccollough@kcstar.com or follow him at twitter.com/BradyMcCollough

© 2010 Kansas City Star and wire service sources. All Rights Reserved. <http://www.kansascity.com>



Top-ranked Kansas survives scare at Colorado, prevails in OT

Updated 2/4/2010 2:28 AM



By Ron Chenoy, US Presswire

Kansas center Cole Aldrich blocks a shot at the end of the first half Wednesday night. Aldrich blocked five shots while also recording his fourth straight double-double.

BOULDER, Colo. (AP) — Marcus Morris went up for the shot in overtime and hit the rim. He grabbed the rebound, but his follow-up also fell short. Again, he grabbed the board. Again, he missed the shot.

Finally, on his fourth try, Morris put the ball through the hoop and finished off the Colorado Buffaloes.

"I wish I could have made it the first time, but I kind of got my stats up a little bit, so that played out well," Morris cracked.

That one play epitomized the entire perplexing game for the top-ranked Kansas Jayhawks, who survived a 72-66 thriller at the Coors Events Center on Wednesday night.

GAME REPORT: [Kansas 72, Colorado 66 \(OT\)](#)

The Jayhawks (21-1, 7-0 Big 12) were just 18 for 38 from the free throw line and couldn't shake the Buffaloes (11-11, 2-6) until the extra period.

Morris, who scored 15 points and pulled down eight boards, got a chance to pad his stats in overtime by blocking the lane in the waning seconds of regulation, when Cory Higgins misfired from several feet beyond the arc with 2 seconds left and the game tied at 60.

"I think I waited too long," Higgins acknowledged. "I'd rather drive the ball. But they switched the screen and I let the clock get too far down and I ended up with that shot."

Morris was surprised to see Higgins hesitate and then have to hurry a long-range shot like that.

"I'm like, 'Hey, if he wants to hit one from back here, that's a shot we'll lose by,'" Morris said. "I mean, that's a shot I want him to take instead of drawing contact and I knew they were in the bonus. So, that's why I kind of gave him some space. And I think he fell asleep on the shot clock and had to chuck it."

Morris said he was exhausted after his put-back on his fourth try gave Kansas a 67-60 lead in overtime.

Advertisement

Kodak

IF YOU'RE NOT PRINTING ON A KODAK ESP ALL-IN-ONE PRINTER, CHANCES ARE
YOU'RE PAYING TOO MUCH FOR INK.

FIND OUT HOW MUCH YOU'RE OVERPAYING FOR INK AT PRINTANDPROSPER.COM

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™



"I was done. I gave everything I had on that last play and the altitude was ridiculous out there. It was hard to catch our breath," he said. "It was a tough game. Nothing was going our way and still nothing was going our way because I was missing right around the rim."

But Morris would be called upon one more time.

He stepped to the line with 26 seconds left and Kansas up by four and calmly sank two free throws, the only ones he hit all night.

"Heck, he's 2 for 7. You should make at least two free throws if you shoot seven, OK?" Kansas coach [Bill Self](#) said, chuckling. "So, I'm not going to give him that much credit.

"But I will tell you this: He made the play of the game. That was the best basketball play of the game. From a competitive standpoint, guys are really tired and he goes after his own ball three or four times and gets the put-back."

Morris sat out the last 12 minutes of the first half two fouls and the Buffs entered their locker room trailing 34-28 but owning the momentum after erasing a 21-8 deficit.

Levi Knutson hit quick consecutive three-pointers from the right corner to tie it at 34 and force Kansas to call a timeout less than 90 seconds into the second half. From then on, it was a thrilling game even though the Buffs would end up losing to Kansas for the 14th straight time.

The Buffs have never beaten a top-ranked team in 13 tries, including six against Kansas.

The No. 1 team has lost each of the last two weeks, Texas and Kentucky.

"We didn't play our best by any stretch, but if you go 18-of-38 from the line and your starting perimeter goes 8-of-26 from the field and you somehow get a win, then some guys had to make some plays," Self said. "But I thought Colorado played great."

Self was stumped as to why his team, which was second in the Big 12 with a free throw shooting percentage of 78% coming in, could slip to 47% on this night.

"We weren't even close," he said. "We almost had two air balls the first half. I don't know how that happened."

They'll search for answers Thursday.

"We're going to be shooting free throws tomorrow," sighed Kansas center Cole Aldrich, who had 16 points and 14 rebounds.

Marcus Relphorde led the Buffs with 18 points and 11 boards. His two free throws with 56 seconds left in regulation gave the Buffaloes their first — and only — lead at 60-59, but [Sherron Collins \(FSY\)](#) made one of two free throws to tie it with 38 seconds left, and the Buffs never led again.

"I'm not going to say we played poorly because it doesn't give (the Buffaloes) the credit they deserve," Self said. "We'll look back on this as a good win."

The Buffs and their fans will look back and wonder what might have been had Colorado coach [Jeff Bzdelik](#) not decided to sit his star freshman Alec Burns, who leads Big 12 newcomers with a 16.3 scoring average but is nursing a sprained left knee.

"He was cleared today by the doctors, but he wasn't 100%," Bzdelik acknowledged. "He is a young, talented guy. That was my decision from the standpoint that you are not going to jeopardize anything. I want the risk the next time he steps on the court to be as minimal as possible.

Advertisement

Mom Dilemma #36:
Your daughter insists on wearing her princess costume to the grocery store. Allow it or not?

YES, at least she's dressed!

NO, I have some rules!

momslime.com
where Local moms meet

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™



"He wanted to play, but he understood."

Copyright 2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Advertisement

The advertisement for the USA TODAY AutoPilot app features the USA TODAY logo at the top left. The word "AutoPilot" is written in a large, bold, black font, with a blue airplane icon to its right. Below the title, a smartphone displays the app's interface, which includes a "USA TODAY Meeting" section with a date "Sep 21, 2009", a flight status "A6 BNA to IAD Landed 09/21/2009 11:46 AM", and weather information "73° Washington (IAD) Partly Cloudy". There are also links to "View a Flickr gallery of Washington" and "Articles: Hotel Check-in Hilton Hotels picks". To the right of the phone, the text "The new travel app for iPhone® and iPod touch®" is displayed. Below this, it says "Presented by:" followed by the Hampton logo. At the bottom right, a blue button with white text says "SEE HOW IT WORKS »".

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™