

No. 2 Texas tops CU Buffs in Big 12 opener

Men's basketball team remains winless on the road

By Ryan Thorburn, Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

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AUSTIN, Texas -- Rick Barnes doesn't like to think about what would happen if Jeff Bzdelik was working with the Longhorns' talent.

The coach of the nation's No. 2 team was feeling more relieved than anything else after Texas opened up Big 12 play with a 103-86 victory over Colorado on Saturday at the Erwin Center.

"I'd like to think Colorado knows what it has in him," Barnes said of his friend Bzdelik. The two worked together on Davidson's staff as young assistants three decades ago. "I don't ever look forward to playing Colorado."

The Buffs (9-6, 0-1) shot 53.6 percent from the field (30-for-56), 76.9 percent (20-for-26) from the line and had three players score in double figures.

But the bigger, deeper and more aggressive Longhorns (15-0, 1-0) out-rebounded the undersized visitors 39-23, finishing with a 22-6 advantage in second-chance points and 17 points off 15 CU turnovers.

"We knew coming in we'd have to take care of the ball and that we would have to do a very good job on the defensive boards," Bzdelik said. "To give one of the nation's elite teams 39 points off turnovers and second-chance points is just way too many.

"Our players competed, we just fell short in those two areas."

CU has now lost 30 consecutive Big 12 road games and 22 consecutive true road games against Division I opponents.

Marcus Relphorde scored a career-high 24 points on 8-for-13 shooting. The 6-7 point-forward also produced a SportsCenter-worthy dunk and then completed the three-point play to bring CU within 59-50 with 17:39 remaining in the game.

That was as close as the Buffs would get in the second half.

Super freshman Avery Bradley answered Relphorde's challenge with a 3-pointer and finished with 29 points on 12-for-14 shooting as Texas built a 23-point lead down the stretch.

"They were a good team, but we competed with them," said Relphorde, who was one of four CU players who fouled out in the second half. "We took away a lot of confidence from that game. There were a couple swings where they kind of went up, but I feel that game helped us knowing we can play with anybody."

CU put on an offensive clinic in the first half, knocking down 16 of 26 shots (61.5 percent) and keeping the crowd of 10,823 quiet for the most part.

Thanks to a 13-0 run by Texas, the Buffs still trailed 57-42 at the intermission.

"Offensively, if we didn't turn it over we were able to find ways to score," Bzdelik said. "Give Texas a lot of credit, they're extremely talented and well coached. They've got their act together."

Nate Tomlinson set the tone early with a layup to give CU a 2-0 lead. Alec Burks had two layups and Cory Higgins' layup with 15:03 remaining tied the score 15-15.

A basket by Relphorde gave the Buffs their final lead (17-15) with 13:33 remaining, and a three-point play by Burks tied the score (20-20) for the final time with 12:05 left in the first half.

"We knew they were going to be a really hard team to guard because they are so well coached," Barnes said. "They are really disciplined and they do a lot of really subtle things. They do as good a job of driving the ball as anyone in the country. And I'll have to ask Jeff about free throws because they've always been a good free-throw shooting team."

CU's "bigs" -- 6-8 Austin Dufault and 6-11 Shane Harris-Tunks -- were each whistled for three fouls 10 minutes into the game and fouled out midway through the second half.

The game plan against 6-11, 290-pound center Dexter Pittman (four points, one rebound) was executed brilliantly by the Buffs. But Barnes still has an embarrassment of riches on the front line with Damion James (20 points, 14 rebounds) and Gary Johnson (16 points, three rebounds).

"We knew they would focus on Damion and Dexter because they are so good," said Bradley, who was 3-for-3 behind the arc and also finished with nine rebounds and three assists. "We went into the game looking for open spots so we could line up the shots."

When the Longhorns' shots weren't falling -- Texas shot 55.2 percent from the field -- they were grabbing 18 offensive rebounds. CU finished with 17 defensive rebounds.

"They just have so many weapons," Bzdelik said. "You start with Dexter and Damion and you have to help in the paint there. You pick your poison. We certainly didn't disrespect Avery by leaving him open there, but we just didn't find him quick enough because we were offering help in the paint so often."

Burks (21 points) and Higgins (15) also scored in double figures for CU. They were a combined 14-for-26 from the field and 8-for-10 from the line.

The Buffs will try to bounce back on Tuesday against Baylor at the Coors Events Center, where Bzdelik's team went 8-0 during non-conference play.

Texas 103, Colorado 86

COLORADO

FG FT Reb

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

H-Tunks 13 1-2 0-0 0-0 0 5 2

Tomlinsn 23 2-4 2-3 0-1 6 3 7

Relphrde 27 8-13 5-5 2-5 0 5 24

Burks 31 8-16 5-6 1-6 0 3 21

CHiggins 33 6-10 3-4 0-2 2 1 15

Thorne II 24 2-3 3-4 0-1 3 0 8

Knutson 8 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Dufault 9 0-2 1-2 0-0 1 5 1

Crawford 10 2-4 1-2 1-3 0 2 6

Hornbuckle 12 0-1 0-0 0-0 1 0 0

Eckloff 10 1-1 0-0 0-0 0 5 2

Totals 200 30-56 20-26 6-23 13 29 86

Percentages: FG .536, FT .769.

3-Point Goals: 6-15, .400 (Relphorde 3-6, Thorne II 1-1, Crawford 1-3, Tomlinson 1-3, Burks 0-1, [C.Higgins](#) 0-1).

Team Rebounds: 5.

Blocked Shots: 3 (Thorne II, Burks, Eckloff).

Turnovers: 15 (Relphorde 4, Dufault 2, [C.Higgins](#) 2, Eckloff 2, Tomlinson 2, Burks 2, Hornbuckle).

Steals: 4 (Relphorde, Hornbuckle, Harris-Tunks, [C.Higgins](#)).

Technical Fouls: None.

TEXAS

FG FT Reb

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

James 28 9-16 1-5 6-14 0 5 20

Pittman 12 2-4 0-0 0-1 0 3 4

Bradley 36 12-14 2-3 3-9 3 2 29

Balbay 16 1-2 1-1 1-2 5 3 3

Mason 10 0-1 0-0 1-2 3 1 0

Johnson 28 5-7 6-9 1-3 0 2 16

Lucas 14 2-4 2-2 0-0 1 0 6

Wangmene 10 1-2 4-6 2-2 0 1 6

Hill 2 0-1 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Hamilton 29 3-9 5-6 3-5 1 4 12

Brown 15 2-7 2-2 1-1 5 3 7

Totals 200 37-67 23-34 18-39 18 24 103

Percentages: FG .552, FT .676.

3-Point Goals: 6-12, .500 (Bradley 3-3, James 1-1, Brown 1-3, Hamilton 1-4, Lucas 0-1).

Team Rebounds: 0.

Blocked Shots: 1 (Pittman).

Turnovers: 11 (Pittman 3, Balbay 3, James 2, Johnson, Bradley, Lucas).

Steals: 5 (Wangmene 2, Hamilton, Lucas, Balbay).

Technical Fouls: None.

Colorado 42 44-- 86

Texas 57 46--103

A -- 15,146.

Officials -- Michael Eggers, Damon Jones, James Breeding.

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More fouls than points for CU Buffs big men in loss to Texas

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 01/09/2010 11:54:27 PM MST

AUSTIN, Texas -- Whistled while they worked.

One by one the Buffs' biggest players marched to the bench after fouling out during Colorado's 103-86 loss to No. 2 Texas on Saturday at the Erwin Center.

CU coach Jeff Bzdelik started 6-11 freshman center Shane Harris-Tunks for the first time in his brief career and brought Austin Dufault off the bench for the first time in his career to match up better with the Longhorns' size.

Both players fouled out midway through the second half, combining for three points and no rebounds.

"That strategy didn't work," Bzdelik said with a chuckle at his postgame press conference. "(The foul trouble) didn't really change the game. We just turned the ball over and didn't finish defensive possessions. It's that simple."

Dufault, who had started all 45 games of his CU career before Saturday, was 0-for-2 from the field with one point and two turnovers in nine minutes. After playing just three minutes in the first half, the sophomore picked up his fourth foul with 14:45 remaining and fouled out with 10:01 left in the game.

"It was tough to really get in a rhythm coming in and out like that," Dufault said. "There was some miscommunication and stuff that usually doesn't happen. We need to move on from this to the next game."

Dufault said not starting had nothing to do with his performance.

"I was definitely comfortable coming off the bench, that was no problem at all," he said. "I understand why coach did it. It wasn't my night I guess, the ball wasn't bouncing my way."

Harris-Tunks fouled out with 8:43 remaining after scoring two points in 13 minutes. He was able to help frustrate Texas center Dexter Pittman (four points, one rebounds), but Damion James (20 points, 14 rebounds) and Gary Johnson (16 points, three rebounds) still controlled the paint.

"We went into the game thinking James was probably their best player, rather than Dexter. We still had an emphasis on Dexter and we did a good job against him," Harris-Tunks said. "He only had four points and didn't really have an impact on the game because he got in foul trouble, too."

CU's Marcus Relphorde (24 points in 23 minutes) and Trey Eckloff (five fouls in 10 minutes) also fouled out.

Gone streakin`

The loss extended all of CU's unpleasant streaks as follows:

30-game road losing streak in the Big 12 dating back to Jan. 21, 2006 (at Oklahoma State, 80-78 in overtime).

26-game road losing streak versus ranked opponents dating back to Jan. 11, 1997 (at Texas Tech, 80-78).

22-game road losing streak against Division I opponents dating back to Dec. 22, 2007 (at Colorado State, 73-70).

13-game losing streak in Big 12 openers dating back to Jan. 4, 1997 (Nebraska, 79-73).

Street clothes crew

Shannon Sharpe, Trent Beckley and Rick Higgins were all on the trip because classes had not started yet. And the Buffs could have used their help.

Sharpe, a talented freshman point guard, is out for the season with a knee injury. Beckley, a 6-10 forward, is out of the lineup indefinitely due to health issues not related to basketball. And Higgins, the older brother of Cory Higgins, is sitting out this season per NCAA transfer rules.

Series

The Longhorns lead the all-time series 14-8 and have won the past six meetings. The previous three losses for CU were by an average of 7.3 points.

Texas' high point total in the series was actually a 104-95 victory on Feb. 9, 2002, in Austin.

Notable

Freshman guard Alec Burks (six rebounds) led CU in rebounding for the third consecutive game and seventh time this season. ... The Buffs fell to 7-2 when shooting better than 50 percent from the field and 8-3 when scoring at least 70 points this season. ... CU actually blocked more shots (three) than Texas (one). ... The Buffs entered the game ranked No. 2 nationally in free throw shooting at 78.2 percent and were 20-for-26 (76.9 percent) on Saturday.

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cu men's basketball

Bradley-led Longhorns handle CU

By Jim Vertuno
The Associated Press

Posted: 01/10/2010 01:00:00 AM MST

AUSTIN, Texas — Freshman guard Avery Bradley scored 29 points, hit 12-of-14 shots and grabbed nine rebounds in his Big 12 debut, leading No. 2 Texas to a 103-86 victory over Colorado (9-6, 0-1) on Saturday.

"What can I say? He was terrific," Texas coach Rick Barnes said of the 6-foot-2 Bradley. "Avery's explosive. He's quick. He's as fast as anybody we've had in a long time."

Before Saturday, Bradley's season high was a 20-point game in a victory over North Carolina.

Senior forward Damion James contributed 20 points and 14 rebounds as Texas improved to 15-0 for the first time since the 1932-33 season.

For Colorado, it was just another afternoon of road woes. The Buffaloes dropped their 22nd consecutive

road game overall and their 30th in the Big 12.

CU Basketball

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[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.](#)

Marcus Relphorde scored 24 points for the Buffaloes, but he also was one of four Colorado players to foul out in a four-minute stretch of the second half as Texas put the game away.

Early on, CU looked like a team determined to end its run of road futility. The Buffaloes made 12 of their first 17 shots. But even with that kind of shooting, they couldn't keep Texas from building a big lead.

Colorado coach Jeff Bzdelik said the problem was trying to guard Bradley while also trying to stop James and 6-10 Dexter Pittman near the basket.

The Buffaloes stopped Pittman — he was in foul

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trouble the entire game and finished with just four points — but the others can take over a game.

"We didn't disrespect Avery by leaving him open, we just couldn't get to him in time because we were helping out in the paint," Bzdelik said. "They have just so many weapons."

CU shaved Texas' lead early in the second half and kept it close for a while. Bradley fouled Alec Burks on a dunk, and the three-point play made it 59-50. But Bradley also kept making the baskets that held off the Buffaloes.

"It made it tough," Relphorde said. "They were a real physical team."

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Team rebounds: 5. **Blocked shots:** 3 (Thorne,

Burks, Eckloff). **Turnovers:** 15 (Relphorde 4, Dufault 2, C. Higgins 2, Eckloff 2, Tomlinson 2, Burks 2, Hornbuckle). **Steals:** 4 (Relphorde, Hornbuckle, Harris-Tunks, C. Higgins). **Technical fouls:** None.

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