

# CU Buff men not feeling pressure for home wins

**With 8-0 record at home, CU men next host Baylor, K-State**

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AUSTIN, Texas -- Will there be any pressure on the home team at the Coors Events Center this week?

"What is pressure?" Jeff Bzdelik said. "This is Big 12 basketball. You step on the court to compete and win no matter where you're at."

The Buffs did their best to beat No. 2 Texas on Saturday in the conference opener at the Erwin Center, but CU's 103-86 loss followed a tired script.

Bzdelik's team has dropped its last 22 road games against Division I opponents, and the program has a 30-game road losing streak in the Big 12 dating back to the Ricardo Patton days.

Meanwhile, Big 12 teams are a combined 111-1 at home this season. All five teams that hosted conference openers on Saturday are 1-0 in the standings.

That's why Bzdelik was asked if the Buffs (9-6, 0-1) -- who are 8-0 in Boulder this season -- will be feeling the pressure of defending the home court against Baylor on Tuesday and Kansas State on Saturday.

If the Buffs are serious about finishing with a winning record, the team's stated goal, they will probably have to win at least six conference home games.

"It's just another game," freshman center Shane Harris-Tunks said of Tuesday's tilt with the Bears. "It's at home, which gives us more of an advantage. I don't think it's more pressure to win. Every game we're trying just as hard to win, whether we're home or away."

The most encouraging storyline for CU on Saturday was the performances of Marcus Relphorde (24 points on 8-for-13 shooting) and Alec Burks (21 points, six rebounds) in their Big 12 debuts. Cory Higgins, a third-team All-Big 12 selection last season, added 15 points for the visitors.

It appears that no matter who Bzdelik's team plays this season enough skill is in place to make things very interesting on the scoreboard.

"Our offense works. We know the offense works. When we stick to the offense we're going to score points," Harris-Tunks said. "Defensively, we just have to give them one shot and rebound it. Texas probably had over 20 points on second-chance points. That's where we have to focus."

The Longhorns (15-0, 1-0) had 22 second-chance points and 17 points off CU turnovers. Texas also had a 44-32 scoring edge in the paint and 44 points off the bench compared to 17 points for the Buffs' reserves.

Austin Dufault, who came off the bench for the first time in his career, did not score and fouled out in only nine minutes of court time. Relphorde, Harris-Tunks and Trey Eckloff also exited the game early with five fouls.

It's hard to imagine that CU will play a better opponent this season, although there are still two games on the schedule with No. 1 Kansas.

"It's the Big 12 and everyone is good in this league," Dufault said. "We have to prepare for the rest of the games like we prepared for this game. We're coming back home and that's definitely a good thing because we haven't lost there. Hopefully we can have a big crowd and feed off that crowd."

Baylor (13-1, 1-0) is coming off a 91-60 victory over Oklahoma and will likely be ranked by the time the team arrives in Boulder. No. 11 Kansas State (13-2, 0-1) should be focused on getting a road breakthrough following a 74-68 loss at Missouri.

"I feel like coming into the game on Tuesday we'll handle our business," Relphorde said. "We play really well at home and are looking forward to the challenge of getting a Big 12 win at home."

No pressure.

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