

# Burks` future at CU looks bright

## Bufs guard leads Big 12 freshmen in scoring

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

Posted: 01/14/2010 11:47:06 PM MST

Jeff Bzdelik walked into the Colorado locker room one afternoon, noticed that Austin Dufault was conducting a facial hair experiment and decided to give the sophomore forward some grief.

"I said to Austin kiddingly, 'If you`ve lost a razor, I have an extra one at home,'" Bzdelik said.

Alec Burks then added: "One day, I'll have to use one."

Burks wasn't kidding. But the baby-faced freshman -- listed at 6-foot-6 these days and still growing -- is already a man on the court.

Entering Saturday's game against No. 13 Kansas State, Burks leads all Big 12 freshmen in scoring (16.6 ppg) and is the Bufs' leading rebounder (5.1 rpg).

After CU's 78-71 upset over No. 22 Baylor on Tuesday night -- Burks scored 16 points in the game and later appeared in SportsCenter's "Top Plays" segment with his gravity-defying reverse layup highlight -- the 18-year-old guard explained that his mental approach to basketball is quite simple.

"I don't believe in pressure," he said matter-of-fact.

Burks' ability to make the game fun has helped refocus and re-energize some of his veteran teammates who were beaten down by losing and lacking confidence against opponents like Baylor prior to the season. His presence in the lineup alongside Cory Higgins and Marcus Relphorde has made the Bufs a dangerous team at the Coors Events Center, where they are 9-0 this season.

"Alec has made us a more threatening team," said Higgins, who is fourth in the Big 12 in scoring (18.2 ppg) and shooting 50 percent from the field, thanks in large part to the attention defenses also have to pay Burks. "Teams can't focus on any one of us now because they have to deal with all of us."

Higgins, a third-team All-Big 12 selection last year as a sophomore, scored 266 points during his freshman season. Burks already has 256 points with at least 15 games remaining in his freshman campaign.

Bzdelik isn't surprised by anything Burks does with the ball. This story wouldn't be unfolding, however, if the kid didn't make a commitment to defense as soon as he stepped foot on campus.

"He sat me down and said if I don't play defense, I don't play," Burks said. "The light bulb went off in my head that I had to play defense. ... I'm so athletic that I could just get away with not playing any defense in high school.

"It was a big culture shock when I got here."

Burks, despite the lack of interest in defense as a prep superstar, was still named the Gatorade player of the year last season after leading his high school team to the state championship game in Missouri's largest classification.

His mom wanted him to play at a Big 12 school closer to home (Grandview, Mo.). Kansas State was the only other program wise enough to seriously court Burks.

"I was probably a day away from going there," said Burks, who visited Manhattan and then Boulder during the recruiting process. "I came out here on my visit and loved it so much that I made my mind up to come here. But I was real close to going there."

Burks verbally committed to Bzdelik's rebuilding project before his senior season. He was 6-3 going on 6-4 at the time. When he arrived at CU he had grown another two inches.

"I hope not," Bzdelik said when asked if his rising star was done growing.

The coach can't wait to find out what kind of a player Burks develops into by the time he's old enough to shave.

Close Window

Send To Printer

# denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

cu basketball

## Roaming Relphorde finds a home in Boulder

By Tom Kensler  
*The Denver Post*

Posted: 01/15/2010 01:00:00 AM MST

Updated: 01/15/2010 09:21:35 AM MST



Marcus Relphorde works against Baylor's Quincy Acy in Colorado's 78-71 upset over Baylor on Tuesday night. He had 17 points and seven rebounds. (David Zalubowski, The Associated Press)

BOULDER — Although Colorado basketball coach Jeff Bzdelik told the media in October that he expected more from 6-foot-7 forward Marcus Relphorde than from his other newcomers, Bzdelik wondered privately how long it would take for the junior college transfer to learn a system — again.

"He's had five different coaches in five years," Bzdelik said. "That can screw up any player."

So it came as no surprise that it took awhile for

Advertisement

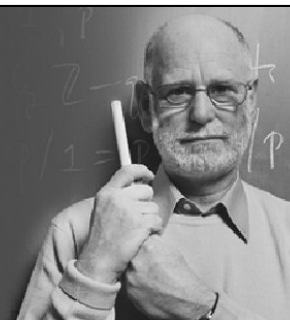


**Florida Tech**  
UNIVERSITY ONLINE



**APPLY TODAY!**

FloridaTechOnline.com/FD | 1-888-253-5946



Print Powered By  **FormatDynamics™**

# denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

things to click. Early in the season, Relphorde sometimes pulled an unintentional disappearing act on the court. The effort was there, but he appeared to have little clue about what to do or where to go in Bzdelik's pattern offense. Of late, Relphorde has become one of CU's most productive

## CU Basketball

- [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 .

players, as averages of 18.3 points and five rebounds for the past three games attest.

The transformation into a go-to player has been amazing. Bzdelik calls it "playing instinctive instead of robotic."

"Just knowing the offense is helping me play better," Relphorde said. "In the beginning, I was just trying to fit in, feeling my way around. I was thinking too much. Because of that, I'd be maybe a step slow in what I was supposed to do.

"It's been an adjustment, I won't deny that. In junior college, we didn't run sets. Here, there's a lot of sets. But it's starting to come together."

After a season at junior college power Indian Hills Community College in Iowa, Relphorde picked Colorado over Arkansas, LSU and TCU. A big factor in choosing the Buffs, Relphorde admits, was the fact he and Bzdelik have a "Chicagoland" kinship — Relphorde hails from a south suburb, Bzdelik from a north 'burb.

For Relphorde, the Chicago playgrounds must seem like ages ago. After playing at Homewood-Flossmoor (Ill.) High School with future Kansas star and NBA first-round draft choice Julian Wright, Relphorde headed to American Christian School in Alston, Pa. He averaged 13 points and six rebounds there and caught the eye of Saint Louis University coach Brad Soderberg, who offered a scholarship.

Relphorde signed with the Billikens, but he never got to play for Soderberg, who was fired and replaced by Rick Majerus. Under Majerus, Relphorde struggled to get playing time (an average of 4.3 minutes in 21 games), so he decided to rejuvenate his career with a season at Indian Hills, one of the nation's top junior college programs.

"Some people don't think you get much competition in junior college," Relphorde said. "But we had a lot of Division I recruits on our team. Every practice was like a Division I practice."

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

Relphorde enters Saturday's home game against No. 13 Kansas State averaging 11.1 points, providing CU with a dependable third scoring option behind Cory Higgins and Alec Burks. But statistics do not reflect the savvy and maturity Relphorde brings to a young roster.

In the first half of Tuesday night's upset of No. 22 Baylor, when Colorado was struggling to keep up, Relphorde spotted the Bears setting up a pick- and-roll and jumped between the two players. The result: a steal in front of CU's bench.

"That was huge," Bzdelik said.

Later, Relphorde saved a loose ball with his foot (officials apparently didn't see it), pushing the ball to a teammate for a layup.

"Marcus has been around the block, at a number of places," sophomore point guard Nate Tomlinson said. "Having all that knowledge has helped us grow as a basketball team."

With the Buffaloes in the heat of Big 12 competition and about to face a ranked opponent for the third straight game, the timing of Relphorde's revival couldn't be much better.

*Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or [tkensler@denverpost.com](mailto:tkensler@denverpost.com)*

## Finding his comfort zone

*A look at how Marcus Relphorde, a 6-foot-7*

*junior forward, has improved since joining Colorado this season:*

### Past five games

Opponent	FG	Pts	Reb
Baylor	6-12	17	7
at Texas	8-13	24	5
Miami (Ohio)	5-7	14	3
at Tulsa	0-5	0	1
Yale	6-11	15	6
Averages	.521	14.0	4.4

### First five games

Opponent	FG	Pts	Reb
Ark-Pine Bluff	3-8	6	4
Coppin State	4-10	14	6
Texas Southern	4-9	11	2
Gonzaga	4-7	10	2
Arizona	0-7	1	1
Averages	.366	8.4	3.0

Advertisement



## Bring the Classroom to Your Home

### With a Degree Online From Florida Tech





**APPLY TODAY!**

[FloridaTechOnline.com/FD](http://FloridaTechOnline.com/FD) | 1-888-253-5946

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

---

**All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post**

---

JANUARY 15, 2010, 9:41 AM

## 6-11 Harris-Tunks remains CU starter

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

As coaches have said for decades, perhaps centuries: the change appears to be permanent – unless something changes.

Once again, Colorado's 6-foot-11 freshman center Shane Harris-Tunks will be in the starting lineup Saturday for CU's 2 p.m. home game against 13th-ranked Kansas State, Buffaloes coach Jeff Bzdelik said.

That will mark the third straight start for Harris-Tunks, an Aussie averaging 2.5 points and 2.1 rebounds.

Harris-Tunks has replaced 6-9 sophomore forward Austin Dufault, who had started the first 45 games of his college career, including the first 14 this season. Dufault, from Killdeer, N.D., is averaging 6.5 points and 3.3 rebounds, down from his freshman averages of 8.2 points and 3.7 boards.

Bzdelik said Dufault's spirits remain positive.

"Austin is just an awesome team player, with a great attitude," Bzdelik said. "He has accepted it well. We need him. He's a valuable member of this team. He'll get going again."

### More from All Things Colorado Sports

- [Morale remains high among CU hoopsters](#) <sup>[1]</sup>
- [CU's Bzdelik looking for three](#) <sup>[2]</sup>
- [Celestine working way back to CU](#) <sup>[3]</sup>
- [CU's Bzdelik to schedule more toughies](#) <sup>[4]</sup>
- [Will CU's Burks get hometown jitters today?](#) <sup>[5]</sup>

### All Things Colorado Sports Recommends

- [Win two tickets to Game 6](#) (All Things Colorado Avalanche)
- [The casino behind the 6:5 blackjack payout](#) (Cover the Spread)
- [Wednesday, 6 p.m.: Game 5 at SA](#) (All Things Nuggets)



---

ARTICLE PRINTED FROM ALL THINGS COLORADO SPORTS

<http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2010/01/15/6-11-harris-tunks-remains-cu-starter/>

URLs in this post:

[1] Morale remains high among CU hoopsters: [http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2010/04/15/morale-remains-high-among-cu-hoopsters/?source=ARK\\_sports](http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2010/04/15/morale-remains-high-among-cu-hoopsters/?source=ARK_sports)

[Print page](#)[Close window](#)

Longmont, Colorado  
Tuesday, May 04, 2010

Publish Date: 1/15/2010

## Bufs basking in recruiting gem

*By Patrick Ridgell*  
© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Alec Burks puts the “late” in “late bloomer.”

Burks, the freshman guard who’s turning heads for Colorado’s men’s basketball program, still is changing in myriad ways, and, actually, he may still be growing.

Burks said Thursday he stood around 5-foot-9 or 10 as a sophomore in high school in Grandview, Mo. He grew to 6-3 as a junior and 6-4 as a senior, and between his signing with CU in November 2008 and his arrival on campus last summer, he grew close to 6-6.

“I’m 6-6 with shoes on,” Burks said.

Is he still growing today?

“My mom said you grow every day,” Burks said. “But I’m not sure. I couldn’t tell you.”

CU coach Jeff Bzdelik said only “I hope so” Thursday when asked if the budding star is still growing.

Bzdelik likes to talk about Burks, though. The other day, the coach recalled the time he spotted Burks on the recruiting trail, playing in a summer tournament. Burks, in a sweltering gym not blessed with air conditioning, ignored the approximately 110-degree heat — that’s Bzdelik’s estimate — and put on some fancy moves. An especially impressive one occurred right in front of CU’s coach.

Bzdelik looked around and wondered if any other coach had just seen it. He hoped not.

The story Bzdelik told about Burks on Thursday went like this: The coach recently asked forward Austin Dufault if he needed to borrow a razor because Dufault had let his beard grow. Privy to the conversation, Burks chimed in, “Hopefully, one day I’ll have to use one.”

Yes, Burks — baby-faced and precocious — is proving to be quite a find for the Buffs. His highlight-reel reverse layup Tuesday even made ESPN SportsCenter’s top 10 plays.

He’s started all 16 games and scored at least 10 points in every game. His 265 points already is the 11th-best season output for a CU freshman. He needs two points today to pass Cory Higgins’ freshman total, and eight to pass Stephane Pelle’s.

Richard Roby’s 480 points in 2004-05 are the program’s freshman record.

Bzdelik mentioned before Big 12 play started that opponents would begin game-planning specifically to slow Burks. So far against No. 1 Texas and No. 22 Baylor, he has scored 21 and 16.

Burks said he’s noticed opponents are putting their second-best defenders on him; their best defenders guard Cory



Higgins. He said he realizes what's happening.

"You just look for teammates," Burks said. "Keep running yourself hard, and eventually it'll open up for you."

Burks enters Saturday's game with No. 13 Kansas State (2 p.m., Altitude) averaging 16.6 points per game, second to Higgins, and 5.1 rebounds per, the team's best. Kansas State had found great success in recent years luring top recruits like Michael Beasley and Wally Judge to its program.

Burks said he "was, like, probably a day away from going" to Kansas State, mainly because his mother wanted him to stay near home. And he noted, "I like to see my mom a lot." But he chose Boulder.

Who says the Buffs never get lucky?

**BUFF BITS:** Don't tell me this region cares nothing about college hoops.

CU reported Thursday that 7,000 tickets already have been sold for Saturday's game with Kansas State. Bzdelik appeared on four radio shows this week, including one while driving through Texas on a recruiting trip. He didn't have time for a fifth.

This, after just one win over a ranked opponent — Tuesday's defeat of No. 22 Baylor.

The region is starved for good college basketball. Once it's here, it'll be supported.

Bzdelik said center Shane Harris-Tunks will make his third straight start Saturday and Dufault will come off the bench again.

Marcus Relphorde's development appears to be accelerating. He's scored 14, 24 and 17 in CU's past three games.

Relphorde, who's in his fifth program in five years, is starting to settle in, Bzdelik said.

"It's really tough on a young man to be constantly learning new systems," Bzdelik said.

**TIP-INS:** The league's home record has been a hot topic this week. But Wednesday's home losses by Iowa State, Nebraska and Texas Tech dropped the Big 12's combined home record to 114-4. ... Eight Big 12 teams are among the top 50 in RPI. ... Kansas State will pose many problems for CU's defense. The Wildcats have topped 80 points in 12 of their 16 games, and guard Denis Clemente has scored in double digits in all but two. He had 14 in Tuesday's 23-point defeat of Texas A&M.





## Colorado vs. Kansas State

[GameTracker](#) · [Box Score](#) · [Full Play-by-Play](#) · [Recap](#) · [Shot Chart](#)

TIME: 04:00 P.M. EST

Kansas State knows all too well how hard it is to win Big 12 road games. Colorado, meanwhile, certainly hasn't hurt the league's reputation for being tough on visiting teams.

After rebounding from a deflating loss, the 13th-ranked Wildcats travel to Coors Events Center on Saturday to face an upset-minded Buffaloes team that has yet to lose at home.

A 74-68 defeat at Missouri last Saturday ended a 10-game winning streak for Kansas State, which dropped to 5-10 in conference road games since January 2008. The Wildcats (14-2, 1-1) hosted Texas A&M in their next game, winning 88-65 on Tuesday night.

That was one of many home victories for Big 12 teams this season. The league's teams are 114-4 at home, including an impressive run by Colorado (10-6, 1-1).

The Buffaloes beat No. 22 Baylor 78-71 on Tuesday night, improving to 9-0 at home for the first time in 18 years. The last time they won their first 10 at home was the 1979-80 season.

"We've been playing pretty well and we're getting better and we just need to continue to do that," said Colorado coach Jeff Bzdelik, whose team had lost 13 straight conference games and nine in a row versus ranked teams before upsetting the Bears.

The Buffaloes, though, have lost seven straight - three at home - versus the Wildcats. Kansas State is hoping to avoid a letdown with Monday night's matchup at home against top-ranked Texas looming.

Denis Clemente had 24 points for the Wildcats in a 76-64 win over the Buffaloes on March 7, the teams' last matchup.

The senior guard is coming off his highest-scoring game of the season, going 5 of 12 from 3-point range and posting 24 points against the Aggies. Clemente shot 7 of 34 (20.6 percent) from beyond the arc over his previous five games.

"Denis is a good player and he likes to win," coach Frank Martin said. "The leadership that he has shown has been big-time."

Clemente joins Jacob Pullen to give the Wildcats a strong backcourt that will face a tough test against the Buffaloes' guards. Pullen is second in the Big 12 in scoring, averaging 19.8 points.

Colorado's Cory Higgins ranks fourth in that category with 18.2 points a contest. He's averaging 20.3 points at home while shooting 59.4 percent.

Higgins is complemented by fellow guard Alec Burks, the only true freshman in the country to score in double digits every game this season. Burks is averaging 18.0 points and 6.0 rebounds in his last seven contests.

Higgins and Burks give Colorado good reason for optimism following last season's 9-22 record and its third consecutive last-place finish in the Big 12.

"I think we have been building more and more confidence," Higgins said. "We know we can play with anyone. Unlike in the past, we expect to win these games. It's a lot different this year. It's been a tough stretch this past couple of years and I feel like we're breaking through that door."

This will be the Buffaloes' third straight game against a ranked team. They lost 103-86 to the Longhorns last Saturday.

Colorado has a chance to be competitive against Kansas State if it continues to take care of the ball. The Buffaloes committed a season-low five turnovers against Baylor, but averaged 20.5 in two losses to the Wildcats last season.

Kansas State leads the series 95-44.

Copyright 2010 by STATS LLC and The Associated Press. Any commercial use or distribution without the express written consent of STATS LLC and The Associated Press is strictly prohibited.

### Big 12

Team	Conf. W-L	Tot. W-L
Kansas	15-1	33-3
Kansas St.	11-5	29-8
Baylor	11-5	28-8
Texas A&M	11-5	24-10
Missouri	10-6	23-11
Texas	9-7	24-10
Oklahoma St.	9-7	22-11
Colorado	6-10	15-16
Texas Tech	4-12	19-16
Iowa St.	4-12	15-17
Oklahoma	4-12	13-18
Nebraska	2-14	15-18

### Expanded Standings

### Key Players



Jacob Pullen G, KSST

29.3  
19.8  
3.4  
2.5  
45.2  
44.1  
79.6

Min. Per Game  
Pts. Per Game  
Ast. Per Game  
Reb. Per Game  
Field Goal %  
Three Point %  
Free Throw %

32.3  
18.2  
2.8  
3.4  
50.3  
37.5  
85.0



Cory Higgins G, CO

### Head to Head



Kansas State Wildcats  
14-2



Colorado Buffaloes  
10-6

### SCORING

82.8	Points/Game	77.2
47.3	Field Goal %	49
65.8	Free Throw %	77.1
36.6	Three Point %	38.8

### DEFENSE

43.1	Rebounds/Game	31.4
7.4	Steals/Game	8.5
4.9	Blocks/Game	2.6

### Other Games

CLEM	73	Final	LOU	77	Final	CUSE	72	Final
NCST	70		PITT	82		WV	71	
MS	69	Final	TXT	63	Final	GT	73	Final
TENN	71		KAN	89		UNC	71	
MASS	64	Final	ILL	63	Final	KY	72	Final
TEMP	76		MIST	73		AUB	67	Final
OKST	70		PUR	64		VT	58	
BAY	83	Final	NW	72	Final	FSU	63	Final
COST	47		TXAM	67		WISC	51	Final
BYU	91	Final	TX	72	Final	OHST	60	
MIA-F	57	Final	ZAGS	68	Final			
VA	75		SDG	50				

CBS Sports Store

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

- [Subscribe](#)

## Buffing up to win big games

CU looks to protect perfect home record Saturday

By David Starcer on January 15, 2010

Share

1

tweet

*The original version of the photo caption for this story incorrectly stated that CU defeated Baylor 78-7. The final score was 78-71. 1/15/10; 13:29*

retweet

Despite the well-documented struggles of the Colorado Buffs' frontcourt, the combination of sophomores Austin Dufault and Trey Eckloff, and freshman Shane Harris-Tunks has been superb in containing two of the Big 12 Conference's best big men to start conference play.

The trio helped hold Texas' Dexter Pittman to four points and a rebound Saturday while Baylor's Josh Lomers had 10 points and four rebounds Tuesday even though CU's big men have had trouble with rebounding, foul trouble and scoring points in the paint.

Harris-Tunks' effectiveness on the defensive end convinced head coach Jeff Bzdelik to move him into the starting lineup against Baylor. The Australian responded with four of the Buffs' first six points, showing some touch with a nice baby hook and a strong slam dunk on Lomers.

"It was a situational start from the standpoint that we needed size," Bzdelik said. "Him and Trey are progressing. Trey gave us 10 solid minutes the other night."

Despite being inserted into the starting lineup for his size, Harris-Tunks has done enough the past few games to get the start again against No. 12 Kansas State at 2 p.m. Saturday at the Coors Events Center.

For the 6-foot-11 center, being able to be such an integral part of the team so early in his collegiate career is praise enough for him.

"Rebounding and playing defense, that is what coach is putting me out there to do," Harris-Tunks said. "There's a reason behind what everything coach is doing. It's to win. At the end of the day, if I play two minutes and we win or 22 minutes and we win, I'm going to be happy."



Junior guard Cory Higgins, junior forward Marcus Relphorhe, and freshman center Shane Harris-Tunks celebrate a CU win Tuesday after they defeated visiting Baylor 78-71. (CU Independent/Molly Maher)

With a larger role and more minutes comes increased recognition and attention. Handling the extra attention, whether it's from fans or media, can be tough (and fun) for any freshman.

"Walking around school and getting recognized more, it really inspires you to get better." Harris-Tunks said.

After CU's 78-71 win over No. 22 Baylor, it was clear there is some Mile High magic in Boulder as the team is a perfect 9-0 at home. The players attribute a basic feeling in protecting their home territory.

"This is our court," Harris-Tunks said. "You're not going to come in and get a win on us. The guys are just sick of losing. The game against Baylor, it was just such a rush."

Contact CU Independent Staff Writer David Starcer at [David.starcer@colorado.edu](mailto:David.starcer@colorado.edu).

Posted in [Sports](#) | Tagged [CU basketball](#)

---

Copyright © 2010 [CU Independent](#)

Jobs and internships for students - [click here](#)

## Wildcats to play Colorado Saturday in Boulder

By Ashley Dunkak

Published: Friday, January 15, 2010

Updated: Friday, January 15, 2010

Saturday at 3 p.m. will be an opportunity for either the K-State or Colorado men's basketball team to post a winning conference record, as the teams, both 1-1 in Big 12 play, compete in Boulder, Colo.

The Buffaloes are fresh off a 78-71 upset of then-No. 22 Baylor, who improved their record to 10-6. Like K-State (14-2), their last game featured scoring from a variety of sources with five players in double figures. Junior guard Cory Higgins had a game-high 18 points and shot 6-8 from the foul line. Junior guard Marcus Relphorde had 17 points and seven rebounds.

"They've been scoring the ball at a high, high clip," Coach Frank Martin said. "Their offense has become even more difficult because you have to guard all five guys now."

Higgins and Relphorde are two of four guards in the starting lineup for Colorado, so K-State should have a size advantage in the post, where junior forwards Curtis Kelly and Dominique Sutton and sophomore Jamar Samuels wreaked havoc against Texas A&M. Kelly had seven points and seven rebounds; Samuels cashed in with 19 points; and Sutton claimed a double-double with 12 points and 12 rebounds.

Despite the dominance of K-State's forwards, the team also has two of the best guards in the country. Senior Denis Clemente showed what he is capable of as he broke loose for 20 points in the first half of the Texas A&M game, and junior Jacob Pullen finished with 15 points and was perfect from the foul line.



Jonathan Knight

Kansas State guard Jacob Pullen shoots a three point shot during the second half of their game in Bramlage Coliseum, Sunday, Jan. 3, 2010. Kansas State won 91-69.

K-State had four players in double figures on Tuesday, and everyone on the roster got time. The freshmen, now 16 games into their K-State careers, have the complete confidence of Martin, he said. Because of that, he is comfortable putting any of them in the game, which has been necessary due to some foul trouble for the posts in the last couple games.

In Colorado's game against Baylor, the Buffaloes had four fast break points. In K-State's game against Texas A&M, the Wildcats got 15 fast break points. As the teams try to control the tempo, the one closest to staying true to their game is to get out and run.

"We've just got to rebound and outlet it quickly to Denis or Jake," Samuels said. "That'll get everyone going. As soon as they score the first four or five points, everyone relaxes."

K-State forced the same number of turnovers they committed against Texas A&M, but Colorado forced 18 from Baylor while only committing five of their own. Taking care of the ball is always a deciding factor during games, but considering Colorado's latest victory, it will probably be a point of focus for the Wildcats.

"It's going to be a dogfight," Samuels said. "It's getting us prepared for Monday." Monday, of course, referring to K-State's game against Texas, which will be televised on ESPN's Big Monday.

In keeping with the way Big 12 schools have been defending their home courts recently, Colorado is an undefeated 9-0 at home this season. It is looking to win its 10th consecutive game there on Saturday. Senior Chris Merriewether credited home court success of the league to the fans and school pride.

"You've got great fan support," Merriewether said. "That's always the sixth man." He also said Big 12 teams have a lot of pride, and although everyone wants to win every game, they dig in a little deeper on the home court.