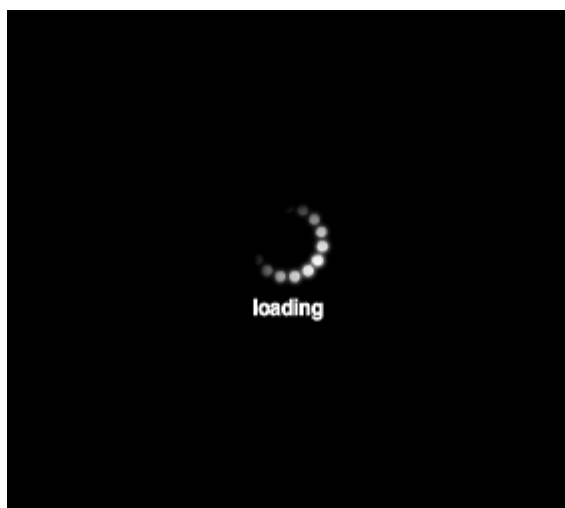


CU Buff men fall to No. 13 K-State

Colorado loses at home for first time this season

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 01/16/2010 04:41:03 PM MST



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87-81 CU loss.

The Buffs (10-7, 1-2) were also crestfallen after the Wildcats (15-2, 2-1) put the first blemish on CU's 9-1 home record this season.

"Our players care and we're all disappointed because we wanted to do this for our fans," Bzdelik said. "We expect to win. This is not about being competitive. Please understand that. We expect to win. That's why it hurts."

If Bzdelik had a dominant big man ... well, the Buffs might be the ranked team.

Instead, CU's Kryptonite -- rebounding -- prevented the hometown heroes from victory. The Buffs lost the battle of the boards 44-27 and allowed K-State to score 15 second-chance points on 20 offensive rebounds.

"We can spend a lot of time talking about the defensive rebounding, but when it's all said and done we have to take care of the basketball better," Bzdelik said. "And we missed free throws."

CU committed only five turnovers against Baylor. The aggressive Wildcats scored 23 points off 17 Buffs turnovers.

And in a game in which a Coors Events Center-record 68 personal fouls were called, Bzdelik's team lost a free-throw shooting contest. CU was 27-for-40 (67.5 percent) at the line while K-State went 38-for-54 (70.4 percent).

Ninety-four free throws?

"That's what we want," Wildcats coach Frank Martin said. "We need to pressure the rim, we need to utilize our size, and pressure teams into getting into their bench."

Higgins led all scorers with a season-high 30 points. He was 12-for-18 from the field but 6-for-10 from the line.

Fans packed the Coors Events Center ready to party like it was 1997.

Jeff Bzdelik's team had already won 10 games with no excuses and captured the attention of the Colorado faithful starving for something to scream about with Tuesday's 78-71 upset of No. 22 Baylor.

On a perfect Saturday afternoon for Big 12 basketball, it was No. 13 Kansas State's turn to make the suddenly troublesome trip to Boulder.

Even Chauncey Billups was in the house.

"Since I've been here, it's the best pro-Colorado crowd I've seen," junior guard Cory Higgins said.

But the 17th-largest crowd in the 31-year history of the Coors Events Center left frustrated by a poorly officiated game and an

"I missed four free throws. That puts us right in the game (if they are made)," Higgins said. "We don't have the luxury of being able to miss opportunities like that."

K-State led 38-34 at the intermission after 20 choppy minutes of action that was spoiled by the men in stripes. A total of 36 team fouls were called -- 19 on the Buffs and 17 on the Wildcats -- before halftime.

Martin was also hit with a technical foul.

The Buffs overcame an early 9-2 deficit and took their first lead (23-22) on a basket by Higgins with 8:08 left in the half. On the previous play, Higgins blocked a layup attempt by Curtis Kelly and threw the ball ahead to Alec Burks for a layup.

CU didn't make another field goal, however, until Higgins' three-point play with 2:11 remaining. That allowed Kansas State to grind out a 36-27 lead with a 9-0 run.

"It kind of started and sputtered and stopped and all that," Bzdelik said when asked if it was difficult for the players to get into a flow with so many whistles. "Those were two teams playing real hard."

A dunk by Higgins gave the Buffs their final lead (44-42) with 15:09 remaining.

The Wildcats' balance -- five players scored in double figures for the visitors, led by Jacon Pullen's 18 points -- and a 32-18 edge in bench scoring allowed them to escape with their eighth consecutive win in the series.

Marcus Relphorde (18 points), Burks (14) and Dwight Thorne (12) also scored in double figures as CU shot 52.2 percent from the field.

The Buffs will have to play at Oklahoma State and Texas A&M next week before attempting to begin a new winning streak at the Coors Events Center against Nebraska on Jan. 27.

"Our fans have been absolutely awesome. I sincerely hope that they will continue to support this basketball team," Bzdelik said. "If we can create the environment that we had tonight every night, we're going to have some fun in this building."

Kansas State 87, Colorado 81

KANSAS ST.

FG FT Reb

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

Sutton 17 1-2 6-9 1-2 5 2 8

Kelly 22 3-7 5-8 4-7 0 4 11

Colon 15 0-1 3-4 1-5 1 3 3

Pullen 29 5-14 5-7 1-6 2 4 18

Clmnt 37 2-8 11-13 2-3 2 1 15

H-Rbrts 7 0-1 0-0 1-1 0 1 0

Irving 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Ojeleye 11 1-2 1-2 1-3 0 1 3

McGrdr 25 4-9 0-0 4-5 1 3 10

Mrrwthr 11 1-2 2-2 2-5 0 4 4

Smuels 15 4-5 3-7 1-1 1 4 11

Judge 10 1-2 2-2 1-3 0 4 4

Totals 200 22-53 38-54 20-44 12 31 87

Percentages: FG .415, FT .704.

3-Point Goals: 5-13, .385 (Pullen 3-6, McGruder 2-3, Clemente 0-4).

Team Rebounds: 3.

Blocked Shots: 5 (Kelly 2, Samuels, Henriquez-Roberts, Merriewether).

Turnovers: 17 (Pullen 3, Clemente 3, Kelly 3, Henriquez-Roberts 2, Irving, Samuels, McGruder, Merriewether, Sutton).

Steals: 7 (Pullen 2, Samuels 2, McGruder, Merriewether, Clemente).

Technical Fouls: Bench.

COLORADO

FG FT Reb

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

H-Tunks 17 0-0 1-3 0-1 0 4 1

Tmlinsn 26 0-1 0-0 0-1 6 4 0

Rlphrde 19 5-7 6-9 1-3 2 4 18

Burks 35 4-11 6-7 2-6 3 4 14

Higgins 38 12-18 6-10 1-6 1 3 30

Thorne 21 3-4 4-4 0-2 2 5 12

Knutson 12 0-2 1-2 0-1 1 2 1

Dufault 22 1-3 3-5 2-3 0 5 5

Hrnbkle 0 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

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

Totals 200 25-47 27-40 8-27 16 36 81

Percentages: FG .532, FT .675.

3-Point Goals: 4-12, .333 (Thorne II 2-3, Relphorde 2-3, Knutson 0-1, [C.Higgins](#) 0-5).

Team Rebounds: 4.

Blocked Shots: 5 ([C.Higgins](#) 2, Burks, Harris-Tunks, Eckloff).

Turnovers: 17 ([C.Higgins](#) 5, Relphorde 4, Burks 3, Tomlinson 2, Harris-Tunks, Thorne II, Eckloff).

Steals: 7 (Tomlinson 2, Knutson, [C.Higgins](#), Dufault, Thorne II, Relphorde).

Technical Fouls: K-State coach Martin.

Kansas St. 38 49--87

Colorado 34 47--81

A -- 10,852.

Officials -- Duke Edsall, Brent Meaux, Rick Randall.

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Rebounding continues to plague Buffaloes

Colorado beaten on boards 44-27 by Kansas State

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 01/16/2010 11:48:08 PM MST

The glass is half empty.

Colorado is clearly a factor in the Big 12 race this season and a difficult team to beat in Boulder. For anyone.

But until the Buffs do something about their rebounding woes, they're going to continue to lose close games to more aggressive and physical conference foes.

Such as No. 13 Kansas State, which out-rebounded CU 44-27 during an 87-81 victory over the Buffs on Saturday at the Coors Events Center.

The Wildcats had more offensive rebounds (20) than the home team had defensive rebounds (19).

"We're under-sized in there. Everybody knows that," Jeff Bzdelik said. "But we had some opportunities where we failed to block off several times with force. And as our young players are understanding, every possession matters. Not only in the game, but in the season."

Cory Higgins and Alec Burks, both guards, led CU with six rebounds each.

Forward Marcus Relphorde found himself in early foul trouble and finished with 18 points and three rebounds in 19 minutes. Same story for 6-11 freshman Shane Harris-Tunks, who had one point and one rebound in 17 minutes. Austin Dufault had five points and three rebounds before fouling out after 22 minutes of work.

"Obviously, we're under-sized," Higgins said. "But we can't use that as an excuse. We just have to play that much harder. There's no formula to it."

No TV in Boulder

Saturday's game was broadcast on Altitude2, but not for Comcast subscribers in Boulder. Those frustrated CU fans were shown a program about CDOT and then a replay of a high school basketball game.

A number of emails were exchanged throughout the afternoon between Arnie Sgalio of ESPN Regional Television, Tim Allen of the Big 12 Conference, and CU sports information director Dave Plati. They were unable to get an official reason as to why the game was not aired by Comcast in Boulder.

The conference will continue to look into what happened. Officials said it might just be a simple misunderstanding between Altitude and Comcast.

Series

Kansas State has won eight consecutive meetings and leads the all-time series 96-44, including a 15-14 edge since the Big 12 was formed.

Notable

The crowd of 10,852 fans was the largest at the Coors Events Center since Kansas defeated the Buffs 76-61 on Jan. 15, 2005. ... CU's 36 total fouls ties the record for most fouls made by one team at the Coors Events Center (Northwestern State, Dec. 30, 1996). CU and K-State contributed 68 combined fouls, a Coors Events Center record (previous 63 vs. New

Mexico State, Dec. 6, 1980). ... The 40 free throw attempts by CU tied a season high (40 vs. Arkansas-Pine Bluff). ... The Buffs shot 53.2 percent from the field and dropped to 8-3 this season when shooting 50 percent or better. ... CU will return to action on Wednesday at Oklahoma State. The Buffs are looking to snap a 30-game Big 12 road losing streak dating back to an 80-78 overtime win in Stillwater on Jan. 21, 2006.

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Woelk: How to spoil a good afternoon of basketball

By Neill Woelk Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 01/16/2010 11:51:12 PM MST

Gotta get this off my chest:

Are you kidding me? Sixty-eight personal fouls (and one technical)? Ninety-four free throws?

It's not often that I take the time to criticize officials publicly. In fact, in 30-plus years of covering sports, I've done it maybe a handful of times.

Today, make it a handful plus one. That wasn't a basketball game Saturday afternoon at the Coors Events Center, it was an embarrassment to the Big 12. The conference that considers itself one of the best in the nation should be ashamed of the crew it sent to Boulder for Saturday's Colorado-Kansas State game.

Not that anyone got cheated, at least not on purpose. This crew wasn't competent enough to slyly tilt their calls toward one team or the other. They were simply bad. Equal-opportunity terrible, on both ends of the floor, all day long.

Believe me, if both coaches could talk freely, they'd tell you the same. As it is, the tongues of both CU's Jeff Bzdelik and Kansas State's Frank Martin are still bleeding today after they spent the afternoon biting them.

Saturday's crew of Duke Edsall, Brent Meaux and Rick Randall gave a clinic on how to lose control of a game early, then ruin what should have been a terrific contest. They were inconsistent, incompetent and in a fog. At one point, when it became apparent that they were at a loss on how to officiate the game in front of them, they called the two teams together and pleaded with them to "clean it up."

But the only thing that needed cleaning up was the mess this bunch left on the floor. They should have hosed down the place before allowing the CU and Iowa State women to take the court later in the day.

Again -- nobody got cheated. The better team won. Kansas State dominated the boards and shot a better percentage from the free throw line than Colorado. Had the Buffs made some of their free throws in the second half, the outcome might have been different. And that's where the game was played, at the free throw line.

On second thought, maybe a few folks did get cheated -- namely, the 10,852 fans who packed the arena expecting to see a quality game between two good basketball teams. Instead, they were treated to a never-ending parade to the free throw stripe, an endless afternoon of whistles and bad calls. A game that should have lasted about two hours instead took at least 30 minutes longer to finish, thanks to the work of the Three Stooges.

True story: the Big 12 representative on hand whose job it is to track fouls and grade the officials on the floor ran out of paper.

In the first half.

As one astute fan pointed out after the game, it was clear the officials were at a loss when the very first call was a double-foul. That's a sign that the official knew something had happened, but wasn't quite sure what -- and he didn't have the courage to make the correct call. Instead, he compounded the problem and made two bad ones.

It was downhill from there.

There was the play in which a KSU player jumped sideways into a Colorado player -- and was awarded three free throws for his effort. Or, the time when a CU player clearly went over a K-State player's back for a rebound -- and nothing was called (a play that ended up with KSU's Martin drawing a technical foul).

But most of all, it was an afternoon of inconsistent calls, with absolutely no continuity in the way they were calling the

game.

The sad part is that it would have been great fun to see how the game would have been played had the officials not spoiled it.

Even with the officials' anchor around their necks, both teams still did their best to at least make it entertaining. Kansas State maintained its edge for most of the afternoon by dominating on the boards, holding a 44-27 edge in rebounds. The Buffs, meanwhile, shot 53.2 percent from the field to keep it close, their third straight game shooting at least 50 percent -- all against ranked opponents. The Buffs actually made three more field goals than the visitors, but the Wildcats shot 54 free throws to a "mere" 40 for the Buffs.

And, despite the officials' efforts to kill a terrific atmosphere, it was still a great afternoon for basketball. A sold-out crowd, a close game and two good teams.

The atmosphere didn't go unnoticed by Bzdelik.

"I sincerely hope they will continue to support this basketball team because if we can create the environment that we had tonight every night, we're going to have some fun in this building," Bzdelik said. " They have created a wonderful environment and I hope they will continue to support this young team and grow with them. We can turn this thing; I believe that."

These young Buffs are indeed a team worth watching. They'll continue to grow and improve, and it would be nice to see that crowd make an appearance again at CU's next home game.

Well, make it that crowd minus the three officials.

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Wildcats hand Buffs first home loss

Higgins' season-high not enough in foul-plagued game

By David Starcer on January 17, 2010

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In a game featuring 68 fouls and 94 free throws, it was the trips to the foul line that ultimately made the difference.

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Despite a home crowd of 10,852, which is a season-high and 212 short of a sellout, and a season-high 30 points from junior Cory Higgins, the Colorado Buffaloes men's basketball team fell to the No. 13 Kansas State Wildcats 87-81 Saturday at the Coors Events Center.

The loss dropped CU to 10-7 overall, 1-2 in the Big 12 Conference. It also gave CU its first home blemish (9-1) of the season. Kansas State improved to 15-2 overall, 2-1 in the Big 12.

The Wildcats' dynamic backcourt duo of junior Jacob Pullen (18 points) and senior Denis Clemente (15) led the team in scoring and the rest of their supporting cast did just enough to push K-State past a tough Buffaloes' team hungry for a second straight upset.

In a closely officiated game where almost every hand-check, bump or love tap was called a foul, Colorado's offense didn't have its patented rhythm.

"They were officiating so tightly, cheap fouls and questionable fouls," said forward Marcus Relphorde, who added 18 points. "It really hurt us."

Senior guard Dwight Thorne II added, "It was hard to get into a rhythm, for both teams."

The Buffs were called for a season-high 19 first-half fouls and their 36 total fouls tied the Coors Events Center record for most fouls made by one team (Northwestern State, Dec. 30, 1996). The 68 total fouls also marked a Coors Events Center record, surpassing the previous 63 vs. New Mexico State on Dec. 6, 1980.

Thorne, who hit a game-tying 3-pointer against Kansas State to send the game into overtime on Jan. 24, 2009, was one of three Buffs, along with forward Trey Eckloff and forward Austin Dufault, to foul out.



Freshman guard Alec Burks attempts a shot at the basket during CU's game against Kansas State on Saturday at the Coors Events Center. The Buffs lost to the Wildcats 87-81. (CU Independent/Charlie Sievers)

The first half was a back-and-forth affair that saw Colorado take its first lead, 23-22, on a Higgins layup with 8:09 to go. But a 9-0 K-State run broke a 27-all tie with 3:02 left. The Buffs were able to go into the half down 38-34.

A little more than three minutes into the second half, Relphorde's 3-pointer tied the game at 40. After both teams exchanged buckets, Higgins stole the ball and beat everyone down the court to slam it home to put the Buffs on top and send the black and gold fans into a frenzy.

But the Wildcats responded with a 16-7 run and remained in the lead for the remainder of the game. The disappointment was written all over the players' faces for not coming through for the Buff faithful.

"We wanted this one for the fans," head coach Jeff Bzdelik said. "They created such a wonderful environment."

The Buffs had their chances to come back in the final minutes. Thorne's 3-pointer with 40 seconds to play cut K-State's lead to five. The Buffs then forced a turnover, but Higgins' 3-point attempt was blocked. After missing 10 free throws in the first half, the Wildcats went 20-of-26 from the charity stripe in the second half, which helped them seal the deal.

Higgins, whose play kept the Buffs in the game when other options on offense weren't effective, wasn't satisfied with his game.

"Free throws, I missed four," Higgins said. "That puts us right in the game if we make them. We don't have the luxury of missing those."

Colorado's next game is against the Oklahoma State Cowboys at 7 p.m. Wednesday in Stillwater, Okla. The Buffs return to Boulder to face rival Nebraska at 8 p.m. on Jan. 27.

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

Posted in [Front Page](#), [Sports](#)

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THE DENVER POST

cu men's basketball

Bufs can't pad upset streak

No. 13 Kansas St. 87, Colorado 81

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 01/17/2010 01:00:00 AM MST



Colorado's Austin Dufault tries to keep control of the ball as he collides with the Wildcats' Jamar Samuels in the second half of Kansas State's 87-81 victory Saturday at the Coors Events Center. (Jack Dempsey, The Associated Press)

BOULDER — With Nuggets star and Colorado legend Chauncey Billups sitting courtside amid a packed house Saturday, the Buffaloes came up short in their bid to do something even Billups couldn't pull off — defeat ranked teams in back-to-back games.

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THE DENVER POST

Kansas State pulled away down the stretch and ruined what might have been a raucous Coors Events Center party with an 87-81 victory. The 13th-ranked Wildcats (15-2, 2-1 Big 12) led by just four points on four occasions in the final eight minutes but stayed in control by pounding the ball inside to what seemed like a roster full of athletic, bouncy big men.

At the other end, missed free throws and turnovers by Colorado in crunch time proved costly.

"You have to take care of the ball in games like this," CU coach Jeff Bzdelik said.

It's a shame, Colorado players said afterward, that the Buffs (10-7, 1-2) couldn't treat the crowd of 10,852 (the 17th-largest in the arena's 31-year history) with a fantastic finish.

"That was the best 'pro-Colorado' crowd I've seen since I've been here," junior guard Cory Higgins said.

"If we can continue to create an environment like that with our fans, we're going to have some fun," Bzdelik added.

Higgins scored a game-best 30 points, his season high, but Colorado lost at home for the first time after nine victories.

"We expect to win," Bzdelik said. "This is not about being competitive. That's why it hurts. We showed the last three games (all ranked

opponents) that we can be competitive with anybody in the nation. But we need to improve."

Colorado outshot Kansas State, 53.2 percent to 41.5 percent, but the Buffs were outrebounded 44-27. And getting the ball slapped away continually by quick-handed Kansas State defenders, Colorado committed 17 turnovers. In Tuesday's victory over No. 22 Baylor, the Buffs had five.

CU entered as the Big 12's most accurate team from the foul line (.771) but missed 13-of-

CU Basketball

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40 attempts (.675) Saturday, including eight in the second half.

"There's no excuse to miss free throws," Higgins said.

Constant whistles prevented either team from

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THE DENVER POST

finding an offensive rhythm. Kansas State's 54 free-throw attempts were just five off the Big 12 record. A total of 68 fouls were called, an arena record.

"Most of them by us," Kansas State coach Frank Martin said. "It's bad defense, bad basketball."

But a good road win by the Wildcats, who were led by Jacob Pullen's 18 points.

FG FT Reb

KANSAS ST. Min M-A M-A O-T A PF PTS

Sutton 17 1-2 6-9 1-2 5 2 8
Kelly 22 3-7 5-8 4-7 0 4 11
Colon 15 0-1 3-4 1-5 1 3 3
Pullen 29 5-14 5-7 1-6 2 4 18
Clemente 37 2-8 11-13 2-3 2 1 15
Hnrqz-Rberts 7 0-1 0-0 1-1 0 1 0
Irving 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0
Ojeleye 11 1-2 1-2 1-3 0 1 3
McGruder 25 4-9 0-0 4-5 1 3 10
Merriewether 11 1-2 2-2 2-5 0 4 4
Samuels 15 4-5 3-7 1-1 1 4 11
Judge 10 1-2 2-2 1-3 0 4 4

Totals 200 22-53 38-54 19-44 12 31 87

Percentages: FG .415, FT .704. **3-point goals:** 5-13, .385 (Pullen 3-6, McGruder 2-3, Clemente 0-4). **Team rebounds:** 3. **Blocked shots:** 5 (Kelly 2, Samuels, Henriquez-Roberts, Merriewether). **Turnovers:** 17 (Pullen 3, Clemente 3, Kelly 3, Henriquez-Roberts 2, Irving, Samuels, McGruder, Merriewether, Sutton). **Steals:** 7 (Pullen 2, Samuels 2, McGruder, Merriewether, Clemente). **Technical fouls:** Bench.

FG FT Reb

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

Harris-Tunks 17 0-0 1-3 0-1 0 4 1
Tomlinson 26 0-1 0-0 0-1 6 4 0
Relphorde 19 5-7 6-9 1-3 2 4 18
Burks 35 4-11 6-7 2-6 3 4 14
CHiggins 38 12-18 6-10 1-6 1 3 30
Thorne II 21 3-4 4-4 0-2 2 5 12
Knutson 12 0-2 1-2 0-1 1 2 1
Dufault 22 1-3 3-5 2-3 0 5 5
Hornbuckle 0 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0
Eckloff 10 0-1 0-0 0-0 1 5 0

Totals 200 25-47 27-40 8-27 16 36 81

Percentages: FG .532, FT .675. **3-point goals:**

4-12, .333 (Thorne II 2-3, Relphorde 2-3,

Knutson 0-1, C.Higgins 0-5). **Team rebounds:**

4. **Blocked shots:** 5 (C.Higgins 2, Burks, Harris-

Tunks, Eckloff). **Turnovers:** 17 (C.Higgins 5,

Relphorde 4, Burks 3, Tomlinson 2, Harris-Tunks, T

horne II, Eckloff). **Steals:** 7 (Tomlinson 2,

Knutson, C.Higgins, Dufault, Thorne II,

Relphorde). **Kansas State 38 49 — 87**

Colorado 34 47 — 81

10,852.

A —

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Posted on Sat, Jan. 16, 2010

Samuels helps K-State weather Colorado

By KELLIS ROBINETT
The Kansas City Star

BOULDER, Colo. | When it was over, all Jamar Samuels could do was lean against a wall outside the Kansas State locker room and talk quietly.

After wins, Samuels normally turns into the team's comedian, but there were no jokes to be told after this one. Helping the No. 13 Wildcats hold off a motivated Buffaloes squad for an 87-81 victory took that much out of him.

He had to keep his focus on Colorado rather than the No. 1 Texas Longhorns, who come to Bramlage Coliseum on Monday. He had to keep pushing in a game filled with 94 free throws and 68 fouls, and he had to record the game's signature play.

With less than a minute to go and K-State clinging to a four-point lead, Samuels made sure the Wildcats held off the Buffs by cutting to the basket, taking a pass from Denis Clemente and dunking over Colorado's Austin Dufault.

It was one of the more memorable moments in Samuels' collegiate career, but he was unable to describe it in great detail.

"I don't even remember it," he said, "because I'm so tired right now."

Tired or not, everyone on the Wildcats' roster can rest easy knowing they took care of business at Colorado. No. 22 Baylor couldn't do the same earlier this week, and now K-State, 15-2 overall and 2-1 in the Big 12, heads into its monster showdown with Texas on a winning streak.

The Wildcats accomplished that feat by always having an answer for Colorado. Not even Cory Higgins exploding for 30 points and Marcus Relphorde adding 18 were enough for the Buffs.

"We stopped their runs," said K-State guard Jacob Pullen, who scored a team-high 18 points. "They would have a 9-2 run or something, and we would slow down. We would get the ball into the post, or we would get a free throw to slow the game down so we can attack, we can run and we can press. That was the difference."

Those rebuttals allowed K-State to pull away from Colorado late in a game that was back-and-forth most of the way. The Wildcats led by as many as nine, but also trailed in the first half and fell behind 44-42 with 15:30 remaining in the second half.

On the Wildcats' next possession, though, Pullen drained a three-pointer and K-State never gave up the lead again. Samuels' dunk, followed by seven K-State free throws in the final minute, wrapped up the game.

Pullen said that shows the maturity of his team.

"Before conference play, we didn't panic and I think we got back towards that," he said. "We got back to being calm and collected. When they made a run, we just settled down, ran the offense we wanted and got the shot we wanted."

K-State coach Frank Martin was proud of that effort.

"Our kids are fighters," he said. "They're battlers. They've been through this."

The Wildcats got contributions from almost everyone who made the trip. Five players scored in double figures and K-State outrebounded Colorado 44-27.

Freshman guard Rodney McGruder was one of the biggest contributors. He came off the bench and played his best game since scoring 20 points against Boston University in Puerto Rico. Against the Buffs, he scored 10 points and grabbed five rebounds, four of which were on the offensive end.

Plus, seven of his points came during a crucial stretch in the first half in which K-State outscored Colorado 9-0 and took a 36-27 lead.

"The last two weeks in practice, he's been phenomenal," Martin said. "He's been really, really competing ... He brings an ingredient to our basketball team that helps us. He can shoot that ball."

Martin hopes McGruder continues to shoot well against Texas. The Wildcats will need big games from a lot of players to take down the Longhorns, but K-State will have a wild home crowd on its side.

That means something in the Big 12, where only a handful of road teams have won all season.

"We're excited about playing that (Texas) game, but we're even happier to get a road win in the league," Martin said. "Winning on the road in this league is no joke."

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Tweet! Cats win foul-fest



Refs dominate in 94 free throw game, an 87-81 Cats win

BY [AUSTIN MEEK](#)

Created January 16, 2010 at 6:37pm

Updated January 17, 2010 at 1:32am

BOULDER, Colo. — The fans chanted "Let them play," which seemed like an altogether reasonable request.

The words fell on deaf ears, a condition likely caused by all the high-pitched whistling. This wasn't a fun game.

But Kansas State will take road wins in any form or fashion, and the Wildcats got one Saturday at the Coors Events Center. No. 13 K-State edged Colorado 87-81, winning a game that lasted approximately as long as the Cold War.

"That's becoming a common theme with our basketball team," coach Frank Martin said.

K-State (15-2, 2-1 Big 12) has played some prolific foul-fests this season, but this one topped them all. The officials, apparently working on commission, whistled 68 fouls that led to 94 combined free throws.

K-State went 38-for-54 from the line, while Colorado went 27-for-40.

"It's tough," forward Jamar Samuels said. "It's a lot of ticky-tack ones you wouldn't get when you're at home. But I credit the officials — they did a good job today. A lot of them were fouls."

The final free-throw total finished well short of NCAA record of 130, but the fact that someone felt compelled to look it up should say something. The whistles weren't totally surprising — K-State has made a concerted attempt to draw fouls all season, and the Wildcats once again lead the nation in free throws attempted after Saturday.

Martin just wishes the Wildcats would stop returning the favor on the other end.

"It's a shame," Martin said. "We didn't foul early in the year, and now all of sudden all we do is

foul. It's bad defense, bad basketball, and we've got to stop that."

When actual basketball was played, it went about like Martin expected. Colorado (10-7, 1-2 Big 12) hung tough the whole game, bolstered by 30 points from guard Cory Higgins.

"They're a good team," Martin said. "I told you guys."

The Buffaloes were unbeaten at home this season, and it looked like they might stay that way after Higgins stripped Jacob Pullen and raced for a dunk that put Colorado ahead 44-42 five minutes into the second half.

But Pullen, who led the Wildcats with 18 points, responded with two 3-pointers, and K-State didn't trail again.

"Our kids are fighters," Martin said. "They've been through this. This isn't their first road game. At Missouri, we didn't play very well with the game on the line. Today we did better."

The Wildcats showed their moxie after Colorado closed within 78-74 in the final minute. Denis Clemente knifed into the lane and dished to Samuels on the baseline, leading to a one-handed slam and foul. After missing his free throw, Samuels raced to the other end to swat a shot.

"I was going to stay out there and probably shoot the 3 or something, but as soon as I seen my man driving with (Clemente), I went with Denis," Samuels said. "I looked up at the rim and I was going to lay it in, but at the last minute I just changed my hand and dunked it."

The whistles started early, putting everyone in a generally foul mood. At one point, the officials gathered both teams at midcourt, like umpires warning the benches after a beanball.

Didn't help. The lone no-call of the first half — an apparent over-the-back on Colorado — made Martin mad enough to earn a technical.

But the Wildcats accomplished their ultimate objective, which was to get Colorado's starters in foul trouble.

"We had to get into their bench," Martin said. "To get into their bench, we had to try and get the game to where it forces them to guard the rim, because we thought it was an advantage for us."

With Colorado finally subdued, the Wildcats turned their full attention to a Big Monday date against the top-ranked Texas Longhorns, who remained unbeaten by edging Texas A&M in overtime.

"We didn't want to think about Texas until we got this game over with," Pullen said. "Now that this game's over with, our complete focus is on Texas and defending our home court."

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Longmont, Colorado
Tuesday, May 04, 2010

Publish Date: 1/17/2010

Hurt feeling

By Patrick Ridgell
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BOULDER — The fervor with which the Colorado men's basketball team cried foul following Saturday's 87-81 defeat to No. 13 Kansas State varied among players and coaches. What they agreed upon was this one hurt.

Because a hard-fought loss before a season-most 10,852 fans at the Coors Events Center, the Buffs emerged feeling they should have won, even against such a lofty opponent; even when foul problems so badly burdened them; even when very little went their way.

CU's Dwight Thorne hit a 3-pointer to make it 82-77 with 38.1 seconds to go, then he tipped the ensuing inbound off Kansas State's Denis Clemente beyond the baseline. CU could pull no closer.

Kansas State's Chris Merriewether blocked Cory Higgins' 3 from the corner on CU's next possession, and Curtis Kelly sank two free throws to make Kansas State's lead seven with 25 seconds to go. The Wildcats hit 7-of-8 free throws in the last 46 seconds to seal it.

"We expect to win," CU coach Jeff Bzdelik said. "This is not about being competitive. Please understand that. That's why it hurts."

The Buffs (10-7, 1-2 Big 12), formerly the nation's best free throw shooting team, went 27-for-40 from the line. Each miss hurt. They were out-rebounded once again, this time by a 44-27 margin. Kansas State (15-2, 2-1) grabbed 20 offensive rebounds. The Buffs committed 17 turnovers. All dubious numbers, hard to overcome.

CU fell to 9-1 at home. It last started 10-0 at home in 1979-80, the Coors Events Center's first season. Kansas State has beaten CU eight straight times.

But what might be most memorable about Saturday is all the fouls. The teams combined for 68, the most for a game in the Coors Events Center. The old record was 63.

Kansas State shot 54 free throws, making 38. Fifty-four attempts tied the most CU has allowed in a single game, dating back to December 1952. UCLA made 42 against the Buffs in 1977, a record that still stands after Saturday.

According to the conference record book, the most free throws ever shot in a Big 12 game is 59, by Texas A&M in 2008. Baylor set the league record for free throws made, 39, in 2008.



Colorado's Cory Higgins shoots between a pair of Kansas State defenders Saturday at the Coors Events Center in Boulder. Higgins finished with a game-high 30 points. **Lewis Geyer/Times-Call**

KANSAS STATE 87, COLORADO 81

KANSAS STATE (15-2, 2-1)

Sutton 1-2 6-9 8, Kelly 3-7 5-8 11, Colon 0-1 3-4 3, Pullen 5-14 5-7 18, Clemente 2-8 11-13 15, Henriquez 0-1 0-0 0, Irving 0-0 0-0 0, Ojeleye 1-2 1-2 3, McGruder 4-9 0-0 10, Merriewether 1-2 2-2 4, Samuels 4-5 3-7 11, Judge 1-2 2-2 4. Totals 22-53 38-54 87.

COLORADO (10-7, 1-2)

Harris-Tunks 0-0 1-3 1, Tomlinson 0-1 0-0 0, Relphorde 5-7 6-9 18, Burks 4-11 6-7 14, Higgins 12-18 6-10 30, Thorne 3-4 4-4 12, Knutson 0-2 1-2 1, Dufault 1-3 3-5 5, Hornbuckle 0-0 0-0 0, Eckloff 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 25-47 27-40 81.

Halftime—Kansas State 38-34. 3-point goals—Kansas State 5-13 (Pullen 3-6, McGruder 2-3, Clemente 0-4); CU 4-12 (Relphorde 2-3, Thorne 2-3, Higgins 0-5, Knutson 0-1). Fouled out—Thorne (C), Dufault (C), Eckloff (C). Rebounds—Kansas State 44 (Kelly 7); CU 27 (Burks 6, Higgins 6). Assists—Kansas State 12 (Sutton 5); CU 16 (Tomlinson 6). Total fouls—Kansas State 32; CU 36.

Play began physical, with Kansas State, an aggressive team, implementing its style. Midway through the first half, officials called both teams to the center of the floor and, according to Thorne, told them “we were too good of players to be playing the way we were playing ... to clean it up.

Technical—none. A—10,852

“I guess we didn’t because the second half was the same story.”

Three Buffs fouled out. Trey Eckloff fouled out in 10 minutes. Four other Buffs had four fouls at game’s end. Bzdelik was constantly rotating big men to keep them from fouling out. Center Shane Harris-Tunks and guard Marcus Relphorde played only 17 and 19 minutes apiece.

“There were a lot of fouls called; I don’t understand why,” Thorne said. “It was equally as bad on both ends, though.

“It was hard to get in rhythm for both teams. But you have to deal with it; that’s the game.”

Said Relphorde: “We’ve played in more physical games. It was just officiated so tightly. They weren’t really letting us play. I won’t blame it on the refs, but we’ve played in more physical games than that.”

Bzdelik was asked what impact the officiating had, and he answered, “I won’t get into that.” He also joked about being a Miami Heat assistant in the 1990s when the Heat played the Knicks in the NBA playoffs, so he’s seen lots of fouls in a game.

Here’s what he did get into: He said his team’s lack of an inside scoring threat compounds its challenge, yet CU has now shot 50 percent or better against three ranked teams in a row. It shot 53 percent Saturday. And he concluded if CU had grabbed defensive rebounds when Kansas State missed shots, it could have held the Wildcats in the 30s.

The solution?

“How we solve that problem falls on me to recruit,” he said.

TIP-INS: CU reported this week that Saturday’s game would air on Altitude2. It did not. CU provided the following explanation in an e-mail: “There were several e-mails exchanged Saturday afternoon between Arnie Sgalio of ESPN Regional Television, Tim Allen of the Big 12 Conference, and CU sports information director Dave Plati. The Big 12 will continue to look into what happened, but it might just be a simple misunderstanding between Altitude and Comcast.” ... The crowd was the 17th-largest at the Coors Events Center. It was the arena’s largest since Jan. 15, 2005. ... Cory Higgins scored a season-high 30 points to lead CU. He’s now 20th all time at CU with 1,125 career points. ... CU’s previous season high for fouls committed was 29. The most free throws an opponent had shot on the Buffs entering Saturday was 39, by Colorado State, and the Rams made the most, 30.

Read Patrick Ridgell’s [CU sports blog](#). He can be reached at pridgell@times-call.com.