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## WATCH: Q&A with Jeff Bzdelik

Men's basketball coach sits down to talk about season

*By Zack Shapiro on January 29, 2010*

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The Colorado Buffaloes men's basketball season is heating up, and the crowd is loving it.

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The Buffs defeated Nebraska 72-60 Wednesday to increase their record to 11-9 overall and 2-4 in the Big 12 Conference. Their final 10 games of the regular season are against Big 12 opponents.

After years of struggles, Colorado is finally in a position to show the NCAA they are as much of a contender as Texas or Kansas.

We sat down with head coach Jeff Bzdelik to talk about the influence of the crowd, former Buff and current Denver Nuggets point guard Chauncey Billups, and the improvements of the Buffaloes. To view the entire interview with Bzdelik, watch the videos below.

**CU Independent:** What did the win against Nebraska mean now that you're in a position to turn the conference record around?

**Jeff Bzdelik:** I told the team before they took the court that the game against Colorado State and the game against Nebraska, those are very important games for everyone associated with the University of Colorado around the world, that means a lot to people. We must understand that. To win against Nebraska on our home court and have them down 20, I think brought a lot of pride back to the Buff Nation.

**CUI:** Going back a few games, Coors Events Center was nearly sold out against Baylor and Kansas State. How did the crowd and the support affect the team?

**JB:** We approached this year with the understanding that last year we lost 11 games by an average of four points per game. In fact since I've been here, 49 percent of my losses have been by single digits, so to turn this environment into the way it's been the last several games is a real positive. I told the press after our game (against Nebraska), they asked me the question: 'You had a lot of great contributions from people.' And I said, 'Yeah, both on and off the court. The contribution from our fans was awesome and it had such a great positive impact. It's been that way in all of our games this year.' So as we get better and as the fans support our team and as the fans are here, and as they continue to grow and create this environment in here, that is a great marriage. And it's a marriage that can just blossom into great wins.

**CUI:** Do you speak to Chauncey Billups and how often do you ask him to speak with the team?

**JB:** You know, Chauncey has been a great supporter. When Colorado first approached me about this opportunity here, I was sitting at home and my cell phone rang and it came up “unknown number” and I was curious, so I answered the phone and it was Chauncey. Chauncey and I spoke for 45 minutes about this opportunity here. Chauncey was well aware the vision that we had and how we would go about building this program, doing it the right way and that it would take some time. He’s been engaged; he’s been positive. He and I speak very frequently. I remember last year after a big win against the Lakers for the Denver Nuggets in the playoffs, it wasn’t 20 minutes after the game and I texted Chauncey and I said, “Congratulations on a great win,” and lo and behold, it wasn’t a minute later he texted me back. So he’s engaged, he’s very supportive, he communicates with our guys and that’s awesome.

**CUI:** Who has stepped up this season and surprised you with their play?

**JB:** I think you’ve got to start with Alec Burks. Alec has been singled out on ESPN and throughout the media and various outlets as one of the top freshmen in the country. He’s, knock on wood, he’s the only true freshman in the nation to have double-digit scoring games in every game. His consistency, I knew he was talented, there was no question about that. Thus far, he’s been very consistent. I think that’s been the big surprise. I would have to say that Alec has really been the biggest surprise in terms of his consistency.

**CUI:** What are your goals for the rest of the season?

**JB:** Just to get better every day. I think the winning and the losing takes care of itself just by getting better every day. [Thursday], the day after the Nebraska game, our guys are lifting to get stronger and tomorrow we’ll practice. Just to get better. Every time we step on this floor right here, it’s an opportunity to get better. As we get better, the winning and the losing takes care of itself and that’s been the vision all along. I just want, when the smoke clears, I just hope we have more wins than losses.

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Jeff Bzdelik interview Part 1 of 2



## Jeff Bzdelik interview Part 2 of 2



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