

CU Buff men aim to end road woes

Bufs carry 36-game Big 12 road losing skid into last-place Nebraska

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 03/01/2010 11:49:37 PM MST

LINCOLN, Neb. -- The Buffs are tied for eighth place in the Big 12.

The seven teams above them in the standings are in position to make the NCAA Tournament.

Colorado, picked to finish last in the preseason coaches poll, will not finish in that dubious position after dwelling in the conference basement and losing at least 20 games the past three seasons.

Cory Higgins is one of the best players in the Big 12. Alec Burks is arguably the best freshman in the conference. Marcus Relphorde is an important piece to the rebuilding puzzle. Another potential star, Shannon Sharpe, will begin playing basketball in April after missing the season with a knee injury.

"If we can enhance this group in recruiting with some length inside ... I think we're right on target in terms of the vision that we have for this program," Jeff Bzdelik, in his third season at CU, said on Monday.

Despite all the progress the Buffs have made during the 2009-10 campaign, there is still a nasty four-letter word associated with this program:

R-O-A-D.

CU has lost 36 consecutive Big 12 road games and suffered 28 consecutive road losses against Division I competition.

If the Buffs (13-15, 4-10) are serious about getting back to .500 before the Big 12 Tournament and making a run at an NIT bid, they'll have to snap these frustrating streaks here tonight against last-place Nebraska at the Devaney Center (6 p.m., FSN).

"Our team has confidence going into any game. We haven't had great success on the road, it's always documented and they all know that," Bzdelik said. "The key is we need to play better basketball, rebound better and not turn it over. They feel good about themselves."

CU is coming off a thrilling 75-72 victory over Iowa State. Higgins led the way with 33 points, Burks made some clutch free throws in the final minute, and Casey Crawford sparked the team with 10 points off the bench down the stretch.

If the season ended today, the Buffs would be the No. 8 seed and would open the conference tournament against No. 9 Texas Tech.

But the Cornhuskers (14-15, 2-12) are also determined to keep some late-season momentum going after a double-overtime victory over the Red Raiders on Saturday.

Despite all of the Big 12 losses, Doc Sadler said on Monday that this might be the best of his four Nebraska teams. And CU hasn't found a way to beat the Huskers in Lincoln since 2004.

"I'm not sure this isn't the best team we've had since I've been here," Sadler said. "We just don't have the wins. Some of that is probably the confidence along the way."

CU won the first meeting this season 72-60 in Boulder on Jan. 27. To get a season sweep the Buffs will have to experience their first Big 12 road breakthrough since an 80-78 overtime win at Oklahoma State on Jan. 21, 2006.

"There's no doubt in my mind that Colorado in a lot of leagues would have a much better record," Sadler said. "I said before the season that Colorado would finish seventh or eighth in this league. Everybody picked them last, and I thought they were nuts. And that was before I knew how good the Burks kid is."

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CU men's preview vs. Nebraska

Camera staff
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 03/01/2010 11:51:05 PM MST

TONIGHT: Colorado will play its final road game of the season tonight against Nebraska at 6:07 p.m. at the Devaney Center.

BROADCAST: Television: FSN Midwest with Greg Sharpe (play-by-play) and Eric Piatkowski (color); **Radio:** KKZN (760 AM) with Mark Johnson (play-by-play) and Charles Johnson (color).

STORYLINES: The Buffs (13-15, 4-10) are coming off a 75-72 victory over Iowa State on Saturday. ... The win moved CU into a tie for 8th place in the Big 12 standings with Texas Tech (16-12, 4-10). ... Cory Higgins scored 33 points on 12-for-15 shooting to lead the way. ... The Cornhuskers (14-15, 2-12) snapped a seven-game losing streak with an 83-79 double-overtime home win over Texas Tech. ... Senior guard Sek Henry scored a career-high 21 points in the win with six assists and no turnovers. ... The Huskers grabbed a season-high 50 rebounds against the Red Raiders.

KEY STAT: This will be the final opportunity for CU to snap its Big 12 road losing streak -- which is now stands at 36 consecutive losses -- until 2011.

COACHES: Jeff Bzdelik is 34-57 in his third season at CU. Doc Sadler is 69-55 in his fourth season at Nebraska.

PROBABLE STARTERS:

Colorado -- G Nate Tomlinson, 6-3, sophomore, 5.3 ppg, 2.5 rpg; G Alec Burks, 6-6, freshman, 16.5 ppg, 4.7 rpg; G Cory Higgins, 6-5, junior, 18.6 ppg, 3.8 rpg; G Marcus Relphorde, 6-7, junior, 10.8 ppg, 4.1 rpg; F Austin Dufault, 6-9, sophomore, 6.0 ppg, 3.3 rpg.

Nebraska -- G Brandon Richardson, 6-0, sophomore, 8.5 ppg, 2.6 rpg; G Sek Henry, 6-3, senior, 7.3 ppg, 3.4 rpg; G Lance Jeter, 6-3, junior, 7.4 ppg, 3.5 rpg; G Ryan Anderson, 6-4, senior, 11.0 ppg, 4.9 rpg; C Jorge Diaz, 6-11, freshman, 8.6 ppg, 4.1 rpg.

SERIES: Nebraska leads 75-70 with a 51-13 edge in Lincoln. CU won the first meeting this season 72-60 in Boulder on Jan. 27.

UP NEXT: The Buffs will close out the regular season against Texas Tech on Saturday at the Coors Events Center (2 p.m., Altitude).

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Thorburn: Big 12 likely to send 7 to NCAA tourney

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 03/01/2010 11:48:39 PM MST

LINCOLN, Neb. -- March has arrived and so has the Big 12.

Coaches throughout the conference have been arguing since November that they are a part of the best and deepest conference in the nation this season.

With four teams in the Associated Press top 25 poll and seven in the top 40 of the latest RPI, it's hard to argue with them.

Oklahoma State's upset of No. 1 Kansas on Saturday in Stillwater means that seven teams from the Big 12 will likely be smiling on selection Sunday.

"The league is probably better than even what we thought it would be," KU coach Bill Self said on Monday's media teleconference. "There are seven teams that are going to the NCAA Tournament. That's a minimum. If one of the other teams wins the conference tournament then there will be eight."

Despite a 13-1 conference record, the Jayhawks -- who fell to No. 2 in the AP poll behind Syracuse -- still have some difficult work to do in order to win their sixth consecutive Big 12 regular-season title outright. KU hosts Kansas State on Wednesday and plays at Missouri on Saturday.

"It will be as hard a game as we've played," Self said of the rematch with the Wildcats.

KU escaped with an overtime win in Manhattan in the first meeting thanks to a Sherron Collins game-winning layup.

"I'm sure they're thinking that if they knock us off and Missouri knocks us off they could get a piece of the championship. And they're right to think that way. If they come in and knock us off anything can happen at Missouri."

The Wildcats, now ranked No. 5, have the experience and talent to make a Final Four run. Frank Martin insists his team is only thinking about today's practice.

"It's the next game on the schedule," Martin said of the Sunflower State showdown at Allen Fieldhouse. "We focus in on the next game and our objective as a team is to win the next game. ..."

"We're happy that we're playing in a meaningful conference game at this time of the year, but we're not going to dwell on that."

KU will likely be a No. 1 seed in the NCAA Tournament. K-State is in position for a No. 2 seed and could move up if it snaps the nation's longest home-court winning streak in Lawrence.

Baylor, Texas A&M, Missouri and Oklahoma State are all capable of doing some serious damage in the tournament and looking forward to playing teams from other conferences.

Texas, which has dropped out of the AP poll after ascending to No. 1 in January, is a wild card. The Longhorns beat Pittsburgh and Michigan State early before getting beat up late in the Big 12 grind.

"This is as good as it has ever been and is deep as it has ever been," Self said of the Big 12. "Oklahoma State's handling of us is evidence of that."

More madness?

Perhaps because the Big 12 expects seven of its members to be included in the 65-team NCAA Tournament field, several coaches asked about the possibility of the tournament being expanded to 96 teams were lukewarm on the idea.

"I have mixed emotions on it. I love what we have right now," Texas A&M coach Mark Turgeon said. "It's difficult to get into the tournament, you have to be elite. And I think that's what makes it special. I like the way it is.

"But selfishly, I also think 96 helps coaches and keeps more athletic directors and fans happy."

Self is in favor of minor expansion. Let a few more big dogs in and force more small conference champions to play their way into the bracket.

"Expanding it to 96, I don't see the real benefit of that," Self said. "I think if the expansion should occur it should be to 68 or 72. Have more play-in games. ...

"I like the tournament the way it was."

The bottom four teams in the Big 12 this season -- Iowa State (14-15), Nebraska (14-15), Colorado (13-15) and Oklahoma (13-15) -- are all scrambling to get eligible for the NIT or CBI. None of these teams would have much of a chance to be included in a 96-team NCAA Tournament without a deep run at the conference tournament.

Poke pride

There are some gifted players in the Big 12 this season from top -- Collins, Cole Aldrich and Xavier Henry at KU -- to bottom -- John Roberson and Mike Singletary at Texas Tech, Cory Higgins and Alec Burks at CU, Marquis Gilstrap and Craig Brackins at Iowa State.

Kansas State's Denis Clemente, Baylor's LaceDarius Dunn and Texas' Damion James are among the list of solid player of the year candidates.

But Oklahoma State's James Anderson seems to have separated himself from the pack after leading the Cowboys to the upset of KU.

"He is a very special player, a very special person. He's the most coachable player I've ever been around," Oklahoma State coach Travis Ford said. "We've asked him to score and he's the leading scorer in the Big 12. We've asked him to pass the ball and he has found open guys. We've asked him to rebound he rebounds. He's also our best defender."

Anderson (22.6 ppg) is the conference's leading scorer while shooting 46.9 percent from the field and averaging 6.1 rebounds.

"He's the best offensive player in our league, hands down," Self said. "And I think he'll be a good pro because he's the prototypical two guard in the NBA."

Anderson, a junior, will likely leave Stillwater early. He is projected as a lottery pick.

"I think he's the best player in the country," Ford said.

Notable

Baylor junior Epke Udoh now owns the Big 12 single-season record for blocked shots with 122 and counting. ... Missouri's 52 wins over the last two seasons are the seventh-most nationally over that time span. ... Tiny Gallon had 23 points and 15 rebounds against Baylor but it wasn't enough to prevent Oklahoma from dropping back-to-back games against the Bears for the first time since 1954. ... Anderson was the conference's player of the week.

Quotable

"We've tried it the other way without the bye in years past. We'd like to try it with the bye," Baylor coach Scott Drew said of finishing in the top four in the regular season and earning a first-round bye at the Big 12 Tournament. "There's a reason no team has won the tournament that hasn't had the bye."

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MARCH 1, 2010, 4:04 PM

What would CU's record be in Pac-10? Big Ten?

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

Of course, [Big 12 Conference](#) ^[1] men's basketball coaches are going to say that their conference is the best.

But [Nebraska](#) ^[2]'s [Doc Sadler](#) ^[3] made the argument in a different way, one that could start a lively discussion in sports bars.

"There's no doubt in my mind that [Colorado](#) ^[4], in a lot of leagues, would have a much better record," Sadler said Monday on the Big 12 coaches teleconference. "(They) probably would have seven or eight (conference) wins."

[Colorado](#) ^[4], 13-15 overall, takes a league record of 4-10 into its Tuesday night game at [Nebraska](#) ^[2] (14-15, 2-12).

"They've played the No. 1-ranked team in the country ([Kansas](#) ^[5], which was top-ranked at the time) to the last possession," Sadler said of the Buffs. "They played [Kansas](#) ^[5] State (now No. 5 in the Associated Press poll) to basically the last two minutes of the game."

"I said before the season that I thought [Colorado](#) ^[4] would be a team that would finish eighth or ninth in this league," he added. "Everybody had picked them 12th and I thought that was nuts. I liked their basketball team, and that was before I even realized how good the (Alec) Burks kid was."

Sadler was asked on the teleconference if his team also would have fared better in another conference.

"I'm not for sure that this isn't the best team I've had since I've been here," said Sadler, who is 69-55 in four seasons in Lincoln. "We just don't have the wins."

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MARCH 1, 2010, 10:32 AM

Has CU's Burks hit the proverbial freshman wall?

By [TOM KENSLE](#) |  No Comments

It seems to arrive each February like clockwork. College freshman basketball players, playing so many more games than they ever did in high school, seem to slip into a slump.

Colorado's [Alec Burks](#) ^[1] may have fallen victim.

"I think that he is a little worn," Colorado coach [Jeff Bzdelik](#) ^[2] said of his 6-foot-6 rookie guard.

Burks needed four free throws in the final 1:16 to reach double figures (11 points) on Saturday in the 75-72 home victory over Iowa State. He entered the game averaging almost 17 points per game.

Although he played 33 minutes, Burks attempted just six shots from the field, making three.

"He has played a lot of minutes," Bzdelik said afterward. "But if you look at his stats — four assists against only one turnover — it shows you what a great talent he is."

Bzdelik said wearing down at this time of year isn't just about basketball.

"(It's also about) being a freshman in college with the studying involved," Bzdelik said. "Everything is different from high school. It is an adjustment, and he has done very well with it. He is doing everything right and that is a credit to him. We expect so much out of him, so we just need to keep it in perspective."

Burks also had an off night in the other game last week, managing just 13 points in a blowout loss at [Missouri](#) ^[3].

Of course Burks isn't about to say he is wearing down.

"It just wasn't my game," he said after the win over Iowa State. "I'm just happy we got the 'W.'"

Often freshmen are able to break out of their late-season slump. Colorado (13-15, 4-10 Big 12) hopes that's the case for Burks when the Buffs play at [Nebraska](#) ^[4] (14-15, 2-12) Tuesday night.

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 2010

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Buffs take one final crack at road woes

By Patrick Ridgell
 © 2010 Longmont Times-Call

This is it.

The Colorado men's basketball team has one last chance — tonight at Nebraska (6 p.m., FSN) — to snap its 36-game Big 12 road losing streak or suffer through another offseason contemplating it. No player or coach in the program has won a Big 12 road game. They say the confidence to do so is there.

"They have great confidence," coach Jeff Bzdelik said Monday about his players. "They just need to play better basketball. That's the key."

"We need to rebound better and not turn the ball over so much, and we need to make shots, and we need to make plays down the stretch. They feel good about themselves. They feel good in a lot of situations about themselves."

Said senior Dwight Thorne: "This is important. It's a big game for our postseason chances."

At 13-15, CU still has a chance at a .500 record, and the NIT and CBI are watching. A strong finish enhances their chances.

"We beat (Nebraska) once at home, and we're playing well right now," Thorne said. "I think the other guys believe we can beat them as well. But they believe they can beat us. It's going to be who can come out and execute and do the best they can for as long as they can."

Nebraska (14-15, 2-12 Big 12) is posting its worst record during coach Doc Sadler's four-year tenure. But it snapped a seven-game losing streak Saturday when it beat Texas Tech in double overtime. And Sadler doesn't think his team is that bad.

"I'm not sure this isn't the best team I've had since I've been here," Sadler said. "We just don't have the wins."

Thorne said a good start is crucial. CU fell behind by large margins early in its past two road games — at Missouri and at Kansas — and never recovered.

CU started fast at Kansas State on Feb. 13 and was still blown out in the second half, so a fast start isn't everything. But it'll help.

"We need to maintain our poise when things don't go our way," Thorne said. "If we do, then we'll be able to sustain that energy level we need."

Game Preview

Colorado men (13-15, 4-10) at
 Nebraska (14-15, 2-12)

When/Where: 6 p.m. tonight at the
 Bob Devaney Center in Lincoln, Neb.

TV/Radio: FSN/KKZN 760AM.

The series: Nebraska leads 76-69.
 CU has lost five straight in Lincoln.
 The Buffs beat Nebraska 72-60 in
 Boulder on Jan. 27.

Leading scorers: CU — Cory
 Higgins (18.6 points per game);
 Nebraska — Ryan Anderson (11
 points per game).

Notes: In addition to its 36 straight
 Big 12 road losses, CU has lost 28
 straight road games against Division I
 teams. ... Alec Burks needs 36 points
 to set CU's freshman scoring record
 at 481 points. ... CU has struggled in
 recent years in Lincoln. It lost by five
 there last year, but the previous four
 trips, its average margin of defeat
 was 17.75 points. ... Nebraska's Sek
 Henry had 21 points, six assists and
 no turnovers in Saturday's double
 overtime defeat of Texas Tech.

Patrick Ridgell

AROUND THE BIG 12:

KANSAS LOSES: The Jayhawks might still be wondering what was the number of that truck that leveled them Saturday at Oklahoma State.

The Cowboys shot 60.4 percent, including 10-for-19 on 3s, in handing Kansas its first Big 12 loss and ending its hopes of a perfect Big 12 season.

“We lost to a team on that particular day that very few teams in the country would have been able to play with,” coach Bill Self said.

Kansas fell to No. 2 in the polls, still looking good for a top seed in the NCAA Tournament. It hosts No. 5 Kansas State on Wednesday in what could be the Big 12’s game of the year. Kansas State, 11-3 Big 12, can tie Kansas for the regular season title if it wins Wednesday and Saturday at home against Iowa State, and the Jayhawks lose Saturday at Missouri, which is always a tough place for them.

TOURNEY TALK: Oklahoma State’s big win nearly assures the Big 12 it’ll receive seven NCAA bids for the first time. It has six teams with top 15 RPIs; seven are in the top 40.

MORE TOURNEY TALK: Baylor, Missouri and Texas A&M are 9-5 and battling for the third and fourth seeds for next week’s Big 12 Tournament. Those seeds receive first-round byes. Fifth place has to face the 12th seed. No team has won the Big 12 Tournament without a first-round bye.

“We’ve tried it in years past without the bye, and we’d like to try it the other way,” Baylor’s Scott Drew said.

TIP-INS: Texas Tech, once 9-0 and ranked No. 16, is 16-12, 4-10, visits CU Saturday. “I have to get (John) Roberson and (Mike) Singletary playing,” coach Pat Knight said. “When our two best guys are making mistakes in crunch time, we have no chance.” ... The Big 12 player of the year will be a close race, but it might be Oklahoma State’s James Anderson, the league’s leading scorer at 22.6 points per game. “He’s the best offensive player in our league, hands down,” Self said. ... Sadler said he believed CU would finish eighth or ninth this season. “Everybody else had picked them 12th, and I thought that was nuts,” he said.

Patrick Ridgell’s Big 12 notes column runs Tuesdays during the conference season. Read his CU sports blog at www.timescall.com/blogs/ridgell. He can be reached at pridgell@times-call.com.

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The difference maker

Sharpshooter Crawford scores ten off the bench to help boost Buffs

By David Starcer on March 1, 2010

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In a game where every possession could mean the difference between a breakthrough win and another heartbreaking loss, it was one big man's play off the bench that swung the balance in CU's favor.

Junior forward Casey Crawford, whose playing time and role has fluctuated from starter to third-string benchwarmer, showed Buff fans what he's capable of on Saturday afternoon.

Crawford scored 10 points and grabbed three rebounds in 12 minutes of play (all in the second half), and was the key factor in Colorado's 75-72 win over the Cyclones, Iowa State coach Greg McDermott said.

"He was the difference in the game," McDermott said. "We were trying to provide help on some of their back cuts and trying to make it difficult for Burks and Higgins as much as we could. We had to give up something and Casey Crawford was just that."

Crawford hit back-to-back threes to break a tie and put the Buffs up 63-59 with just over six minutes remaining. After his third three-point attempt rattled in-and-out, the junior showed some lost post skills, taking a nice pass from fellow junior Marcus Relphorde and laying it in for two. And after junior Cory Higgins broke up Crawford's run with a pair of free throws, the big man grabbed an offensive rebound off a Relphorde miss and scored a tough put back bucket.

Watching his play against Cyclones, one would wonder how a player with such offensive firepower could have been relegated to benchwarmer duty at times this season. Even with his role on the team in flux from time to time, Crawford said he has remained focused and ready to go on a moment's notice.

"It's tough just waiting there, not playing the first half and not knowing if you're going to get in, but coach has always told me, 'Casey, if I need you, be ready,'" Crawford said. "It's tough on a player, but it's helped me out a lot. Some consistency is nice sometimes, but I just go out there and follow orders, and play as hard as I can and do the best that I can."



Junior forward Casey Crawford shoots a lay up over Nebraska defense during their game on Jan. 27 in the Coors Events Center. The Buffs defeated rival Nebraska 72-60. (CU Independent file/Molly Maher)

The man giving those orders is known to be quite uncharacteristic with who he does and doesn't play. For a while freshman Shane Harris-Tunks was CU coach Jeff Bzdelik's go-to forward off the bench, even starting against Big 12 foes Baylor and Kansas State.

Then Bzdelik turned to sophomore Trey Eckloff during the middle of the season, handing the youngster a start in their second matchup with K-State in Manhattan.

It seemed the veteran Crawford was the odd man out until a recent string of solid games versus Iowa State (the first meeting), both Kansas games and Nebraska helped him re-establish himself in the rotation and earn the chance to play in a close game in crunch time.

After Saturday's win, Bzdelik recognized that Crawford's long-range shooting was the key adjustment to turning things around when his team trailed ISU early in the second half.

"As the game went on we figured out their defense and started getting some drives to the basket," Bzdelik said. "Casey really contributed to this win from the standpoint that he spread out their defense and they gave him some air to shoot, and he was able to knock down some shots. Then they had to expand their defense on him, and that enabled us to drive to the basket."

Now the question is whether Colorado will be able to carry the momentum from a close win into the road victory they have yet achieve.

Higgins, the other hero of Saturday's game, has high expectations for himself and his teammates heading into their final two games. Higgins, whose 33-point effort showed how much he wants this season to continue, said that he felt the win was just what the doctor ordered.

"Us being able to grind out this close win shows a lot of growth and maturity," Higgins said. "We want to win out. Today was the first step of that. Now we have to focus on Nebraska."

As for Crawford, his attitude was almost a mirror reflection of team's following the contest. With more confidence following a victory and a couple solid individual performances, he expects his teammates and himself to come out firing on all cylinders against Nebraska on Tuesday.

Case and point: when asked whether his third three-point attempt during his own mini-scoring run was set in the offense or just him "feeling it," the junior didn't hesitate to answer.

"Oh, that one over Brackins," Crawford said. "That was definitely a heat-check."

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

Posted in [Front Page](#), [Sports](#) | Tagged [CU Men's Basketball](#)

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Henry, other seniors hope for smooth home finale

By BRIAN ROSENTHAL / Lincoln Journal Star

His younger brother lost his ID two days before his scheduled flight.

His cousin's airplane was struck by lightning before it took off, causing a lengthy delay.

His mother is scared of airplanes.

So, no, the trip from Los Angeles to Lincoln wasn't easy for Sek Henry's family. In fact, his brother, Saint, didn't make it.

But his mother and cousin persevered, somewhat symbolic of Henry's career with the Nebraska men's basketball team.

Like his family's travel plans, Henry's senior season hasn't gone according to plan. But on Tuesday, on senior night, Henry will play in his 125th consecutive game.

That's every game of the Doc Sadler era.

"I just want to stay consistent," Henry said Monday, when asked if he's planned a repeat of his career-best performance from Saturday, when he scored 21 points in a double-overtime victory against Texas Tech.

"I don't really want to get emotional for senior night. I just want to be focused and get ready for this game, because it's big for us."

Nebraska (14-15, 2-12 Big 12 Conference) will host Colorado (13-15, 4-10) in the Huskers' final regular-season home game.

Nebraska will honor its four seniors — Henry, Ryan Anderson, Ben Nelson and student assistant coach Chris Balham — in a 6:40 p.m. pregame ceremony.

Henry, who will make his 96th career start, said he's not going to waste any time thinking about what could have been.

Instead, he's keeping hope.

"It's not over yet. I'm going to stick with that," said Henry, who's averaging 7.3 points and 3.4 rebounds. "I still believe we have a chance to win the rest of our games and finish out strong.

"I've been frustrated, but I never doubt that we can do it."

Anderson, a Seattle native, is the last remaining player signed by former coach Barry Collier.

"It's been a tough four years for me. A different four years," said Anderson, the team's leading scorer this season, and the program's 25th player to reach 1,000 career points.

“A lot of stuff happened, man. It was up-and-down. All along, it was a great opportunity, though.”

Sadler expressed his gratitude to the seniors, lauding their work ethic and character. He’s planning on rewarding Nelson, a walk-on from Minnesota, with his first career start Tuesday night.

“They’ve definitely been put through some good times, but they also have withstood some bad times, and they’ve continued to be the same person,” Sadler said. “That’s a sign of a person who has character, and they all four have it.”

And for Henry, if there’s a sign of how things might play out Tuesday, maybe it’s his mother’s flight to Lincoln.

“She said it was smooth,” he said, “so she was very, very happy about that.”

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