

# CU Buff Knutson packing bags for Europe

## Senior to play on Athletes in Action team

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

Posted: 05/03/2010 12:06:03 AM MDT

Levi Knutson is one of the Denver Broncos fans who is thrilled the team used a first-round draft pick to select Tim Tebow.

Tebow won two national championships and a Heisman Trophy during his historic career at Florida.

The rookie quarterback might be more famous internationally -- thanks to a controversial anti-abortion ad he taped with his mother that aired during the Super Bowl -- for his deep faith and missionary work.

"I think it's a good move because he's a quality guy and a proven winner," Knutson said. "That culture is overlooked in professional sports a lot."

Knutson, a devout Christian himself, plans to use his sport to "spread the word a little bit" while playing on an Athletes in Action team later this month during a tour that begins in Katowice, Poland.

The Colorado senior-to-be will be joined by nine other NCAA Division I players on the AIC team, including Baylor's A.J. Walton and Cory Jefferson.

"I haven't had an opportunity to do a lot of missionary work," said Knutson, who has not been to Europe before. "This is a chance to hopefully bring some more people to the faith. And it's pretty cool to actually be playing games in the offseason."

Knutson has faced a lot of adversity during his CU career. He was recruited out of Arapahoe High School by Ricardo Patton, played three seasons for Jeff Bzdelik, and is now counting on Tad Boyle to get the Buffs back into the NCAA tournament before he graduates a year from now.

"One thing I've taken from the experience is that life throws changes at you," Knutson said. "You can't dwell on a coaching change that's out of your control. You just move forward. ...

"I like (Boyle) a lot. He has been real positive with the players and he will do anything that it takes to take this team to the next level."

After his freshman and sophomore seasons, Knutson underwent surgery to repair torn labrums in his hips and spent the summers grinding through grueling off-court rehabs sessions.

"It is a relief," Knutson said of this scalpel-free spring. "I love working on my game and improving during the offseason. That's something I'm very excited about because the last two years I haven't had a chance to do much of that."

Knutson averaged 3.5 points and 12.7 minutes last season but has continued to improve defensively throughout his career. With the graduation of Dwight Thorne and Keegan Hornbuckle's decision to transfer, the 6-foot-4 shooting guard's role will likely be expanded during the 2010-11 campaign.

"I'm really looking forward to a great year individually and as a team. We have a real chance to do something special," Knutson said. "Anything less than making the NCAA tournament will be a disappointment."

Knutson -- who was named to the Big 12's All-Academic team this spring and carries a 3.929 grade-point average in business entering this week's final exams -- will depart for Poland on May 29 and return June 7. Athletes in Action will face Poland's U23 national team and several professional teams.

Close Window

Send To Printer