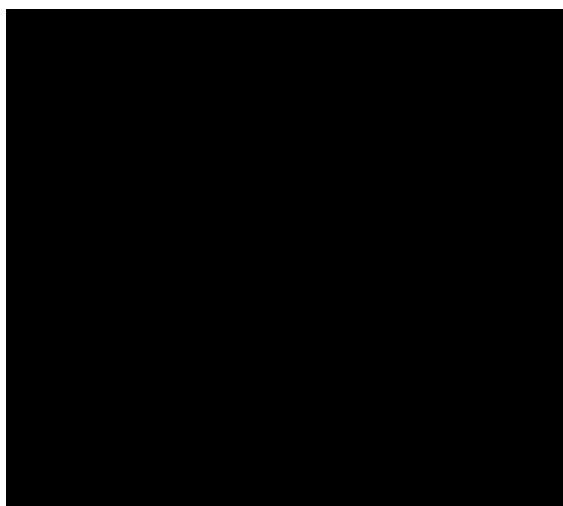


Balanced Buffs cruise past Broncos

Tomlinson leaves game in 1st minute with neck injury

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

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Texas-Pan American head coach Ryan Marks had Cory Higgins and Alec Burks scouted well.

Colorado's talented guard tandem quietly scored just 27 total points after averaging a combined 41.6 points through the first five games of the season.

"You have to pick your poison. We were very cognizant of helping on Higgins and Burks," Marks said of the marked men. "We felt like if they are going to beat us, we want to see them beat us differently than they are accustomed to."

If the game had been played in Edinburg, Texas, perhaps the Broncos could have busted an upset win over a Big 12 opponent.

Instead, CU received major contributions from Marcus Relphorde and Levi Knutson during Tuesday night's 83-64 rout of Texas-Pan American at the Coors Events Center.

Four different Buffs scored in double figures, led by Knutson's 18 points off the bench, and the home team finished with 24 assists on 32 made baskets to improve to 3-0 at home and 3-3 overall.

"We have a lot of guys who can make plays for each other on this team and guys that are willing to do it. Cory and Alec are two of those guys who are willing to share the ball and they did that tonight," Knutson said. "Obviously, they're both very talented players, and it's good when they're scoring too. But I think we have some depth and a lot of positions where we can get scoring."

Higgins had 15 points and seven assists. Burks added 12 points, seven rebounds and five assists.

The preseason Wooden Award candidates combined for 41 points but only two assists during CU's 82-66 loss at Harvard on Sunday.

"We challenged our team to play together, to make the extra pass, to play unselfishly. Because that's what we didn't do at Harvard," Boyle said. "And I was really proud of all our guys for doing that. Especially Marcus and Cory did a tremendous job, as seniors are supposed to do when challenged. I think that rubs off. One guy makes the extra pass, the next guy makes the extra pass."

Nate Tomlinson didn't get a chance to make any passes. CU's starting point guard left the game after suffering a neck injury in the first minute and did not return.

"It was just a hard screen and he took a shot to the neck," Boyle said. "His neck was very tender."

Tomlinson had an X-ray taken but Boyle had not been updated by the medical staff on the result after the game.

After the injury, the Broncos (2-6) knocked down three quick 3-pointers and took a 9-3 lead with 17:30 remaining in the first half.

They didn't score again for 11 minutes and 57 seconds and didn't make another field goal until Kieondre Arkwright's basket with 4:25 left before the intermission.

Meanwhile, CU's 19-0 run, capped with a layup by Knutson, made the score 22-9.

The sequence was similar to the Buffs' 20-0 run en route to a 91-51 bludgeoning of Alcorn State a week earlier.

"In practice we've been focusing on defense and just letting the offense come. I think we were finally able to string together a bunch of stops, which is what we've been trying to do," said Relphorde, who finished with 16 points and five rebounds.

"The more consistent we can get with that against better teams the more wins it's going to result for us."

CU led 34-19 at halftime but allowed Texas-Pan American to shoot 56 percent from the field and score 45 points over the final 20 minutes.

"None of us are happy about that," Knutson said after a 7-for-10 night shooting. "We had a better defensive half in the first half, so we need to string together 40 minutes of that kind of defense."

The Buffs will host Oregon State as part of the Big 12/Pac-10 Hardwood Series on Saturday at the Coors Events Center (8 p.m., ESPN).

Notable

Nine different Buffs scored, including freshman Ben Mills (four points), walk-on Javon Coney (two) and Trey Eckloff (two). ... Former Oklahoma and Indiana head coach Kelvin Sampson, now working for the Milwaukee Bucks, scouted the game. The Nuggets host the Bucks tonight. ... Guy Marc-Michel, a 7-footer Jeff Bzdelik recruited last season who chose Indiana over CU, was ruled ineligible to play major-college basketball by the NCAA on Tuesday. ... Attendance was 2,641.

Colorado 83,

Texas-Pan American 64

TEXAS-PAN AMERICAN

FG FT Reb

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

Mierzycki 27 0-3 3-4 1-6 3 3 3

Provost 28 5-8 0-0 1-4 1 3 15

Urbanus 27 4-9 2-2 0-1 1 1 14

Maree 26 3-6 0-0 0-2 0 1 6

Petty 30 8-13 5-5 4-5 3 3 23

Hearn 11 0-3 0-0 0-0 1 2 0

Gutridge 7 0-1 1-2 0-0 0 0 1

Arkwright 16 1-4 0-0 0-0 2 1 2

Cabrera 9 0-1 0-0 1-2 0 2 0

ClvInd 16 0-2 0-0 2-2 1 0 0

Walker 3 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Totals 200 21-50 11-13 11-24 12 16 64

Percentages: FG .420, FT .846.

3-Point Goals: 11-26, .423 (Provost 5-7, Urbanus 4-8, Petty 2-6, Gutridge 0-1, Arkwright 0-2, Hearn 0-2).

Team Rebounds: 2.

Blocked Shots: 3 (Petty 2, Cleveland).

Turnovers: 21 (Mierzycki 4, Hearn 3, Petty 3, Provost 3, Urbanus 3, Maree 2, Cabrera 2, Cleveland).

Steals: 10 (Petty 4, Hearn 2, Gutridge, Mierzycki, Cleveland, Maree).

Technical Fouls: None.

Colorado

FG FT Reb

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

Dufault 16 3-6 0-0 2-2 1 3 6

Tmlnsn 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Rlphrde 28 5-8 2-2 1-5 2 2 16

Burks 28 4-10 4-5 3-7 5 2 12

Higgins 29 6-10 0-0 0-1 7 0 15

Sharpe 28 0-3 0-2 2-4 6 2 0

Coney 9 1-1 0-0 0-2 0 2 2

Rbrsn 21 3-6 2-2 3-6 0 2 8

Knutson 24 7-10 2-2 3-3 2 0 18

Mills 9 2-4 0-0 0-0 0 0 4

Eckloff 7 1-1 0-0 0-2 1 1 2

Totals 200 32-59 10-13 15-34 24 14 83

Percentages: FG .542, FT .769.

3-Point Goals: 9-15, .600 (Relphorde 4-4, Higgins 3-6, Knutson 2-3, Sharpe 0-1, Burks 0-1).

Team Rebounds: 2.

Blocked Shots: 4 (Roberson 2, Higgins, Sharpe).

Turnovers: 15 (Roberson 4, Burks 3, Sharpe 2, Relphorde 2, Tomlinson, Coney, Knutson, Dufault).

Steals: 13 (Roberson 3, Relphorde 2, Dufault 2, Sharpe 2, Eckloff, Burks, Knutson, Higgins).

Technical Fouls: None.

Texas-Pan American 19 45--64

Colorado 34 49--83

A -- 2,641.

Officials -- Scott Thornley, Greg Rennegarbe, Kipp Kissinger.

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CU basketball: Colorado runs over Texas-Pan Am

Men's basketball comfortably beats Broncos

By Mark McNeillie on December 1, 2010

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Returning to their home court, the Buffs are back on the winning track.

Colorado men's basketball (3-3) beat The Texas-Pan American Broncos (2-6) 83-64 Tuesday night at Coors Events Center in Boulder.

"For the most part, we played pretty hard today," said senior guard Levi Knutson. "We played unselfishly, played as a team. That's what we were looking for."

Broncs senior guard Perry Petty led all scorers with 23 points, shooting 8-of-23 from the field and 2-of-6 from behind the 3 point line. Knutson scored 18 for the Buffs, going 7-of-10 from the field, and senior guard Marcus Relphorde had 16 points.

The Broncos were the better team in the beginning, opening a 9-4 lead early in the first half. The Buffs picked up their intensity on both sides of the court and went on a 15-0 run to go up 19-9. Texas-Pan Am managed to get some rhythm back to end the half, and the team went into the locker room with 34-19 Colorado lead.

Practice seemed to pay off with Colorado's strong, first-half defensive effort.

"At practice, and the whole season, we've been trying to play harder on defense," Relphorde said. "We were finally able to string together a bunch of defensive stops which is what we've been trying to do."

The first half was not without troubles for the Buffs, as starting junior point guard Nate Tomlinson picked up a neck injury after a hard screen and had to be replaced by freshman guard Shannon Sharpe.

Relphorde was the lead scorer in the first half with 13 points, shooting 4-of-6. Alec Burks and Shannon Sharpe both lead the Buffs with four rebounds apiece. Junior guard Brandon Provost led the Broncos with six points in the half and senior forward Matt Mierzycki was the first half rebound leader with five.



Senior forward Austin Dufault drives to the basket against Texas-Pan American on Tuesday night. The Buffs beat the Broncos 83-64. (CU Independent/Phil McMichael)