



CU Coach Tad Boyle wants better overall production from his most productive players.
Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



01/31/2011 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

Brooks: Buffs, Cyclones Stuck In 'Need-A-Win' Mode

BOULDER - No one told Fred Hoiberg it was going to be easy, but then again, "The Mayor" might not remember it being this difficult.

Iowa State's first-year basketball coach endeared himself to Cyclones fans as a player in the early '90s with his non-stop hustle and marksmanship. Named ISU's coach last spring after a 10-year NBA career and a season as a league exec in Minnesota, Hoiberg's team is emulating its driven, competitive coach.

With non-conference wins at Iowa and Virginia, the Cyclones appeared to be compensating for an undersized and undermanned roster. But in Big 12 Conference play, ISU's rewards have been scarce. It's come to Hoiberg now assessing his team like this: "Struggling teams find ways to lose . . . we're a group that needs to find a way to win a game."

That goes for the group the Cyclones will face Tuesday night at the Coors Events Center.

With the exception of Colorado's swift start (3-0) in league play, the Buffs and Cyclones have traveled a similarly frustrating path. They're not mirror images of each other, but both teams are undersized in comparison to the rest of the league, have to rebound and defend every time they take the floor to stay competitive, and don't have much wiggle room in the overall margin-for-error category.

BUFFALO EXTRAS



Game Notes #23 vs. Iowa State

Plus, each is on a four-game losing streak, and both coaches probably considered three of those defeats agonizingly avoidable.

Two of ISU most recent four losses have come in overtime - 96-87 at Oklahoma State on Jan. 19, 82-76 vs. Oklahoma on Saturday. Three days earlier, the Cyclones lost another winnable home game - 92-83 to Texas Tech.

The lone Big 12 win for Hoiberg's team was against Baylor, which overtook CU 70-66 Saturday in Waco. Meanwhile, ISU got Baylor - *really* got - at home, bashing the Bears 72-57 at mid-month. Three nights earlier, the Cyclones lost by five points (84-79) at home to then-No. 3 Kansas. CU lost by four points (82-78) at home a week ago to now-No. 2 KU.

Upshot: As their 14-8 overall records hint, the teams that play Tuesday (7 p.m., FSN Rocky Mountain) aren't vastly different.

For the sake of his sanity, here's a stat that Hoiberg can't afford to dwell on: In five of ISU's eight losses, the Cyclones have been tied or held a lead with under a minute remaining in regulation. But it's been ISU's starts - not finishes - in Big 12 play that gnaw at Hoiberg.

"Slow starts have been a big thing . . . we've had double-digit deficits in all but one conference game," he said on Monday's Big 12 coaches teleconference. "We have to become the aggressors."

Falling behind early and big is difficult for teams that lack depth - and Hoiberg's settles squarely into that category. He routinely uses seven players and notes, "We just don't have the depth to dig out . . . you just use up so much juice" after falling behind by double figures and trying to catch up.

The Buffs' recent problems have been on the flip side - finishing. They opened a 17-point first-half lead at Baylor and held off the Bears until the final 3 minutes. In the previous game, they rallied from 10 back and stuck with KU until the final minute. In the game before that at Oklahoma, they started sloppily, caught the Sooners but couldn't close them out.

Like Hoiberg's team, Tad Boyle's isn't particularly deep. "We've got a relatively short rotation," Boyle said. "Our production has to come from our most productive players . . . some teams may be able to supplement that production from another one or two players (but) that's indicative of where our program is right now."

The Buffs were productive enough in non-conference play and three games into the Big 12 schedule to be averaging about 84 points a game. Their scoring average in all games has dipped to 81, and in conference games they're at 72.7. The across-the-board productivity from their four or five top players isn't there like it was a month ago.

Nevertheless, there's ample time for a recovery. Tuesday night's game marks the halfway point of conference play. With a win, CU goes into the final eight games with a 4-4 record. Of those final eight, home games are against Texas A&M, Kansas State, Texas and Nebraska, with trips to Missouri, Kansas, Texas Tech and Iowa State.

Holding serve at home against two ranked teams - No. 3 Texas, No. 16 A&M - will be a challenge, as will winning at No. 2 Kansas and at No. 14 Missouri. But Boyle's team continues to battle and, according to him, hasn't suffered a setback in confidence during its four-game slide.

"I like our guys . . . I like our resiliency," he said. "The effort's going to be there, that's one thing I can count on."

But like Hoiberg's team, Boyle's simply needs to find a way to win.

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SHOW MENU



Iowa State, already as thin as CU in the post, will be without forward Calvin Godfrey, who has been suspended three games by Hoiberg for "violation of team rules."

"It's going to be a tough game for us. They're bigger than us," Hoiberg said of the Buffs, who are usually the team at a distinct size disadvantage in conference games. "We have to find a way to come out and compete early."

CU has a 13-2 record against Iowa State in Big 12 games played at the Coors Events Center. The Cyclones lead the all-time series 76-68.

TODAY: The Colorado Buffaloes (14-8, 3-4) host the Iowa State Cyclones (14-8, 1-6) at 7 p.m. at the Coors Events Center.

BROADCAST: Television on FSN with Drew Goodman (play-by-play), Ceal Barry (color) and Alanna Rizzo (sideline). Radio on KKZN (760 AM) with Mark Johnson (play-by-play) and Chris Lewis (analyst).

STORY LINES: The Buffs coughed up a 17-point lead in Waco, Texas and lost 70-66 to Baylor on Saturday. ... Freshman forward Andre Roberson grabbed 11 rebounds, including 10 offensive rebounds, as CU and Baylor each had 38 rebounds. ... Alec Burks is the league leader in points per conference game (21.4). ... The Cyclones, like the Buffs, have lost four consecutive games. ... Iowa State, despite 19 points and 12 rebounds off the bench from Melvin Ejim, lost 82-76 in overtime to Oklahoma on Saturday. The Sooners have lost 19 consecutive road games before the win at Ames. ... Cyclones forward Calvin Godfrey was suspended for three games beginning tonight.

COACHES: Tad Boyle is 14-8 in his first season at CU. Fred Hoiberg is 14-8 in his first season at Iowa State.

PROBABLE STARTERS: **Colorado** -- G Nate Tomlinson, 6-2, Jr., 3.0 ppg, 1.8 rpg; G Marcus Relphorde, 6-7, Sr., 11.4 ppg, 4.1 rpg; G Alec Burks, 6-6, So., 19.8 ppg, 5.7 rpg; G Cory Higgins, 6-5, Sr., 16.2 ppg, 3.5 rpg; F Austin Dufault, 6-9, Jr., 8.0 ppg, 4.6 rpg. **Iowa State** -- G Jake Anderson, 6-2, Sr., 12.3 ppg, 8.0 rpg; G Diante Garrett, 6-4, Sr., 17.8 ppg, 3.8 rpg; G Scott Christopherson, 6-3, Jr., 13.3 ppg, 3.0 rpg; F Melvin Ejim, 6-6, Fr., 11.4 ppg, 7.0 rpg; F Jamie Vanderbeken, 6-11, Sr., 11.5 ppg, 5.7 rpg.

KEY STAT: The Buffs are 13-2 against Iowa State in Big 12 games played at the Coors Events Center.

SERIES: Iowa State leads 76-68, but CU has a 47-16 advantage in Boulder.

UP NEXT: The Buffs travel to Columbia to play No. 14 Missouri at Mizzou Arena on Saturday (5:30 p.m., no television).

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THE DENVER POST

cu men's basketball

To rebound from skid, Buffs must grab more rebounds

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 02/01/2011 01:00:00 AM MST

Beginning with the first time Tad Boyle met with his new team in April, the Colorado men's basketball coach has impressed the importance of rebounding.

Now he has the statistics to back up his concerns.

In their three Big 12 victories, the Buffaloes averaged a 41.3-28.7 rebounding margin.

However, during CU's current four-game losing streak, opponents have won the battle of the boards by an average of 34.0-29.8.

The Buffs (14-8, 3-4 Big 12) play Iowa State (14-8, 1-6) tonight at the Coors Events Center, desperately needing a win to get their season turned around.

"(Rebounding) is a barometer for our group, because we are undersized," Boyle said Monday on the Big 12 coaches teleconference. "We have to do a good job on the boards to neutralize whoever we're playing."

Colorado and Baylor both finished with 38 rebounds Saturday in Baylor's come-from-behind, 70-66 win in Waco, Texas. But the host Bears had two more boards in the second half.

"(Rebounding) is something we have to do 'by committee,' " Boyle said. "Against Baylor, Andre Roberson had 10 offensive rebounds, but I'm not sure anybody else on our team had more than one or two."

Said CU senior guard Cory Higgins, "Rebounding is all heart and desire."

For conference games only, Iowa State ranks third among Big 12 teams in rebounding (36.7 average), behind Missouri (38.0) and Texas (37.5).

First-year Cyclones coach Fred Hoiberg said that number is deceiving.

"We rebounded well in our last game (against Oklahoma), but overall that's been a weakness for us," Hoiberg said on the teleconference. "I really challenged them (to rebound) before the Oklahoma game."

Iowa State did, winning the board battle 45-34 but losing in overtime.

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THE DENVER POST

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Cyclones haven't won at CU since 2005. . . . CU is
 11-1 when scoring 80 or more points.

Iowa State at Colorado

Tom Kensler, The Denver Post

7 p.m., FSN, 760 AM

Spotlight on Fred Hoiberg: Iowa State's coach, nicknamed "The Mayor" because the favorite son led Ames High to a state title and had four great years at hometown ISU, had been associated with the NBA for 15 years before returning to his alma mater for his "dream job." The Cyclones have struggled this season, as expected, but look for a big bump in recruiting under Hoiberg, 38.

Iowa State: The Cyclones have supplanted CU as the Big 12's best free-throw shooting team (83.6 percent) for league games only. CU is at 78.9 percent. . . . According to ISU sports information, the Cyclones are one of six Division I teams with five players averaging in double figures. . . . In five of their eight losses, the Cyclones have been tied or had the lead with one minute remaining. . . . Already short on depth with four transfers sitting out, the Cyclones will be without freshman Calvin Godfrey, who has been suspended for three games (violating team rules).

Colorado: The Buffaloes' four-game conference losing streak is longer than any during the 2009-10 season. . . . Sophomore guard Alec Burks has taken over the Big 12 scoring lead (21.4) for conference games only. . . . In the series, CU holds a 47-16 advantage in Boulder. The

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Longmont, Colorado
 Tuesday, February 08,
 2011

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Cleaning the glass: Rebounds key to Buffs' success this season

By Brian Howell
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More than anything, rebounding may be the key to whether the University of Colorado men's basketball team wins or loses.

"It is a barometer for our group," CU head coach Tad Boyle said.

This season, when the Buffs have out-rebounded their opponents, they are 11-1. When they get out-rebounded, they are 2-6.

Rebounding has particularly been a key in Big 12 play.

CU (14-8, 3-4 Big 12) began Big 12 play with three straight wins. During those games, they out-rebounded their opponents by 12.7 boards per game.

In four games since — all losses — CU has been out-rebounded by 4.3 per game.

"Every day we impress it on our team," Boyle said of rebounding. "Because we are undersized, we have to do a good job on the boards to neutralize whoever we're playing."

Freshman Andre Roberson has proven to be an exceptional rebounder. Off the bench, he's posting a team-high 7.3 boards per game.

Boyle would like to see more players step up in that area, though. Guard Alec Burks (5.7) is the only other Buff averaging at least five rebounds per game.

"It's something we have to do by committee," Boyle said.

Rebounding will once again be a key tonight when Iowa State (14-8, 1-6) visits Boulder. The Cyclones rank fourth in the Big 12 with 38.5 rebounds per game. Jake Anderson (8.0) and Melvin Ejim (7.0) lead that effort.

"Iowa State is a good rebounding team; shoot, every team in the Big 12 seems like they are," Boyle said.

Iowa State coach Fred Hoiberg said those numbers are misleading, however.

"We rebounded well last game," Hoiberg said. "Overall, that's been a weakness for us all season. Coming into this, I knew that would be something we'd struggle with, with our lack of size and our lack of depth.



Colorado's Austin Dufault misses out on a rebound while battling Marcus Morris as he comes down on Kansas' Tyrel Reed at Coors Events Center on Jan. 25. **Joshua Buck/Times-Call**

Tonight's game

Iowa State (14-8, 1-6 Big 12) at CU men (14-8, 3-4)

When/Where: 7 p.m. tonight, at Coors Events Center in Boulder

TV/Radio: FSN/760-AM

The series: Iowa State leads 76-68, but CU is 47-16 against the Cyclones in Boulder.

Leading scorers: ISU — Diante Garrett (17.8 points per game); CU — Alec Burks (19.8)

Notes: CU leads the Big 12 by hitting 78.0 percent of its free throws. But nobody has been hotter at the line lately than Iowa State. The Cyclones have made 85.4 percent of their free throws in the past six games. ... CU's Levi Knutson leads the Big 12 in 3-point field goal percentage (50.0, 44-

"You've got to come up with them at the key moments of the game, and we just have not been able to do that since conference play has started. We've obviously suffered because of that."

So has Colorado, but Boyle and the Buffs hope tonight is the night they get back on track — not only with rebounding, but with winning.

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of-88). ... The Cyclones have five players averaging at least 11.4 points per game. ... Iowa State is 1-9 in its last 10 Big 12 road games. ... CU is 11-1 at home this season. ... CU has won five in a row at home against the Cyclones.

Brian Howell

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Nothing Easy: Big 12 teams hanging hats on defense

By Brian Howell
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Approaching the midway point of the Big 12 Conference season, defense has been the focal point.

A year ago, Texas A&M led the Big 12 in scoring defense, allowing just 65.8 points per game.

How well are teams playing on defense this year? A&M's 65.8 from last year would rank seventh in the conference this year.

"I do think the teams we've played defensively are better than they were last year, across the board," said Texas A&M coach Mark Turgeon, whose team is second in the league with 58.7 points allowed per game. "It's been very difficult to manufacture points and get easy shots."

Turgeon's 16th-ranked Aggies (17-4) had a rough time scoring Saturday at Nebraska, losing 57-48.

Nebraska (15-5) is on pace to set a couple of Big 12 records for defense.

The Cornhuskers are allowing just 56.5 points per game, while opponents are making just 36.5 percent of their shots. The Big 12 records are 57.9 (Texas, 2005-06) and 37.7 (Kansas, 2006-07).

"They're playing their tails off," Kansas State coach Frank Martin said of the Cornhuskers.

Great defense doesn't stop with Nebraska. Texas A&M, Texas (60.5), Baylor (61.3) and Kansas (62.7) also have been stingy.

Only Colorado (71.8) and Texas Tech (75.6) are allowing more than 68.7 per game.

Baylor coach Scott Drew said preparing for games is tougher than ever.

"Each coach in the league is not only a very good coach, but I think there's more changes this year," Drew said. "Every game it seems like people do something different defensively. It's tough to prepare for every game because there's an adjustment."

AROUND THE BIG 12

The Big 12 is the only conference in the country to have all of its members in the top 150 of the RPI (Rating Percentage Index) ratings.

Colorado is 93rd on the list, ranking below in-state teams Colorado State (48th) and Air Force (92nd). Northern Colorado is 138th.

The RPI rates teams on factors such as winning percentage and strength of schedule.

During his eight years as Kansas' head coach, Bill Self has won a lot of games. He has yet to find a way to win in Lubbock, Texas, however.

Tonight, the second-ranked Jayhawks (20-1) visit Texas Tech (11-11) looking to snap a three-game skid in Lubbock. It's the only stop in the Big 12 where Self has yet to win.

"I don't think we've played particularly well when we've gone down there, but they've also played great," said Self, who has led KU to a 5-0 mark against the Red Raiders outside of Lubbock. "I don't know what it is. We just haven't performed well there."

Oklahoma State (14-7) began Big 12 play with an upset of then-No. 17 Kansas State. Since then, the Cowboys have lost five of six, including their last three.

"We're playing hard," Cowboys coach Travis Ford said. "We're just not rewarding ourselves very well."

After an 0-3 start to Big 12 play, Oklahoma (11-9) has won three in a row.

"Our defense has improved a lot," coach Jeff Capel said of the difference in recent games. "I think we've been more active (on defense)."

Texas Tech senior Mike Singletary was named the Big 12 player of the week. Kansas freshman Josh Selby was named the Big 12 rookie of the week.

Sophomore Wally Judge quit the Kansas State team on Monday. He started 11 games for the Wildcats this year, averaging 5.5 points and 3.8 rebounds.

In women's basketball, Oklahoma's Danielle Robinson was named Big 12 player of the week, while Baylor's Odyssey Sims was named Big 12 freshman of the week.

Since beating Colorado in Boulder on Jan. 12, the Kansas women's basketball team is 0-5. The Jayhawks (14-7) and Buffs will meet again Wednesday in Lawrence. KU is 10-3 at home this year.

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