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cu basketball

## Super subs give Colorado basketball a lift

By Tom Kensler  
The Denver Post

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BOULDER — Fans might call senior guard Levi Knutson and freshman forward Andre Roberson "Instant Energy" or perhaps just Colorado's "Super Subs."

CU coach Tad Boyle isn't much into nicknames or labels. He just wonders if anybody anywhere has a more productive pair coming off the bench.

"If there is a better sixth man in the country than Levi, I want to see him," Boyle said. "And Andre has a nose for the ball on the boards that you can't coach and can't teach."

"Those two guys are a big reason why this team is where we're at. They give us a great punch off the bench."

Colorado (13-4, 2-0 Big 12) may need the duo's usual spark today against an Oklahoma State

squad (13-3, 1-1) ready to rebound from an ugly 71-48 loss at Texas A&M on Wednesday night. The Cowboys have wins over DePaul, Tulsa, Alabama, Stanford and Kansas State, among others.

CU coaches can just about count on big efforts in every game from Knutson and Roberson (pronounced Robb-err-son). In front of a hostile crowd of 12,528 at Manhattan, Kan., their contributions took center stage Wednesday night in Colorado's 74-66 victory over No. 21 Kansas State. Knutson came off the bench firing 3-pointers, finishing with a career-best six treys (in eight attempts) and a team-high 20 points — his career best for a Big 12 game.

In just 23 minutes, Roberson grabbed a game-high nine rebounds, including five at the offensive end. He also added nine points (4-of-5).

In all games, Knutson, a former Colorado "Mr. Basketball" at Arapahoe High, tops the Big 12 in 3-point accuracy (.532) by a wide margin (next best: Missouri's Marcus Denmon at .505). Knutson contributes 12 points a game to a frenetic CU offense that is second in the Big 12 with 84.4 points per game.

Playing 24 minutes per game, Knutson also is knocking down 90 percent of his free throws. Sports computer stats expert Ken Pomeroy calculated that Knutson ranks first nationally in offensive rating in a complex formula that measures points per 100 possessions.

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"Whether it's coming off the bench or starting, I feel that my role doesn't change," Knutson said Friday. "I'm going to do the same things to try to contribute."

Roberson averages 7.5 rebounds in just 20 minutes per game. His rebounding pace projects to 13.1 rebounds for 35 minutes on the court. According to CU, the San Antonio native ranks ninth in rebounding among the nation's freshmen. The eight ahead of him are starters.

"I want to give them a boost coming off the bench, a big spark," Roberson said. "Especially if our team is down, it makes me want to go in there and work harder."

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# CU Buffs' Roberson boasts fierce nature

## Boyle impressed with CU freshman's effort

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

Posted:

Even when Andre Roberson misses a shot it's exciting.

Colorado's magnetic freshman forward leads the team in rebounding (7.5 rpg), steals (27) and blocks (21). Shane Harris-Tunks led the Buffs with 14 blocks last season.

"I told him, 'You might lead the country in missed dunks,'" CU head coach Tad Boyle said with a smile after Friday's practice. "But I like aggressiveness. I don't want to take away from Andre's aggressiveness. What we talk to him about is finishing plays."

Roberson came off the bench and helped the Buffs finish off Wednesday's 74-66 win at No. 21 Kansas State with nine points and nine rebounds. He was 4-for-5 from the field and would have been perfect if his monstrous slam didn't slip out of the rim.

"I don't know how I missed that one," Roberson said. "I just try to finish strong, especially knowing big guys can go up there and blocks shots if you lay it up sometimes. That's all I try to do is finish strong."

The Buffs (13-4, 2-0) -- coming off back-to-back wins over ranked opponents for the first time in program history -- host Oklahoma State today at the Coors Events Center (11:30 a.m., Altitude). CU has not started a Big 12 season 3-0 since 1996-97 when Chauncey Billups and Co. opened conference play 6-0.

"I have felt the excitement with what we've done this past week, but I don't concern myself with it," Boyle said when asked about students and fans jumping on the bandwagon with CU on top of the standings. "Our whole key with our team is to stay focused and hungry."

The Cowboys (13-3, 1-1) feature one of the Big 12's best post players in 6-7, 255-pound forward Marshall Moses, who is averaging 16.6 points and 8.4 rebounds.

CU out-rebounded Missouri and K-State, but the coaching staff is concerned Moses could give them trouble in the paint like Keith Wright did on Nov. 28. That was the game when the 6-8, 240-pound forward scored 19 points on 8-for-11 shooting to lead Harvard to an 82-66 win over the Buffs.

"Moses is probably the best offensive post player we've played year to date," Boyle said. "The kid from Harvard was pretty good, but you put that kid with athleticism and that's what you've got with Moses."

Moses scored 20 points on 8-for-9 shooting and grabbed 18 rebounds during Oklahoma State's 90-78 victory over the Buffs in Stillwater last season. If CU pays too much attention to Moses the senior can send the ball out to Keiton Page (13.6 ppg) or other skilled players on the perimeter.

"A lot of these teams like Oklahoma State, I've never beat them before in my career," junior forward Austin Dufault said when asked how the players will stay humble and focused after the fast start to the conference season. "It's a just another challenge. I'm really excited for this game to have an opportunity to beat someone I've never beat and have them on our home floor."

"You just have to find something in every game to get excited about, and in the Big 12 that shouldn't be too hard."

Especially with Levi Knutson and Roberson coming off the bench. Knutson knocked down six 3-pointers at Kansas State, and Roberson added a back-breaking basket from behind the arc that gave CU an 11-point lead in the second half.

"You don't know what to expect from freshmen. I wasn't sure if he'd be able to translate his game to the Big 12 level as a freshman, but he's doing it. He is having to grow up quick," Boyle said. "That shot was huge for our team, huge for his confidence. When I first sat down with Andre before the season I told him, 'You've got to know you belong and play like you belong and you've got to act like you belong.'"

"He's done that. You have to as a freshman because they're going to come at you."

**TODAY:** The Colorado Buffaloes (13-4, 2-0) host the Oklahoma State Cowboys (13-3, 1-1) at 11:30 a.m. at the Coors Events Center.

**BROADCAST:** Television on Altitude with Brad Sham (play-by-play) and Jon Sundvold (color). Radio on KKZN (760 AM) with Mark Johnson (play-by-play) and Chris Lewis (analyst).

**STORY LINES:** The Buffs are coming off a 74-66 road victory over No. 21 Kansas State. ... CU, which opened Big 12 play with an upset of then-No. 9 Missouri, has recorded back-to-back wins over ranked opponents for the first time in program history. ... Levi Knutson continued to shoot the lights out, knocking down 6-of-8 3-pointers en route to 20 points at Bramlage Coliseum. ... The Cowboys are coming off a 71-48 loss at Texas A&M. ... Oklahoma State had held 10 of its previous 15 opponents to less than 64 points. ... Marshall Moses (16.6 ppg) and Keiton Page (13.6 ppg) make up one of the more potent inside-out duos in the Big 12.

**COACHES:** Tad Boyle is 13-4 in his first season at CU after going 56-66 in four seasons at Northern Colorado. Travis Ford is 58-26 in his third season at Oklahoma State.

**PROBABLE STARTERS:** **Colorado** -- G Nate Tomlinson, 6-2, Jr., 3.2 ppg, 2.1 rpg; G Marcus Relpthorpe, 6-7, Sr., 11.9 ppg, 4.3 rpg; G Alec Burks, 6-6, SO., 19.6 ppg, 5.0 rpg; G Cory Higgins, 6-5, Sr., 16.2 ppg, 3.6 rpg; F Austin Dufault, 6-9, Jr., 9.1 ppg, 4.9 rpg. **Oklahoma State** -- F Matt Pilgrim, 6-8, Sr., 5.0 ppg, 5.1 rpg; F Marshall Moses, 6-7, Sr., 16.6 ppg, 8.4 rpg; G Keiton Page, 5-9, Jr., 13.6 ppg, 2.0 rpg; G Ray Penn, 5-9, So., 8.6 ppg, 3.0 rpg; G Nick Sidorakis, 6-4, Sr., 2.8 ppg, 1.7 rpg.

**KEY STAT:** The Buffs are looking for their first 3-0 start in Big 12 play since 1996-97 when CU opened conference play 6-0 en route to the NCAA Tournament.

**SERIES:** Oklahoma State leads 60-47, but the Cowboys are 17-31 all-time in Boulder.

**UP NEXT:** The Buffs will travel to Lincoln for the final time as a conference rival to face Nebraska on Tuesday at the Devaney Center (5 p.m., ESPN2).

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