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CU's Boyle: defense needs to tighten up

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

Watching from the bench, Colorado men's [basketball](#)^[1] [coach Tad Boyle](#)^[2] had one of the best seats in the house for the [Buffaloes](#)^[3], 79-67 loss at [Nebraska](#)^[4] that snapped CU's seven-game winning streak.

But even Boyle was surprised when his staff analyzed tape of the game.

"[Nebraska](#)^[4] had 44 points in the paint and when we watched the film we counted up that 38 of those points were point-blank layups," Boyle said.

"We just gave up too many easy baskets. [Nebraska](#)^[4] is a team that has trouble scoring, but when you give them 38 at point-blank range, it put a lot of pressure on our offense (to keep up)."

Boyle said Colorado shot the ball well enough to win, hitting 44.4 percent from the field.

But [Nebraska](#)^[4] made 56.6 percent.

In effect, it became almost a layup drill for the Huskers. The officials stats recorded nine Husker layups before halftime.

"Of [Nebraska](#)^[4]'s 38 points (inside), 24 were because of (bad) post defense or we didn't have help-side (defense) or they got shots in transition," Boyle said.

Colorado (14-5, 3-2 Big 12) plays Saturday at Oklahoma (9-9, 1-3), with an 11:30 a.m. tipoff on Altitude2 (channel 105 for most Front Range Comcast subscribers) and 760 AM.

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ARTICLE PRINTED FROM ALL THINGS COLORADO SPORTS

CU men looking to bounce back

Bufs out to put loss to Nebraska in rearview

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

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LINCOLN, Neb. -- Tad Boyle will have everyone's full attention at practice today.

Colorado's players have responded well to their new head coach following bitter defeats this season.

Harvard exposed CU's flaws during an 82-66 Ivy League-over-Big 12 beat down on Nov. 28 in Cambridge, Mass.

After that humbling loss, Boyle met with team leaders and the Buffs started to commit to defense and rebounding while rattling off five consecutive wins, including an 83-57 thrashing of Oregon State and a 90-83 overtime win over Colorado State.

CU lost a disappointing game against New Mexico at the Las Vegas Classic but regrouped the next night to beat Indiana. That began a seven-game winning streak that included the team's first true road win (at Cal State Bakersfield), back-to-back wins over ranked opponents (Missouri and Kansas State) for the first time in program history, and a 3-0 start to Big 12 play.

Boyle will use Tuesday night's 79-67 loss to Nebraska at the Devaney Center as another teachable moment.

"That's the one thing our team has done this year is we've gotten better after our losses," said Boyle, who did not conduct a practice on Wednesday so the Buffs could catch up on rest and homework. "We've learned. These guys want to get better, they want to succeed, so I'm not worried about where we're at."

The formula for success, especially in Big 12 games, is a simple one for CU.

When this talented offensive team out-rebounds the opponent -- an area the Buffs dominated in the wins over Missouri (47-33), Kansas State (38-29) and Oklahoma State (39-27) -- they are tough to beat.

The Cornhuskers had a 31-26 edge on the glass and shot 56.6 percent from the field. CU's players and head coach insist the performance had nothing to do with overlooking Nebraska.

"No, I don't think so. We battled. We just didn't play well," Levi Knutson said. "It hurts a little bit. It was a winnable game for us and a game we felt like we should have won. We have to play better. We've got another road game on Saturday, so we've got to bounce back quick."

The Buffs (14-5, 3-1) will play Oklahoma on Saturday at the Lloyd Noble Center in Norman. The Sooners (9-9, 1-3) beat Texas Tech on Tuesday to avoid sole possession of last place in the Big 12.

"It's real important that we play well there," Marcus Relphorpe said. "It's a long season and every game is important. I think we learned (against Nebraska) that we have to be ready and every team is going to give us their best shot. We just have to regroup and get a win on Saturday."

The Buffs can't afford to look ahead, especially on the road.

But a 4-1 record for CU in the Big 12 -- including two road breakthroughs -- would certainly add to the intrigue of No. 2 Kansas' final visit to the Coors Events Center as a conference foe.

"We're not thinking about that next (home) game, we're thinking about Oklahoma," Knutson said. "We've got to go back and practice and prepare for Oklahoma because there are no easy games in the Big 12. We'll be ready to go on Saturday."

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