

# Bufs running short on time

## Baylor loss leaves CU in must-win situation vs. ISU

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

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WACO, Texas -- The Bufs are on the bubble.

The NIT bubble.

After four consecutive losses, Colorado has gone from receiving votes in the top-25 polls to fighting for a spot in a lesser postseason tournament.

There is still time for Tad Boyle's team to play its way back into the NCAA Tournament picture. But CU will have to turn things around beginning with Tuesday's home game against Iowa State and then upset some ranked conference rivals down the stretch to be a part of the madness in March.

"We know we still have a shot," senior guard Levi Knutson insisted after the Bufs' blew a 17-point lead and lost 70-66 to Baylor on Saturday at the Ferrell Center. "This loss doesn't take us away from our goals. We still have nine games to battle and get some wins. We'll be fine."

Playing in a power conference means there really aren't any automatic wins on the schedule. Texas Tech, after an 8-11 start to the season, has won three consecutive Big 12 games.

The Big 12 also creates opportunities for the Bufs -- at No. 11 Missouri next Saturday, home games against No. 13 Texas A&M and No. 7 Texas, the final visit to Lawrence for a rematch with No. 6 Kansas -- to rack up some quality wins that will grab the selection committee's attention.

"I'm not worried about losing confidence," Boyle said when asked about the psyche of his team moving forward. "I haven't lost confidence in these guys. We just have to execute better, and you have to make plays down the stretch."

The Bufs (14-8, 3-4) were outscored 49-31 by Baylor in the second half. The Bears (14-6, 4-3), an Elite Eight team last season, needed the win just as much as the struggling visitors.

"It's frustrating. I liked our guys' intensity, I like their effort, I liked their focus. I can't fault them for anything, other than not making shots," Boyle said after CU shot 35.4 percent from the field. "We're going to keep battling. This is a long season. We're not counting ourselves out of it."

"It's time to regroup, pull yourself up by the bootstraps, and go get 'em."

CU is currently tied with Texas Tech (3-4) for seventh in the Big 12 standings. Remember, last season the Red Raiders beat the Bufs in the first round of the Big 12 Tournament in what was essentially an NIT play-in game.

The seven teams that finished ahead of CU in the conference standings last March were in the NCAA Tournament field. Traditionally, the top five or six Big 12 finishers are invited.

Texas, Kansas, Texas A&M and Missouri are locks this season. In addition to the Bufs and Bears, Nebraska (15-5), Kansas State (14-8), Oklahoma State (14-7) and Iowa State (14-8) have NIT résumés entering February.

It's actually more difficult for teams from power conferences to get into the NIT because all teams that win regular-season conference titles in small conferences and don't make the NCAA field are automatically included.

And the field has been trimmed back down to its traditional 32-team format. However, the NCAA field has been expanded to 68 teams.

As of Sunday, CU's RPI was 95, which ranked ninth in the Big 12. Baylor moved up to 86th after seizing victory from the jaws of defeat on Saturday.

"You can't play not to lose, you have to play to win," Boyle said. "I just felt like we got on our heels in the second half (against Baylor)."

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JANUARY 31, 2011, 11:08 AM

## Hoiberg: CU's Higgins will get selected in NBA draft

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

First-year [Iowa State](#) <sup>[1]</sup> coach Fred Hoiberg spent 15 years in the NBA, as a player or executive, so it spoke volumes when, during Monday's [Big 12](#) <sup>[2]</sup> coaches teleconference, Hoiberg said Colorado guards [Alec Burks](#) <sup>[3]</sup> and [Cory Higgins](#) <sup>[4]</sup> are "two players that I think will be (NBA) pros."

Burks, a 6-foot-6 sophomore, has long been considered a probable first-round [NBA draft](#) <sup>[5]</sup> choice, as soon as this summer, if he chooses to come out early.

Higgins?

"I do (think he will get drafted)," Hoiberg said of the 6-5 Higgins, a senior. "He can play two positions (point guard and wing/shooting guard). He's got very good size for a point guard.

"And he can create his shots. He does a terrific job of getting to the free-throw line. That's something that in the NBA ... that's a luxury to have, a guy that can create contact and get to the line.

"He shoots the ball well. And he's a very smart player. Having his dad ([Charlotte](#) <sup>[6]</sup> [Bobcats](#) <sup>[7]</sup> general manager and ex-NBA player [Rod Higgins](#) <sup>[8]</sup>) having been in that league for a long time obviously will help him."

[Iowa State](#) <sup>[1]</sup> (14-8, 1-6 [Big 12](#) <sup>[2]</sup>) plays Tuesday night at Colorado (14-8, 3-4), beginning at 7 p.m. (telecast: FSN)

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<sup>[15]</sup>

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JANUARY 31, 2011, 10:44 AM

# CU's Boyle: Rebounding a key as always

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

Speaking Monday during the [Big 12](#)<sup>[1]</sup> men's basketball teleconference, [CU](#)<sup>[2]</sup> coach [Tad Boyle](#)<sup>[3]</sup> said once again a key for his [Buffaloes](#)<sup>[4]</sup> (14-8, 3-4) in Tuesday night's home game against [Iowa](#)<sup>[5]</sup> State (14-8, 1-6) will be rebounding.

It's no secret that [CU](#)<sup>[2]</sup> rebounded well in its three [Big 12](#)<sup>[1]</sup> victories and, for the most part, has been beaten on the boards during its current four-game slid in conference slide.

"It is our barometer for our group because we are undersized," Boyle said. "We have to do a good job on the boards to neutralize whoever we're playing."

For conference games only, [Iowa](#)<sup>[5]</sup> State ranks third among [Big 12](#)<sup>[1]</sup> teams in rebounding (36.7), behind only [Missouri](#)<sup>[6]</sup> (38.0) and [Texas](#)<sup>[7]</sup> (37.5).

"[Iowa](#)<sup>[5]</sup> State is a good rebounding team," Boyle said. "It seems like every team in the [Big 12](#)<sup>[1]</sup> is."

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