



Alec Burks scored a career-high 36 points.
Photo Courtesy: Tony Harman



01/08/2011 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

Burks' 36 Leads Buffs To Win Over No. 9/8 Tigers

BOULDER - Winning Big 12 Conference openers hasn't been the easiest assignment for the Colorado men's basketball team. Making a bold statement in them has been even more difficult.

But on Saturday at the Coors Events Center, things changed. Oh, how they changed.

Unranked, unsung CU got a career-best 36 points from sophomore Alec Burks and turned buzzer-to-buzzer aggressor, turning the tables on No. 8 Missouri. Burks and the Buffaloes stunned the Tigers, 89-76, giving CU its first win against a Top 10 team since Feb. 4, 2003, when the Buffs defeated No. 3 Texas 93-80 at the Events Center. The Buffs had lost 19 consecutive games to opponents ranked in the Top 10 in either national poll.

BUFFALO EXTRAS



Watch:

Tad Boyle
01/09/2011



Listen:

MBB vs. Missouri Audio
01/08/2011



Watch:

MBB vs Missouri Game Highlights
01/08/2011



Watch:

Higgins, Dufault, Burks
01/09/2011



Watch:

MBB vs Missouri Game Replay
01/08/2011



Quotes

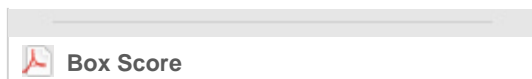


Box Score



Notes

CU snapped a 13-game losing streak in conference openers, winning for the first time in a Big 12 first game since the league's inaugural year in 1997. So the Buffs, headed to the Pac-12 Conference next season, will exit the Big 12 with bookend wins in league openers - hardly worthy of a signpost on the national hoops landscape, but nevertheless something to cheer for a program on the road to reestablishing itself.



"It was a statement game for us . . . we wanted to show that we're a different team from last year and can play with anybody in the Big 12," said the gifted Burks, a Grandview, Mo., native who received maybe a cursory recruiting look from his home state university.

But Mizzou gave him more than a fleeting glance Saturday - when the Tigers (14-2) could keep up with him. In more ways than MU could count, Burks added to a fast-growing personal highlight reel that might be a mixed blessing for first-year coach Tad Boyle.

"He took it to another level offensively," Boyle said. "I think we know what he can do."

But Burks, the league's freshman-of-the-year last season, continued to earn Boyle's respect with his team play: "He's so talented offensively, he feels like he can make a play every time he has the ball. When the guy is like that - and for the sake of the team he gives it up - you have to respect that."

The 6-foot-6 Burks also chipped in eight rebounds, two assists and a steal. He hit all three of his three-point attempts and was 9-of-11 from the free throw line. He said his approach to Saturday's game was the same as any other: "I tried to do everything aggressive . . . that was nothing new; it's the same thing every game."

Boyle also liked all of his players' overall moxie, especially the "statement game" part. He quickly picked up on the theme when asked what that statement might be. It is, he said, "When you come in here, you'd better be ready to play. That's a top 10 team, and when you beat one, it wakes some people up. We want to be the new Colorado and have a chance to win every time we step on the (CEC) floor or go on the road."

Boyle, Northern Colorado's head coach a season ago after assistant stints at Wichita State, Jacksonville State and Oregon, wasn't prepared to give the win a ranking on his scale of large career victories.

"I haven't thought about that . . . I'm just happy for our players," he said. "I just want our guys to believe we can play with any team in the country. Obviously, it was against a Top 10 team, but I'm into wins for the program."

Senior Cory Higgins, however, called the victory "the biggest win since I've been here. It's my best memory so far, with hopefully many more to come. It felt great to execute the game plan and have it show up on the scoreboard."

With Burks, Higgins (18) was one of four CU players in double figures. Levi Knutson added 13 and Austin Dufault 12. Higgins also collected a game-best 10 rebounds, tying a career-high, as the Buffs out-boarded the Tigers 47-33. It was MU's biggest board discrepancy of the season.

"We did the little things right," said the fast-improving Dufault, who contributed seven rebounds.

"When a shot was up in the air, everyone was getting on a body. Once that thing came off the rim, everybody attacked it. We had a lot of team rebounds, a lot of gang rebounds."

And there was this telling statistic: CU committed just 10 turnovers (two in the first half) in successfully handling Mizzou's full- and half-court pressure. The Tigers had been forcing an average of 20 turnovers a game. Taking care of the ball, the rebounding differential and knowing when to attack the Tigers and when to hold up were cited by Boyle as keys to the win.

"We've got to make them pay for pressing, and I think we did a great job of that," Higgins said. "Maybe two years ago, when it was a real young team (were the Buffs intimidated by the Tigers pressure). Now, it's two years down the road and nobody has a 'deer in the headlights' look. Pretty much everybody has seen it all."

The Buffs, noted Tigers Coach Mike Anderson, "did a good job of attacking. We didn't do a good job defensively and I think that showed early on."

Boyle said his players "toughed it out," adding that from a coaching perspective, "The whole key to our game plan was for our players to make decisions when we broke the press - when do we attack and when do we pull it back. If we get the opportunities to score, you better take them when you have them."

Losers of eight consecutive games to the Tigers before Saturday, the Buffs missed their first three shots, but that was in no way indicative of how they would finish the first half or the game. They wound up shooting 47.8 percent (33-of-69) from the field while holding the Tigers to 40.6 percent (28-of-69).

Trailing 4-0, CU caught up on a pair of baskets by Dufault and finally took its first lead (16-15) on an Andre Roberson tip in with 14:26 left before intermission. He entered the game at the 16:17 mark, and his hustle paid off immediately. On the MU possession before his tip, he blocked a shot then raced to the other end to get himself in position for the tap-in.

That hustle was emblematic of how the Buffs opened and closed - and Anderson noticed: "They wanted it more than we did. That's the bottom line - they wanted it more."

CU expanded its first-half lead to nine points (29-20) before Marcus Denmon, Mizzou's leading scorer (17.2), pushed the Tigers on a 12-2 run by scoring seven of those points. His three-pointer with 4:32 before the break put MU up 32-31.

But the Buffs had an answer - a bold one.

After Denmon's trey, CU closed the half with a 15-2 run and went to the locker room cradling a 46-34 advantage - their largest of the afternoon to that point. Burks contributed five points in the surge, giving him a career-best 20 for the half - two more than he scored in the first 20 minutes against Alcorn State earlier this season.

The Buffs maintained their intensity to open the second half, and when Burks canned a pair of free throws 3:42 in, they increased their lead to 56-40 - their largest until Knutson scored seven consecutive points to put CU up 65-47 with 12:36 to play.

At that point, the Buffs could be certain the Tigers would ramp up their pressure. They did, mounting an 11-4 run that pulled them within 11 (69-58) with 8:24 remaining. MU guard Michael Dixon keyed that spurt, and minutes later when he hit four consecutive free throws the Tigers had cut the Buffs' lead to single figures (71-62).

CU pushed back in front 75-62 on baskets by Higgins and Burks, but after Mizzou had pulled to 75-68, it took a nearly miraculous catch-turn-and-shoot jumper by Burks with one second left on the shot clock for CU to restore its 10-point lead.

Said Burks of the shot: "I just threw it up and it happened to go in . . . sometimes it's your day and sometimes it's not."

But, of course, Mizzou wasn't ready to roll over.

Preceding the game, Boyle had written three words on the chalkboard in his team's dressing room: Focus, Confidence, Execution. The Buffs delivered all three. "Our guys did it in both halves, which you have to do," he said. "We knew Missouri was going to make some runs, but we just tried to limit those as best we could."

After the Tigers crept to 79-72 on a three-point play by Denmon, the Buffs got a technical free throw and a top-of-the-key jumper from Burks, then a layup by Marcus Relphorde to lead again by a dozen (84-72).

Denmon, the recipient of the 'T,' apparently was upset when scrapping for a loose ball that was awarded to the Buffs after a timeout was called by the CU bench. Anderson called the technical foul "a bad technical, that's the bottom line."

Anderson, who watched his team lose for the first time in 10 games, also said when CU closed the first half with what would be a critical 15-2 run, "we lost our composure there a little bit."

The Buffs kept theirs throughout, and finally, in their final Big 12 opener, they opened with a bang.

"I don't know where to start," Boyle said to open his postgame news conference, "but I'll say this: today at the Coors Events Center is great and how we want Saturdays to be in January and February for years to come. We want this to be an event where our fans can get excited, our players can get ready to play . . . I'm really proud of our guys, really proud."

On Day 1 of his first (and last) Big 12 season, Boyle's guys gave him reason to be proud, very proud indeed.

Contact: BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU

SHOW MENU



CU Buffs upset No. 9 Missouri

Bufs earn victory in Big 12 opener

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 01/08/2011 01:58:35 PM MST



[Click on any photo to see full gallery](#)

anybody in the Big 12 and play with anybody who is ranked. It's a statement game."

So what statement does this win make?

"When you come in here you better be ready to play," first-year CU head coach Tad Boyle said. "We want to be the new Colorado and the new Colorado wants to have a chance to win every time we step on the floor."

The Buffs improved to 10-0 at the Coors Events Center in front of a season-high 8,694 witnesses while snapping a brutal 13-game losing streak in Big 12 openers.

The Tigers, playing only their second true road game of the season, are now 0-5 all-time in Big 12 openers outside of Columbia.

"On the road there are a lot of things you have to do well. We didn't do those things well," Missouri head coach Mike Anderson explained. "You talk about shooting the basketball and rebounding the basketball. We didn't create turnovers. We had windows of opportunities to cash in on, we just didn't do a good job."

"Today, they were better than we were."

CU, ranked 10th among Big 12 teams in rebounding (35.9 rpg) through non-conference play, dominated the boards by a 47-33 count.

Boyle's team also held the Tigers, the nation's fifth-highest scoring team (86.4 ppg) coming in, 10 points under their average and held them to 40.6 percent shooting.

"It feels great," senior Cory Higgins said of his first win over Missouri. "But we expected to win. That's the way we've been preparing."

Forty minutes of heaven.

Colorado opened Big 12 play with a well-executed and exciting 89-76 victory over No. 9 Missouri on Saturday at the Coors Events Center.

The Buffs (12-4, 1-0) had lost eight consecutive games to the Tigers (14-2, 0-1) and dropped their previous 19 games against top-10 foes dating back to a win over No. 3 Texas (93-80) on Feb. 4, 2003.

Super sophomore Alec Burks was spectacular, setting the tone with 20 first-half points and sticking in some daggers -- including a back-breaking fade away jumper as the shot clock expired with 2:44 left in the game -- en route to a career-high 36 points.

"It shows we're a different team than last year," said Burks, the talented Grandview, Mo., export. "It shows we can play with

The Buffs led 46-34 at halftime after shooting 47.2 percent from the field and going 9-for-9 at the free-throw line. Burks went 8-for-11 from the field, including 3-for-3 behind the arc, with 20 points in 16 minutes. Austin Dufault added 10 first-half points on 5-for-7 shooting.

"Hopefully we learned a valuable lesson today," Anderson lamented. "You have to bring it in order to get it."

CU missed its first three shots of the game before settling down. A putback by Andre Roberson gave the home team its first lead (16-15), and a 3-pointer by Burks provided a 29-20 cushion.

Missouri answered with a 12-2 run to retake the lead on a 3-pointer by Marcus Denmon. However, the Buffs outscored the visitors 15-2 before the intermission and took a 2-point lead into the locker room.

CU was the aggressor against the aggressive Tigers.

"That was a point of emphasis: Make them pay for pressing," said Higgins, who finished with 18 points and 10 rebounds. "I think this team is better prepared to play against teams like Missouri because we like to run."

The Buffs led by as many as 18 points -- 58-40 after a pair of free throws by Burks with 16:18 remaining -- before Missouri made its final counterpunch and cut the deficit to 79-72 on a three-point play by Denmon with 2:12 remaining.

But Denmon was called for a questionable technical foul for bouncing the ball into CU's bench with 2:06 remaining after Boyle was awarded a timeout during a scramble for the ball.

The Buffs slammed the door on the win from there.

"In this case, I think the biggest thing was experience," Higgins said. "We expect to build on this and compete. This is just the beginning."

This was a heavenly Big 12 start for the Buffs against the "40 minutes of hell" style Missouri tormented them with over the last four years.

Colorado 89, Missouri 76

MISSOURI

FG FT Reb

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

Ratliffe 29 5-8 1-1 4-8 1 1 11

Bowers 31 6-11 3-4 2-7 0 3 15

M Pressey 28 3-10 2-2 1-4 3 3 8

Denmon 33 6-12 1-1 1-2 2 4 14

English 23 2-10 1-2 0-3 2 1 7

P Pressey 9 0-2 0-0 1-1 1 2 0

Kreklow 3 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 1 0

Dixon 25 5-11 6-6 1-4 2 3 17

Safford 15 1-5 2-2 0-2 1 1 4

Moore 4 0-0 0-0 1-1 1 2 0

Totals 200 28-69 16-18 11-33 13 21 76

Percentages: FG .406, FT .889.

3-Point Goals: 4-16, .250 (English 2-5, Dixon 1-3, Denmon 1-4, M. Pressey 0-2, Safford 0-2).

Team Rebounds: 1.

Blocked Shots: 10 (Bowers 8, Ratliffe, English).

Turnovers: 9 (M. Pressey 3, Bowers 2, Dixon, Ratliffe, Denmon, English).

Steals: 8 (P. Pressey 3, Denmon 2, Dixon 2, Bowers).

Technical Fouls: Denmon.

COLORADO

FG FT Reb

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

Dufault 29 6-10 0-0 4-7 0 2 12

Tomlinson 17 0-2 0-1 0-3 0 3 0

Relphorde 37 3-14 2-3 1-5 4 2 8

Burks 34 12-19 9-11 6-8 2 2 36

Higgins 31 6-12 6-6 1-10 4 3 18

Sharpe 11 0-0 0-0 1-1 1 0 0

Coney 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Roberson 13 1-3 0-0 1-4 1 4 2

Knutson 27 5-9 2-2 1-7 2 1 13

Totals 200 33-69 19-23 16-47 14 17 89

Percentages: FG .478, FT .826.

3-Point Goals: 4-11, .364 (Burks 3-3, Knutson 1-2, Higgins 0-1, Dufault 0-1, Tomlinson 0-1, Relphorde 0-3).

Team Rebounds: 2.

Blocked Shots: 5 (Higgins 2, Sharpe, Roberson, Dufault).

Turnovers: 10 (Relphorde 3, Higgins 2, Burks 2, Tomlinson, Sharpe, Knutson).

Steals: 6 (Relphorde 2, Roberson, Burks, Higgins, Tomlinson).

Technical Fouls: None.

Missouri 34 42--76

Colorado 46 43--89

A -- 8,694.

Officials -- Joe DeRosa, Rick Crawford, Warren Evans.

Close Window

Send To Printer

Ringo: CU Buffs' upset offers fans something new -- Hope

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 01/08/2011 06:10:34 PM MST

For years now Colorado basketball fans -- the few, the proud -- have resembled the kid who didn't get any cake at the birthday party, unable to really enjoy the college season because their team simply wasn't competitive.

We're not ready to predict an NCAA Tournament appearance for first-year coach Tad Boyle and his Buffs, but Saturday's inspiring 89-76 triumph over No. 9 Missouri provides an ingredient missing for far too long around this program -- hope.

Consider that the win was only the second in a Big 12 Conference opener for the Buffs in their 15 years in the league. That's a lot of conference seasons started with pouty lips.

Some will be quick to call Saturday's result a fluke. Some will say Missouri had an off day. There might be some truth there, but make no mistake, Colorado not only had the best player on the floor in sophomore Alec Burks, it was the better team in just about every facet of the game from start to finish. Period.

Better game plan, better shot selection, better rebounding, and most surprisingly, better defense against a team known for it.

The Buffs struck me as a hungry group since the start of practices back in October. They should be. Most of them have been through a lot of Saturday afternoons on the wrong side of scores like the one they produced against the Tigers.

But will they continue to be hungry after their first victory over a top-10 team since Feb. 4, 2003 at home against then-No. 3 Texas? Or will they be satisfied like they just devoured Thanksgiving dinner?

"We just had like a little appetizer there if you put it that way," senior Cory Higgins said. "This team is more hungry than I've seen since I've been here. I mean, everybody is two feet in because we know we can do something special, but we know if we're going to do it, we've got to do it together."

So how was Boyle able to beat a top-10 team in his first try at CU?

He showed his team how the Tigers were vulnerable for a week in practice and trusted his players to believe in the plan and stick to it. They were eager to do so because Boyle's approach was so different than what they have tried in recent years under former coach Jeff Bzdelik, who constantly fought the uphill battle trying to control and manage the game by slowing the pace.

This is how Higgins described the difference between that and Boyle's approach:

"They told us to be aggressive and make them pay for pressing," Higgins said. "I think in years past, it was like 'Don't turn the ball over, don't turn the ball over.' This year it was, 'Attack them and don't be afraid.' I don't think anybody was afraid but we were aggressive and made them pay and I think that was a huge difference from years past."

That simple change in philosophy created a dramatic difference in how the Buffs felt before the ball was thrown into the air to start the game. Higgins and Burks, who scored a career-best 36 points, said they came to the Coors Events Center expecting to beat the Tigers.

It's been a long time since anyone on either CU basketball team possessed that kind of confidence with a top-10 team warming up on the other end of the court. Former center David Harrison was probably that last Buff with that kind of bravado.

Backing it up with a victory is bound to have the Buffs coming to the arena feeling good about themselves more often. No one knows how the rest of the season will unfold, but Saturday proved there is finally a reason to pay attention again. The next two months ought to be fun to watch.

"Today at the Coors Events Center is the way we want Saturdays to be in January and February for the Colorado basketball program for years to come," Boyle said. "We want it to be an event where our fans can get excited, our players are ready to play. It was a great win for our program beating a top-10 team."

[Close Window](#)[Send To Printer](#)

CU Buffs' Alec Burks downplays revenge factor against Missouri

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

Posted: 01/08/2011 06:12:25 PM MST



Click on any photo to see full gallery

Alec Burks refused to take the bait when asked if beating Missouri felt extra good.

"It's not really special," Burks said after Colorado's 89-76 victory over No. 9 Missouri on Saturday at the Coors Events Center. "It's special because they're ranked, but every game is a different game. I don't care who it is."

What else would you expect to hear from a Show-Me State kid?

Burks, who is from Grandview, Mo., let his play do all of the talking with a career-high 36 points on 12-for-19 shooting and eight rebounds in 34 minutes.

"He took it to another level offensively," CU head coach Tad Boyle said.

Credit Jeff Bzdelik for sneaking Burks out of the Kansas City area to Boulder. But the former CU head coach didn't have to

battle very hard on the recruiting trail with the Tigers, who did not offer the 6-6 guard a scholarship.

"I thought (Burks) played well. He's a good player, looked like he was an all-league performer today," Missouri head coach Mike Anderson said. "Every time we made a run, he did a good job of making an answer. When you've got a guy from your home state, he's going to take it personal."

Missouri did recruit one of Burks' high school rivals, guard Michael Dixon, who finished with 17 points in 25 minutes.

Burks is projected as a first-round pick in the 2011 NBA draft. In case you were wondering, Chauncey Billups' career-high at CU was 35 points at Nebraska in 1997.

"Just because it's Missouri doesn't mean it has any extra special meaning for me," Burks insisted. "It's just a game to me."

Burks' 36 points were the most for a CU player against Missouri in the Big 12 era. No one has scored more points in any game for the Buffs since D.J. Harrison scored 38 against Austin Peay Nov. 18, 2000 (at a tournament in Alaska).

Ball security

Nate Tomlinson started for the Buffs after sitting out the 92-70 win over Western New Mexico to rest a sore hip. The senior point guard didn't look to be 100 percent and did not score or have an assist in 17 minutes.

Which makes the Buffs' performance against Missouri even more impressive as CU finished with only 10 turnovers. Entering Big 12 play, the Tigers were forcing opponents into an average of 20.1 turnovers.

"Missouri tries to get you on your heels," Boyle said. "The whole key to our game plan was for our players to make decisions when we broke the press, when do we attack and when do we pull back? ... They did a great job making those decisions."

The Tigers only had nine turnovers. CU had forced more turnovers than it committed in 14 of 15 non-conference games with seven single-digit turnover games and 12 or fewer in seven of the previous eight games.

Missouri led the conference in steals (10.3 spg) and was second behind Kansas in assists (18.7 apg) during non-conference play. CU was third in the Big 12 in turnover margin (+4.7) behind Missouri (+6.5) and Iowa State (+4.8).

Eckloff hurt

Trey Eckloff sprained an ankle during Friday's practice and was unable to suit up against Missouri. He was wearing a boot on his left foot.

Boyle isn't sure how long the 6-10 junior will be out. The Buffs didn't miss him on the boards as they out-rebounded Missouri 47-33.

Senior forward Trent Beckley, who rejoined the program on Monday, suited up but did not play.

Series update

Missouri leads the all-time series 95-55, including a 33-31 edge in Boulder.

The Tigers had won the previous eight meetings, the longest winning streak in the series since Missouri won 12 consecutive games from 1979-84.

The series dates back to 1936 and Saturday's game will likely be the last meeting for some time with CU's move to the Pac-12 next season.

Notable

Higgins has made 29 of his last 30 free throws over the past seven games. ... Levi Knutson had a career-high seven rebounds to go with 13 points. ... A handful of NBA scouts were on press row, including three from New Orleans. The Hornets play the Nuggets at the Pepsi Center today. ... About 50 former CU players were recognized at halftime, including Birdie Halderson and Cliff Meely. ... The Buffs are 11-1 when scoring more than 80 points this season and 9-0 when out-rebounding the opposition.

Close Window

Send To Printer

- [News](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Opinion](#)
- [Speak Out!](#)
- [Multimedia](#)

- [Subscribe](#)

Buff's take down ranked Tigers

Colorado opens Big 12 play with victory

By CU Independent on January 8, 2011

Only one other Colorado men's basketball team can boast what this season's squad can now claim with bravado: a win in the Big 12 opening game.

Not since 1997, when the Buffs defeated Nebraska at home, had Colorado relished in a victory in their opening conference match up. But the past remains the past.

On Saturday afternoon, the Buffs (12-4, 1-0 Big 12) handed the No. 9 Tigers (14-2, 0-1 Big 12) only their second loss of the season with an 89-76 win in front of a rowdy crowd of 8,694 at the Coors Events Center.

Snapping their opponent's nine-game winning streak, the Buffs also ended an eight-game losing streak against the Tigers. Colorado now owns five straight victories.

Sophomore guard Alec Burks put on a show for the NBA scouts who were keeping a watchful eye on the talented Missouri native.

"We showed that we could play with anyone in the Big 12, anybody ranked," Burks said after the game. "It's a statement game for us."

Burks scored a career-high 36 points as he went three for three on all 3-point efforts, and was a solid 12 for 19 in field goal attempts. The sophomore was 9 points shy of tying the Colorado record: 47 points scored by Cliff Meely against Oklahoma in 1971.

First year head coach Tad Boyle offered some praise on Burks' offensive showing.

"He took it to another level offensively," Boyle said.

Three other Buffs notched up double-digit points, including junior forward Austin Dufault with 12 and senior guard Levi Knutson with 13.



Senior guard Cory Higgins exhorting the crowd at halftime during the Buffaloes' 89-76 victory over the 9th-ranked Missouri Tigers on Saturday. (CU Independent/Patrick Ghidossi)

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

cu basketball

Burks' 36 points lead CU's upset of No. 9 Missouri

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 01/09/2011 01:00:00 AM MST

Updated: 01/09/2011 01:11:52 AM MST



CU's Alec Burks, who scored a career-high 36 points in the Buffs' 89-76 win over Missouri, maneuvers under the hoop. (Kathryn Scott Osler, The Denver Post)

BOULDER — With gravity-defying moves and a

career-best 36 points, Colorado sophomore guard Alec Burks must have made a statement Saturday to NBA scouts in leading the Buffs to their first victory over a top-10 team in eight years — an 89-76 win over ninth-ranked Missouri in a Big 12 opener.

But what did it mean for the entire Colorado program? More important, what will be the impact from this point forward?

"Some people might have said we had earned respect in past years because we were in almost every game," CU senior guard Cory Higgins said. "But that doesn't matter; you have to win. I'm glad we took a huge step and maybe opened people's eyes in the Big 12."

Colorado first-year coach Tad Boyle hopes there will come a day when a Buffs victory like this won't be considered an upset, at least not an epic one. CU's previous victory over a top-10 team was 93-80 over No. 3 Texas on Feb. 4, 2003, also in Boulder.

Missouri's nine-game winning streak ended, and Colorado earned mention on sports shows nationwide. The Tigers (14-2, 0-1 Big 12) had beaten CU eight straight times, usually by blowout margins.

This afternoon was different. Colorado shot 47.8 percent from the field, outrebounded Missouri's slew of jumping jacks 47-33 and got a double-double of 18 points and 10 rebounds from the 6-foot-5 Higgins. Colorado managed to attack Missouri's full-court press while taking care of

Advertisement



DIRECTV has more of what you want to watch!
Switch today! 1-888-778-0985



Offer ends 2/9/11. Credit card required (except in MA & PA). New approved customers only (lease required). \$19.95 Handling & Delivery fee may apply. Applicable use tax adjustment may apply on the retail value of the installation. Call for details.

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

the basketball. The Buffs committed just 10 turnovers.

Colorado (12-4, 1-0) looked like it belonged. It defeated a top-10 team for the first time in 20 meetings.

"Today is the way we want Saturdays to be in the Coors Events Center on January and February for the Colorado basketball program for years to come," Boyle said.

"Belief is a big thing. I know I believed coming into the game that we could beat Missouri. You try to convey that to your players. But until you get in those situations, you don't know. I thought our guys handled it well."

Colorado led almost the entire game — except for the opening three minutes and then late in the first half when a 3-pointer by junior guard Marcus Denmon capped a 12-2 run to put the Tigers up 32-31. A fall-away jumper by Burks along the baseline put the Buffs back up and ignited a 15-2 tear to finish the first half.

Previous Colorado teams appeared to run away from Missouri's press. Boyle, who coaches an up-tempo style, had convinced his players that they could take advantage of the Tigers' baseline-to-baseline pressure by breaking free for easy baskets. CU's spacing was excellent. Its ballhandlers were rarely trapped.

"Missouri tries to get you on your heels," Boyle said. "You have to make good decisions against that."

Burks, who entered the game averaging 19.1 points, looked as free and relaxed as if he were back on the playgrounds trying to beat fellow Kansas City, Mo., area products Denmon and Missouri sophomore Michael Dixon (team-high 17 points) off the dribble.

Missouri did not recruit Burks, but the springy 6-6 guard dismissed any revenge motive, saying he did not grow up a fan of Missouri or of any particular team.

"The only thing important to me is that we beat a top-10 team," Burks said.

Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or tkensler@denverpost.com

Advertisement

Get a **FREE** ADT-Monitored Home Security System.*

(With \$99 customer installation and purchase of ADT alarm monitoring services. See important terms and conditions below.)

*\$99.00 Customer Installation Charge. 36-Month Monitoring Agreement required at \$35.99 per month (\$1,295.64). Form of payment must be by credit card or electronic charge to your checking or savings account. Offer applies to homeowners only. Local permit fees may be required. Satisfactory credit history required. Certain restrictions apply. Offer valid for new SecurityChoice - An ADT Authorized Dealer customers only and not on purchases from ADT Security Services, Inc. Other rate plans available. Cannot be combined with any other offer. **\$100 VISA® Gift Card Offer: \$100 VISA Gift Card is provided by SecurityChoice and is not sponsored by ADT Security Services. Requires mail-in redemption. Call 1-888-407-2338 for complete restrictions and redemption requirements.

Call Now!

1-877-835-8373

**SECURITY
CHOICE**
ADT Authorized Company



Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

tom kensler

Kensler: CU's Boyle knows how conference play changes things

By Tom Kensler*The Denver Post* **Tom Kensler***covers college basketball. Contact: 303-954-1280 or tkensler@denverpost.com*

Posted: 01/09/2011 01:00:00 AM MST

This weekend gave Colorado men's basketball coach Tad Boyle his first taste of the Big 12, but Boyle had been through conference meat grinders before — as an assistant in the Pac-10, Southeastern Conference and Missouri Valley, and while leading Northern Colorado into the Big Sky.

League play, Boyle said, is a different animal. Coaches everywhere agree. Many began their conference schedule last week.

"The price of poker goes up," Boyle said. "It doesn't matter what league you're in. Big leagues, small leagues, it's all the same."

Typically, conference games are more physical, Boyle explained. The effort-and-emotion meter

cranks up. Crowds go crazy with every basket, every turnover.

"It becomes harder to score," Boyle said. "We're averaging 80-plus points per game. I hope we can continue to do that, but it's going to get harder for us to score against Big 12 teams. Because of that, we're going to have to make it harder for our opponents to score as well."

CU sophomore guard Alec Burks said teams are scouted so well by conference opponents, "when you're on the court, it's like they know what you're going to do before you do it."

There's more on the line in a conference game and players feel it, Kansas coach Bill Self pointed out.

"It means more when you're playing for a trophy," Self said last week on the Big 12 teleconference. "There's pride, rivalries. You're playing for a lot of different things. The intensity level goes way up."

"It's what you play for, what you prepare for. It's like a new season. And everybody feels like they have a chance."

Glimpse into the future.

As recruiting analysts expected, Colorado signee Spencer Dinwiddie is having a breakout senior season for Taft High in Los Angeles. The 6-foot-4 point guard is averaging 11.1 points and team bests of 7.2 assists and 3.6 steals. The latter two stats rank among the top in the West (San

Advertisement



Send flowers for any occasion

Bouquets \$19.99
from **\$19.99** +s/h

ProFlowers

Order ONLY at
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1-877-888-0688

Print Powered By  **FormatDynamics™**

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

Fernando) Valley League. He also is hitting 42 percent of his 3-pointers.

Playing with several Division I-bound teammates last season, Dinwiddie averaged a modest seven points and five assists. Still, he attracted early offers from the likes of Oregon and UNLV, in addition to CU.

Taft High is more famous for producing baseball players (including Robin Yount and Larry Dierker), football players (Jeff Fisher, Steve Smith), actors (Jason Bateman, Lisa Kudrow) and rappers (Ice Cube, Everlast) than basketball players. But perhaps Dinwiddie, ranked a national top-150 prospect by HoopScoop, can join Jordan Farmar as notable hoopster alumni.

Dinwiddie ought to be a thinking man's playmaker. He received an offer from Harvard.

It's a good sign.

That the improving University of Denver women's basketball team won a Sun Belt Conference road game last week against Western Kentucky without getting a point from Pioneers senior guard Britteni Rice, who had an off night.

Rice has averaged 14 points since the beginning of her junior season and was a second- team all-league selection for 2009-10.

This and that.

The second- and third-round sessions of the 2011 men's NCAA Tournament at the Pepsi

Center are sold out, but fans might want to circle Wednesday, March 16, on their calendar. That's the date of the open practices for all eight teams. . . . The University of Denver's overtime victory last Sunday over the Arkansas-Little Rock men's team marked the first OT win for the Pioneers since Joe Scott's first game as DU coach: 76-75 over East Central (Okla.) on Nov. 11, 2007. . . . Who could have imagined that three of the Big 12's top freshmen are Canadians: The Texas duo of forward Tristan Thompson and Cory Joseph, and Iowa State forward Melvin Ejim. Thompson and Joseph were McDonald's All-Americans. Ejim picked ISU over Boston College and Xavier. All three played high school ball in the United States.

Advertisement



Send flowers for any occasion

Bouquets \$19.99
from ^{+s/h} 19.99

ProFlowers

Order ONLY at
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1-877-888-0688

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

mark kizla

Kiszla: CU's Burks almost Chauncey-esque

By Mark Kiszla
The Denver Post

Posted: 01/09/2011 01:00:00 AM MST

Updated: 01/09/2011 01:09:25 AM MST

BOULDER — Sorry, Chauncey Billups. There's a new Mr. Big Shot in town.

And it's about time, don't you think? The nobodies formerly known as the CU basketball team finally have a name worth remembering: Alec Burks.

After single-handedly beating Missouri 89-76 to lead the Buffaloes to their first victory over a team ranked in the top 10 since 2003, Burks signed autographs under a mural of Billups that towers 25 feet high at the Coors Events Center.

"It was a statement game for us," Burks said Saturday.

The 6-foot-6 sophomore guard is the biggest thing to happen to CU hoops since Billups departed 14 years ago for the NBA.

Burks scored 36 points, more than Billups ever tallied in a CU uniform, to upset ninth-ranked Missouri.

And to think: The Tigers never offered a scholarship to Burks, who played high school basketball down the road from Columbia, Mo.

But know what's even more stupefying? Jeff Bzdelik walked out on Burks to take a job at Wake Forest, where the new Demon Deacons coach has made himself miserable by losing to Presbyterian and Stetson.

Burks, however, is now learning from a better college coach in Tad Boyle. Boyle has made the 12-4 Buffs think they don't necessarily have to endure one more brutal winter and slink out of the Big 12 Conference during their last season in the league.

"I think belief is something right now with our program and players that we have to cultivate right now, because you don't know if it is there, or if it is not there," Boyle said.

Late in the second half, with what once had been an 18-point advantage shrinking and their confidence waning, the Buffs were stuck with one second remaining on the shot clock and an inbounds play for Boyle to draw up in the CU huddle.

He did what any smart coach does. Boyle got the ball in the hands of the best player on the floor, stood back and watched as Burks sank a turnaround jump shot that gave Colorado a 77-

Advertisement



DIRECTV has more of what you want to watch!
Switch today! 1-888-778-0985



Offer ends 2/9/11. Credit card required (except in MA & PA). New approved customers only (lease required). \$19.95 Handling & Delivery fee may apply. Applicable use tax adjustment may apply on the retail value of the installation. Call for details.

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

67 lead with 2 minutes, 47 seconds remaining in the conference-opener for both teams.

"I just threw it up, and it happened to go in. Sometimes it's your day, and sometimes it's not," Burks said.

It was all over except the bellyaching by Missouri coach Mike Anderson, who spent the rest of the game blaming the referees. For what? Not recruiting Burks?

Burks possesses the talent of a bona fide first-round draft choice in the NBA.

He is strong enough on the dribble to neutralize a pressing defense that is Missouri's trademark. Burks slashes to the rim with the ferocity that will earn the respect of Kevin Garnett and every other shot-blocker at the next level. The CU guard can hit jumpers that turn any arena into a convention of slack jaws.

Boyle has a weapon that gives him instant credibility against Bill Self of Kansas and every coach in the league. During most league games, nobody will have a good matchup answer for Burks.

"It's a huge advantage," Boyle said, "especially when you can get the ball in his hands and he can make a play. Finding the balance is the key for us. When does (Burks) go and take it upon himself, when does he get his teammates the ball, because you can't beat anybody with just one guy. He is going to have to make good decisions."

It's a huge responsibility. How — or if — the Buffaloes figure in NCAA Tournament bracketology will be left almost entirely to Burks.

The NBA can wait, especially with the very real prospect of a labor dispute that could lead to a lengthy work stoppage next season.

The NCAA tourney will be making an appearance in Denver later this year.

By that time, there could be a real serious outbreak of March Madness throughout the state of Colorado, thanks to Burks.

Mark Kiszla: 303-954-1053 or mkiszla@denverpost.com

Advertisement



Send flowers for any occasion

Bouquets \$19.99
from ^{+s/h}19.99

ProFlowers

Order ONLY at
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1-877-888-0688

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

[Print page](#)[Close window](#)

Longmont, Colorado
Sunday, January 09, 2011

Publish Date: 1/9/2011

Colorado makes bold statement with big victory over ninth-ranked Missouri

By Brian Howell
© 2011 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Judging by the rankings, their history — and, honestly, in just about every other way — the University of Colorado's 89-76 win over Missouri on Saturday was an upset.

Yet, even after he scored 18 points and pulled down 10 rebounds in the Buffs' win over the ninth-ranked Tigers, Cory Higgins wasn't shocked.

"It feels great, but we expected to win this game," Higgins said. "That's the way we have been preparing, and it really felt great to execute the game plan and have it show up on the scoreboard."

Alec Burks scored a career-high 36 points, Higgins posted his third career double-double and CU (12-4, 1-0 in the Big 12) controlled the Tigers (14-2, 0-1) nearly all afternoon.

"Everybody wanted to test them out to see what they really are," Burks said. "Missouri is a great team, but I feel like we just played our game, and that's how we got the win."

Although he expected it, Higgins has been around Boulder long enough to know this was no small feat. CU had lost 19 straight against top-10 teams, dating back to an upset of No. 3 Texas on Feb. 4, 2003. The Buffs, in their 15th and final Big 12 season, had not won their Big 12 opener since 1996-97 — the conference's inaugural season. CU also had lost eight in a row against Missouri, including six in a row since Higgins joined the team in 2007.

"I think it would be No. 1," Higgins said when asked to rank the win. "It's the biggest win we've had since I have been here. This is my best memory so far. Hopefully, it's one of many more to come this year."

The Buffs believe it will be. They viewed Saturday as a statement game.

"It's great," Burks said. "It shows that we're a different team from last year. It shows that we can play against anybody in the Big 12, anybody ranked."

To the rest of the Big 12, coach Tad Boyle said the win sends this message: "When you come in here, you better be ready to play. We're going to be ready to play. When you beat a top-10 team, it's going to wake some people up, especially when you're not; we're not even ranked."

To the Buffs, it sent the message that they can beat good teams. After four



Colorado's Nate Tomlinson greets fans Saturday after his team's win over Missouri at the Coors Events Center. **Lewis Geyer/Times-Call**

Colorado 89, Missouri 76

at Coors Events Center

MISSOURI (14-2, 0-1)

Ratliffe 5-8 1-1 11, Bowers 6-11 3-4 15, M. Pressey 3-10 2-2 8, Denmon 6-12 1-1 14, English 2-10 1-2 7, P. Pressey 0-2 0-0 0, Kreklow 0-0 0-0 0, Dixon 5-11 6-6 17, Safford 1-5 2-2 4, Moore 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 28-69 16-18 76.

COLORADO (12-4, 1-0)

Dufault 6-10 0-0 12, Tomlinson 0-2 0-1 0, Relphorde 3-14 2-3 8, Burks 12-19 9-11 36, Higgins 6-12 6-6 18, Sharpe 0-0 0-0 0, Coney 0-0 0-0 0, Roberson 1-3 0-0 2, Knutson 5-9 2-2 13. Totals 33-69 19-23 89.

Missouri

3442—76

Colorado

4643—89

3-Point goals — Missouri 4-16 (M. Pressey 0-2, Denmon 1-4, English 2-5, Dixon 1-3, Safford 0-2), Colorado 4-11 (Dufault 0-1, Tomlinson 0-1, Relphorde 0-3, Burks 3-3, Higgins 0-

consecutive losing seasons, this type of win was exactly what the Buffs needed.

"I think belief is something with our program, with our players, that we have to cultivate right now — because I don't know if it is there, or if it is not there," said Boyle, in his first season at CU. "As a coach, you try and instill that in them. I know that I believed coming into this game that we could beat Missouri. You try and convey that to your players, but until you get into those situations, you don't know. I thought our guys handled it well."

1, Knutson 1-2). Rebounds — Missouri 33 (Ratliffe 8, Bowers 7), Colorado 47 (Higgins 10, Burks 8, Dufault 7, Knutson 7). Assists — Missouri 13 (M. Pressey 3), Colorado 14 (Relphorde 4, Higgins 4). Steals — Missouri 8 (P. Pressey 3), Colorado 6 (Relphorde 2). Total Fouls — Missouri 21, Colorado 17. Fouled Out — None. Technical Fouls — Denmon. A-8,694.

The Buffs and Tigers — both among the top seven scoring teams in the country coming in — traded baskets early on. Missouri led 15-14 when Andre Roberson scored on a tip to give the Buffs their first lead with 14:26 to play in the first half. CU trailed just one other time — by a single point, for all of 26 seconds — the rest of the way.

CU finished the first half on an 11-0 run, holding Missouri without a point in the final 3:29, to take a 46-34 lead at the break.

"We didn't do a good job defensively, and I think that showed early on, which enabled them to get a 12-point lead at halftime," Missouri head coach Mike Anderson said. "I thought the game was pretty tough. It was (35-34, in favor of CU), and I think we lost our composure there a little bit."

In the first half, CU out-rebounded the Tigers by four, held the Tigers to 38.5 percent shooting and committed just two turnovers.

Halftime didn't do anything to cool off the Buffs. They stretched their lead to 18 points midway through the second half. Overall, they out-rebounded Missouri by 14, held the Tigers to 40.6 percent shooting and committed just 10 turnovers.

"I think experience was the biggest thing in being able to keep that lead," Higgins said. "(Having a let-down in the second half) is always in the back of our head, but at the same time, we were just focused as a team to just keep doing what we were doing and made the commitment to each other not to stop defending. As long as we were doing that, I was confident."

CU never did let up. Even when Missouri made a couple of threats, getting to within seven at one point in the final few minutes, CU responded.

In short, CU did everything Higgins knew his team could do. That's why he expected Saturday's outcome.

"When we play as a unit and play together, we feel we can beat anybody in the country," he said. "When we play defense together, we are hard to beat, especially on the offensive end; we have too many weapons out there. We felt like we were a better team."

They certainly were on Saturday. And, with 15 Big 12 games still to play, the Buffs hope this was a springboard to more success.

"It's huge, especially against a top-10 team," Higgins said. "It's huge because it'll open a lot of people's eyes around the Big 12. We're not going to stop what we do. We expect to build on this. This isn't a peak; this is just the beginning."

Brian Howell can be reached at bhowell@times-call.com.

[Print page](#)[Close window](#)

Longmont, Colorado
Sunday, January 09, 2011

Publish Date: 1/9/2011

Burks hits whole new level in win

By Brian Howell
© 2011 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — There have been plenty of times in his 46 games at Colorado that Alec Burks has proven to be a great player.

On Saturday, Burks was remarkable. He scored a career-high 36 points and pulled down eight rebounds in CU's 89-76 upset of No. 9 Missouri.

Burks' 36 points tie for the 16th-most in a single game in CU history; it was the third-best scoring performance for a CU player in the Big 12 era (since 1996).

"He took it to another level offensively," head coach Tad Boyle said. "It's a big advantage (having a great player on the court). Especially when you can get the ball in his hands and he can make a play."

Burks scored in a variety of ways against the Tigers. He hit a career-best three 3-pointers. He got a fast-break dunk. He scored on put-backs. He scored on jumpers.

Burks even scored on a sensational turn-around jumper with the shot-clock winding down late in the game. That came after Missouri had scored five in a row to cut CU's lead to eight with less than 3 minutes to go.

"I just threw it up and it happened to go in," he said. "Sometimes it's your day and sometimes it's not."

Saturday was most certainly Burks' day. He had 20 points in the first half alone and attacked Missouri's defense from the start.

"I try to start out every game aggressive," he said. "Every time I step on the court, I want to be aggressive. It wasn't anything new. It's the same game every game."

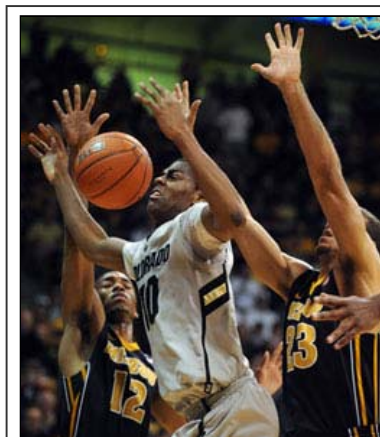
"Seeing shots go in that you work on, it's a great feeling."

Burks' previous career-high was 29 points against San Francisco last month. His previous best in Big 12 play was 27 against Missouri last year. Burks insists that playing against Missouri provided no extra motivation.

"Just because it's Missouri doesn't mean it has any extra meaning for me," said Burks, who grew up in Grandview, Mo., about two hours from the Missouri campus in Columbia. "It's just a game to me."

BALL CONTROL: Coming into the day, Missouri was No. 1 in the Big 12 in creating turnovers (20.1 per game). CU came in having committed the fewest turnovers in the league (10.9 per game).

CU had just 10 turnovers overall, including two in the first half.



The University of Colorado's Alec Burks is fouled underneath the basket in the first half against Missouri on Saturday at the Coors Events Center. Burks finished with a career-high 36 points, leading the Buffaloes to an 89-76 win. **Lewis Geyer/Times-Call**

“Taking care of the ball was number one on our offense. Handle their pressure and take care of the basketball,” Boyle said.

Not many teams had been able to do that against Missouri because of Missouri’s intense pressure on defense. Only one of Missouri’s first 15 opponents had less than 16 turnovers (20th-ranked Illinois had 13).

CU’s Cory Higgins said Missouri’s pressure defense played into the Buffs’ hands.

“I think this team is better prepared to play against teams like Missouri because we like to run,” Higgins said. “They’re just giving us opportunities to run every time they pressed. Every time they pressed, our eyes lit up, so eventually they had to get out of it for a little bit.”

GOOD FORMULA: Missouri came in ranking fifth in the country in scoring (85.6 points per game). CU held the Tigers to 9.6 points below that average.

The Buffs also out-rebounded the Tigers 47-33.

“We hold them to 40 percent (shooting); we outrebound them by 14,” Boyle said. “If we do that, we’re going to give ourselves a chance to win every game, home or the road. If we defend and we rebound, you’ve got a chance. It doesn’t mean you’re going to win them all, but you’ve got a chance to win them all and that’s what you want to do.”

TIP-INS: Burks has nine 20-point games this season. He had eight last year. ... CU had lost 13 straight Big 12 openers. ... The Buffs are 9-1 in their last 10 games.

Brian Howell can be reached at bhowell@times-call.com.

[01/12](#) Top 25 [1/12 @KSU 9:00pm](#)
[01/15 @TA&M 1:00pm](#) [01/15 OKST 1:30pm](#)
[01/17 KSU 5:30pm](#) [01/18 @NEB 7:00pm](#)
[01/22 ISU 9:00pm](#) [01/22 @OKLA 1:30pm](#)
[01/29 @TEX 9:00pm](#) [01/25 KU 8:00pm](#)
 Complete Schedule: [Missouri](#) | [Colorado](#)

Big 12 Conference Standings

TEAM	CONF W-L	TOTAL W-L
#16 Texas A&M	1-0	0 14-1
Nebraska	1-0	• Final 13-2
Oklahoma State	1-0	- 13-2
Baylor	1-0	5 11-3
Colorado	1-0	MAKO 12-4
#3 Kansas	0-0	PITT 11-0
#12 Texas	0-0	81 12-3
#8 Missouri	0-1	89 14-2
Iowa State	0-1	81 13-3
#17 Kansas State	0-1	1 12-4
Oklahoma	0-1	• Final 8-7
Texas Tech	0-1	- 8-8
View expanded standings		

Associated Press

BOULDER, Colo. -- The [Colorado Buffaloes](#) broke Missouri's press and also the Tigers' stranglehold on their one-sided series.

Super sophomore [Alec Burks](#), from suburban Kansas City, scored a career-high 36 points and the Buffaloes upset Missouri 89-76 in their final Big 12 opener.

The Buffaloes (12-4, 1-0), who join the expanded Pac-12 next season, snapped a streak of 13 straight losses in conference openers with their first win over Missouri (No. 8 ESPN/USA Today, No. 9 AP) in nearly five years.

Fast Facts



- [Final](#) OT
- Alec Burks scored 20 of his career-high 36 points in the first half and Cory Higgins and Austin Dufault recorded double-doubles for Colorado.
- The Buffaloes won for the first time in their last nine meetings with Missouri.
- Colorado remained perfect at home at [TX](#) and extended its current win streak to five games.
- Missouri had a nine-game win streak that snapped with the defeat.


-- ESPN Stats & Information

"It shows that we're a different team from last year. It shows that we can play with anybody in the Big 12, anybody ranked," said Burks, whose previous career best was a 29-point effort at San Francisco on Nov. 20. "It's a statement game for us."

The Tigers (14-2, 0-1) had won nine straight overall and nine in a row against the Buffaloes, whose last win over a top-10 team came against third-ranked Texas in 2003.

"It feels great, but we expected to win this game," insisted senior point guard [Cory Higgins](#), who scored 18 points and tied his career high with 10 boards. "We know when we play as a unit, we play together, we feel like we can beat anybody in the country. When we play defense together, we're hard beat. And especially on the offensive end, we have too many weapons out there. I mean, we felt like we were the better team."

Most opponents don't take it to Missouri like the Buffs did when they kept breaking the press and aggressively pushing the pace against one of the most athletic teams in the country.

[Score](#) Top 25  "lacking us, more than anything else," Tigers coach Mike Anderson said.

Colorado coach Tad Boyle said Missouri tries "to get you on your heels," so the key was breaking the press and then his players knowing when to attack and when to pull back and make the Tigers play more defense.

"You've got to make them pay for pressing," Higgins said. "I think this team is better prepared this year to play teams like Missouri because we like to run. And they're just giving us opportunities to run every time they press. Every time they pressed, our eyes lit up, so eventually they had to get out of it for a little bit."

By pushing the pace, the Buffs capitalized on their altitude advantage.

"The main thing when you see them huffing and puffing like that is keep sprinting harder up and down, rim to rim," said Colorado forward [Austin Dufault](#), who scored 12. • [Final](#)

The Buffs took control early on behind Burks and a solid supporting cast that included [Levi Knutson](#) with 13 points and Dufault's 12.

The Buffaloes led by 12 at the half and were up 18 early in the second half before the Tigers, who were led by [Michael Dixon Jr.](#)'s 17 points, charged back, pulling to 79-72 with two minutes left on [Marcus Denmon](#)'s three-point play.

Missouri, which was outrebounded 47-33, couldn't get any closer.

With 20 first-half points, Burks surpassed his season average of 19 points by halftime. He sparked two separate 15-2 runs in the first half, the second one which led to a 46-34 lead at the break.

"Every time we made a run, he did a good job of making an answer," Anderson said. "When you've got a guy from our home state, he's going to take it personal."

Not so fast, Burks said.

"It's special because they're ranked, but every game is a different game," he said. "I don't care who it is. Just because it's Missouri doesn't mean it has any extra meaning for me."

The lead was eight when the Burks got the inbounds with 1 second on the shot clock, spun and swished a basket that made it 77-67.

"Sometimes it's your day," Burks said.

And this day certainly was his.

Game notes

Anderson said junior F [Laurence Bowers](#) was stopped for a traffic violation in Columbia, Mo., on Friday and was cited for having another person's ID. He won't be suspended. ... Burks tied a season high with 8 rebounds.

Copyright by STATS LLC and The Associated Press



Internet Explorer cannot display the webpage

What you can try:

[Diagnose Connection Problems](#)

[More information](#)

- MyESPN
- [NFL](#)
- [MLB](#)
- [NBA](#)
- [NHL](#)
- [NCAA FB](#)
- [NCAA BB](#)



Posted on Sat, Jan. 08, 2011

Colorado outplays No. 9 MU 89-76

By MIKE DeARMOND
The Kansas City Star

BOULDER, Colo. | Colorado outhustled, outrebounded and out-and-out beat ninth-ranked Missouri 89-76 on Saturday. And there was nothing technical about that.

"They just beat us at our own game," MU's Laurence Bowers said.

But a technical foul called against Marcus Denmon for tossing a ball too hard at referee Rick Crawford did coincide with the Tigers' last chance to reverse the outcome.

Missouri trailed 79-72 when Denmon and Michael Dixon double-teamed Colorado's Cory Higgins. Denmon and Higgins hit the floor in front of the Colorado bench, battling for possession of the ball.

Colorado was screaming for a timeout and Crawford gave it. When Denmon got up and threw the ball to Crawford, the official called a technical.

"I just tossed the ref the ball," Denmon said. "I saw the replay. I didn't throw it hard or anything. I just tossed it to him."

Colorado's Alec Burks, a sophomore guard from Grandview who scored a career-high 36 points, made one of two free throws and then hit a jumper on the next possession from inside the key for an 82-72 lead.

And with 1 minute, 39 seconds left on the clock at the Coors Events Center, the game was over.

Denmon said he said nothing to Crawford. Dixon, who led Missouri with 17 points off the bench, concurred.

"He didn't say anything," Dixon said. "He just gave him the ball and ran off."

Missouri coach Mike Anderson added: "I thought it was a bad tech. I thought it was. That's the bottom line."

But Anderson, Dixon, Denmon and Bowers all admitted the major concern of the day was that Colorado played faster and better than Missouri for an entire afternoon in which Colorado ended a 13-game losing streak in Big 12 Conference openers.

"It was a case of outhustling and outquicking," Bowers said, "because a lot of the loose balls we ended up not with them."

"We'd block a shot, and they would get the ball and put it right back in. That was real frustrating. That just makes you know how the day was going to go."

Anderson saw it that way as well.

"They did a good job of attacking us, more than anything else," Anderson said. "A lot of people run with us. I thought they did a good job of attacking us."

No one attacked Missouri like Burks. He scored 20 points in the first half, when Colorado, 12-4 overall and 1-0 in the Big 12, roared to a 46-34 lead at the break.

"It's special because they're ranked," Burks said. "Just because it's Missouri doesn't mean it has any extra meaning for me."

"It shows that we are a different team from last year, that we can play against anybody in the Big 12 and anybody ranked. It's a statement game for us."

Missouri, 14-2 and 0-1, was leading 32-31 in the first half when Burks drove the middle of the lane, hung and twisted to throw up a shot, and then not only made it but also the free throw he earned from being fouled. That kicked off a 15-2 Colorado run ending the half.

After Denmon pulled the Tigers within 75-67 with 3:25 to play, Burks caught an inbounds pass, twisted, launched and swished a jumper from near the right corner, all with only 1 second left on the shot clock.

At that point it seemed obvious that a Missouri roster filled with Kansas City-area players — Denmon, Dixon, Steve Moore and Jarrett Sutton — would have benefited from having one more in Burks.

“He looked like an all-league performer today,” Anderson said. “Every time we made a run he did a good job of making an answer.

“On the road there are a lot of things you’ve got to do well. We didn’t do those things well.”

To reach Mike DeArmond, call 816-234-4353 or send e-mail to mdearmond@kcstar.com

© 2011 Kansas City Star and wire service sources. All Rights Reserved. <http://www.kansascity.com>

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Burks leads Colorado past Missouri men's basketball team

By [Ben Frederickson](#)

January 8, 2011 | 5:39 p.m. CST

The



Colorado guard Alec Burks shoots over Missouri guard Phil Pressey in the Buffaloes' 89-76 victory Saturday over the No.9 Tigers. | Jack Dempsey/The Associated Press

Missouri men's basketball team was coming back. The Tigers had cut Colorado's lead to seven points with two minutes left to play. Michael Dixon beat a clenched fist against his chest, and a

feeling started brewing that Missouri was on the verge of a run. Alec Burks had different plans.

Colorado's leading scorer had been quiet in the second half compared to his outstanding performance in the first. But when it mattered most, the player from Grandview, Mo., made the big shots to help his team defeat Missouri 89-76 on Saturday at the Coors Event Center in Boulder, Colo.

"How about Alec Burks?" Missouri coach Mike Anderson said in his postgame radio interview.

"You always wonder about those when they're from your home state. They want to make sure you know."

Burks played the leading role in Colorado's two 15-2 runs in the first half, scoring 20 of his 36 total points in the period.

He seemed unguardable. Against the smaller Marcus Denmon, he could fade away, shooting over him. When Laurence Bowers stepped out to guard him, he dribbled hard one direction then crossed over, creating enough separation to loft another soon to be swished 3-pointer over Bowers' outstretched arms. Matt Pressey tried too, but the outcome was the same. Burks kept scoring.

"It seemed like every time we had a run, he would make a big play or a big bucket for them," Anderson said.

When the lead was cut to seven with two minutes left, Marcus Denmon was called for a technical foul. Colorado had called a timeout. Denmon didn't think the Colorado player had possession. He reared his arm back like he was going to slam the ball off the ground, but then decided against it. He tossed the ball off to his side and got up, jogging toward his team's huddle when the referee blew his whistle, signaling the technical.

"I'm still kind of mystified by that there," Anderson said.

Burks stepped to the line and made one of the two free throws. Because of the foul, Colorado got the ball back, and Burks made up for the earlier miss by milking the shot clock down and sinking a jump shot.

Colorado hadn't won a Big 12 Conference opener in 13 tries. But, this wasn't the old Colorado. Missouri was outplayed by its own style on Saturday.

"It's obvious that they almost beat us at our own game," Bowers said by phone.

“They weren’t pressing or anything, but as far as getting it back at you that’s what they had going for them, and they didn’t go away from it. They were coming up with every loose ball. It seems like there were times I blocked a shot, and they would end up getting the ball and sticking it right back in the hole. That just shows you what kind of day it was.”

Missouri was outrebounded 47-33 by Colorado.

“We got outscrapped,” Bowers said.

Missouri started out well, with Ricardo Ratliffe scoring six of the team’s first eight points, but then Burks started taking over.

“I think if we could have contained him a little better than we did, then the game would have been totally different. I think the guys on his team jumped on his back once he got it going,” Bowers said.

If Burks was trying to get the attention of the team from his home state, his mission was accomplished.



(1) More Photos

Related Stories

- Related: No. 8 UConn wins at No. 12 Texas in OT
- Related: Syracuse stays undefeated
- Related: Moser leads SLU while Majerus is out
- Related: Women's basketball roundup

Related Links

- Related: Box score: Colorado 89, Missouri 76
- Related: Photo gallery: Mizzou, Colorado
- Related: Mizzou Talk: Fans sound off

BOULDER, COLO. • In the grand scheme, anyway, Mizzou's disjointed 89-76 loss at Colorado on Saturday at the Coors Events Center needn't be interpreted as a sign of the apocalypse.

At least not automatically.

Two years ago, after all, the Tigers lost their Big 12 opener at Nebraska and went on to an NCAA Tournament regional final.

And with 15 conference games to play, as Mizzou guard Michael Dixon put it, "We're ... in no danger or anything like that, but it's definitely a wake-up call."

A resounding one, though, that ended Mizzou's eight-game winning streak against Colorado and promptly snuffed out MU's best start to a season since 1989-90.

"This right here just kind of brought us back down to reality," MU forward Laurence Bowers said.

In a sense, that reality may have been tempered by legitimate notions that Mizzou didn't play its best and was sabotaged by a technical foul that effectively doused its last comeback chance in the final minutes.

"Hopefully, we learned a valuable lesson today," MU coach Mike Anderson said. "You've got to bring it in order to get it."

Still, it was unclear to what degree Mizzou was lethargic and to what degree Colorado simply was the better team, at least at home and on this day.

"I think it was a case of (Colorado) outhustling and out-quicking" us, said Bowers, who had eight blocked shots.

In muzzling Mizzou (14-2), the Buffs beat a top 10 team for the first time in 20 outings since 2003, ended a 13-game losing streak in Big 12 openers (in its last Big 12 opener before leaving for the future Pac 12) and improved to 12-4.

"We want to be the 'new Colorado,'" first-year coach Tad Boyle said.

Said CU guard Alec Burks, who riddled the Tigers with 36 points, "It's a statement game for us."

And at least for the moment a statement about MU, which suffered its season's-worst rebounding margin (47-33) against a team that was only plus-3.7 in nonconference play, forced a season-low turnovers (10) and hit just 40.6 percent from the field against the 11th-worst defense in the league (.436 average).

Most glaringly, the Tigers had no rebuttals for Burks, the sophomore from Grandview, Mo., near Kansas City, who was not offered a scholarship by MU.

"When you get a guy from the home state," MU coach Mike Anderson said, "they're going to take it personal."

Whatever his impetus, with 20 points in the first half he staked the Buffs to a 46-34 halftime lead. And time and again in the second half, he was the one fending off MU advances, scoring 12 points in the final 4:20.

In the second half, the Tigers didn't nibble the deficit below 10 until Marcus Denmon's jumper with 3:29 left cut it to 75-67, which Burks followed with a preposterous baseline jumper off an inbound pass thrown with one second left on the shot clock, and two free throws on the next possession.

But Denmon came back with a three-point play to make it 79-72, and Mizzou was on the verge of forcing the issue before Denmon was called for a technical with 2 minutes, 6 seconds left.

"I thought we had a streak going right there," Bowers said, "and that kind of killed it."

Near the CU bench, Dixon and Denmon tried to trap CU's Cory Higgins, who had fallen down with the ball when the Colorado bench was granted a timeout.

Denmon and Dixon said Denmon had his hands on the ball, too. If so, the timeout shouldn't have been allowed and a jump ball called.

Although Denmon acknowledged he was frustrated, Denmon, Dixon and Bowers said that he said nothing. If not, he apparently was T'd for bouncing the ball instead of handing it to the official as he ran to the MU bench.

"I saw the replay; I didn't really throw it hard, I just tossed it to him," Denmon said, adding, "I mean, yeah, I was surprised. I didn't think I did nothing to get it."

Asked if the call was explained to him, Anderson said, "I thought it was a bad tech. I thought it was. That's the bottom line."

Burks then hit one of two free throws to make it 80-72 and finished the sequence with a jumper to make it 82-72 with 1:40 to go.

The Tigers never got back within 10, leaving them 0-5 since the inception of the Big 12 when they open the conference season on the road. Where it leaves them this time remains to be seen.

"If this team is the team I think it's going to be ... we'll learn from it," Anderson said, "and we'll learn hopefully in a mighty way."

Tiger Tales

Guard Phil Pressey, out since Dec. 19 with a broken bone in his right hand, returned and had three steals in nine minutes. ... Anderson said Bowers was being disciplined internally after being ticketed Friday for possession of false identification during a traffic stop. Anderson said Bowers would not be suspended.

Copyright 2011 www.STLtoday.com. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Posted in Mizzou on *Sunday, January 9, 2011 12:00 am* Updated: 4:05 pm. | Tags: Vahe Gregorian, Mizzou, Missouri, Mike Anderson, Laurence Bowers, Michael Dixon,

[Print Email](#)

Similar Stories

- Megadonors wield big influence at Oregon, Auburn
- No. 8 UConn wins at No. 12 Texas in OT
- Colorado upends Mizzou
- Mizzou DE Smith declares for NFL draft
- MU, Colorado figure to play up-tempo
- LSU tops Texas A&M in Cotton Bowl
- Soderberg's team loaded at Lindenwood