



CU's bench comes to life in the final seconds of Wednesday's win over Iowa State.
Photo Courtesy: Associated Press



03/09/2011 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

Brooks: Riding Burks' Big Day, Buffs Stay In NCAA Picture

KANSAS CITY, Mo. - When it was over, when Alec Burks' supreme second-half takeover was done, this was Tad Boyle's only definitive take on Colorado's NCAA Tournament chances: If Wednesday's first-round Big 12 Conference tournament game against Iowa State had ended any other way, his take wouldn't be needed.

BUFFALO EXTRAS

 **Game Nores #33: vs. Kansas State**

But for good reason, Boyle is beginning to believe that because of Burks and the Buffaloes' resilience, all things are possible - and most certainly his school's first NCAA Tournament berth since 2003.

Down by six points, the Buffs outscored the Cyclones 13-5 over the final 3:02 and emerged with a 77-75 win that keeps CU's name being tipped back and forth by NCAA Tournament bracketologists. Did Wednesday's dramatic win nudge the Buffs over the threshold? No official word on entry or exclusion will come until Sunday, and Boyle isn't going to play that guessing game.

"I don't know what it means, I wish I had an answer for that," Boyle said, but agreeing that a second loss in a week to the Cyclones would have made for a much clearer - but undesirable - answer.

To reach the NAAs, fifth-seeded CU (20-12) might not need a victory here Thursday in the Big 12 quarterfinals against fourth-seeded, No. 19/23 Kansas State (22-9). Then again, what would it hurt? After Wednesday's second-half

comeback, the Buffs are feeling more comfortable about being here and wouldn't mind staying through Saturday's championship game.

If Burks continues to play as he did Wednesday, an extended stay might not be farfetched. Of his team-best 29 points, 25 were scored in the second half. But he did more than show his athleticism around the rim in the final 20 minutes, snaring six of his 15 rebounds and dealing five of his six assists, all with no second-half turnovers. After missing his only free throw attempt in the first half, he hit 11-of-13 in the second.

"Holy cow," said Boyle. "He made every play down the stretch for us when we needed a play to be made. Yeah, he was terrific. I kept saying I want to get him out and get him a rest, but I couldn't afford to take him out of the game."

After the Cyclones had gone ahead 70-64 with 3:02 to play, Burks hit a jumper (70-66) then drove the length of the court after an ISU miss and, while headed for the rim, kicked the ball back to Levi Knutson, who did what he does best. He buried a three-pointer that pulled CU to within a point, 70-69.

"Play of the game . . . finding Levi in front of our bench," Boyle said. "That's when our guys started saying OK, and we got back in it. It got us back to one and got our mojo back. And once our guys started believing, once that play happened, I thought that gave us the juice to get over the top."

Knutson acknowledged, "It was a big play. We needed to make plays down the stretch, and Alec was creating. He draws a lot of help, and he was able to find me for a wide-open shot. I expect to knock those down - and he expects me to knock them down."

Singling out that Burks assist was fair, but there were so many big-play choices. Burks stepped up with a conventional three-point play, tying the score at 72-72 with 1:45 left. (And there was discussion by officials on whether Burks' field goal had been a trey, perhaps offering a four-point chance.)

More Burks bigness to come . . . On ISU's following possession, CU controlled the rebound on a Diante Garrett miss and Boyle called time out with 1:19 showing. The Buffs came out of that timeout with a play freshly drawn by Boyle; Burks finished it with a twist, playing contortionist on the right baseline and hitting a short jumper to give CU its first lead (74-72) since 44-43.

"(It) was a play we'd never run and he made an unbelievable shot out of it," Boyle said. "Great players need to make great plays for you . . . if we're going to lose the game we're going to lose it with our great player and the ball in his hands."

But Burks had much help in this win. Cory Higgins contributed 16 points and did a commendable job in guarding Jake Anderson (33 points) down the stretch. The reliable Knutson added 12 points, but Marcus Relphorde, after scoring 40 points in his last two games, struggled shooting (two-of-seven) and finished with nine points. He had six rebounds, but also five turnovers - including a late travel that gave the ball back to ISU in the final half-minute.

The Buffs' bench outscored the Cyclones' 21-7, and CU won the rebound battle 48-36, with freshman board master Andre Roberson grabbing a season-high 15. Roberson, who scored nine points, sank his biggest pair of free throws this season to push CU ahead 76-72 with 15.6 seconds to play.

Said Boyle: "(Overall) confidence hasn't been a problem with Andre, but at the free throw line, there's a little bit of an issue . . . what can you say?"

For openers, clutch will do.

But CU's ace of the afternoon was the slender Burks, whose sophomore highlight reel had Missouri (36 points) and Texas (33) as its top two entries. Wednesday makes three.

Burks said he didn't believe everything was falling right for him "because I was missing free throws (two in the second half). But I was in a groove enough that the basket looked wide open. I felt like I got to the line a lot . . . I felt better against Texas, though, because I was making a lot of outside shots."

If upsetting the Longhorns returned the Buffs to NCAA Tournament conversation, handling the Cyclones keeps them there. "Every time we win I feel good - no matter who we beat," Burks said. "But there was some extra meat on this game, yeah. Without this game, nobody's talking about us."

ISU Coach Fred Hoiberg found it difficult to stop talking about Burks. "I thought (he) was a lottery pick before today," Hoiberg said. "And nothing changed my mind the way he went out there and performed today. He's a big-time player - prototypical wing in the NBA just the way he plays. He does such a good job drawing fouls, drawing contact. He handles the ball extremely well and he's great in transition . . . Burks was awesome today."

Now, Burks becomes K-State's problem - and vice versa. In CU's regular-season series sweep, Burks scored 12 points in the Buffs' 74-66 win in Manhattan and eight in the 58-56 win in Boulder. He will be the Wildcats' defensive focal point, just as senior guard Jacob Pullen will be for the Buffs.

Burks called the resurgent Wildcats, whose only loss in their past eight games was in Boulder, "physical, tough . . . they play hard. That's what you've always got to overcome when you're playing them. I think if we just match their intensity, play our game, we'll come out with a 'W.'"

Added Knutson on K-State: "They've got a commitment to the defensive end, they grind it out against you. We want to get up and down, but we've shown we can play that game, too."

Play it well enough and the Buffs will leave no doubt about how they fit into next week's NCAA plans. CU did its part Wednesday to stay alive and got assists from Nebraska and Baylor, a pair of Big 12 bubble teams that lost their first-round games.

The Buffs could be in without a win Thursday, but with one . . . No guarantees, but you have to like the chances.

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SHOW MENU





Alec Burks scored 29 points and pulled down 15 boards.
Photo Courtesy: Joel Broida



03/09/2011 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

Burks Leads CU To Comeback Win, Keeps Tourney Hopes Alive

KANSAS CITY, Mo. - Sophomore Alec Burks led a frantic second-half comeback against Iowa State here Wednesday, keeping Colorado's NCAA Tournament hopes intact. Burks scored 29 points - 25 of them in the second half - as fifth-seeded CU eliminated No. 12 seed Iowa State 77-75 in the first round of the Big 12 Conference postseason tournament.

CU faces No. 4 seed Kansas State Thursday at 1 p.m. (MST). The Buffs advanced to the Big 12 tournament's quarterfinal round for the first time since 2007-08, when as the No. 12 seed they upset No. 5 seed Baylor (91-84, 2 OTs).

CU (20-12) now has its fifth 20-win season in school history. The last came in 2005-06 (20-10), and that season also marked the Buffs' most recent postseason appearance (NIT).

Despite a stretch of 6-plus minutes without a field goal, the Buffs trailed only 28-26 at halftime - and it was the lowest scoring first half for either team in their two previous meetings. In their game in Boulder, CU led 49-34 at halftime; in Ames, ISU was up 38-37.

BUFFALO EXTRAS



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Box Score



Notes



Quotes



Box Score

The Buffs didn't open the half like they finished it, taking an 8-2 lead on a pair of baskets each by Burks and Cory Higgins. But the Cyclones worked their back into it, taking their first lead (14-13) on a three-pointer by 6-foot-11 Jamie Vanderbeken with 13:42 before intermission.

From that point, neither team was able to pull away. The rest of the half featured one tie, six lead changes and at best reasonable facsimiles of basketball from both teams - not many actual points and no style points.

CU shot 36.7 percent from the field in the first half, ISU 34.3. The Buffs made one of five three-point attempts, the Cyclones four of 10.

After a Higgins basket at the 9:24 mark that gave his team a 20-18 lead, CU didn't get another field goal until Levi Knutson hit a reverse layup with 3:15 left before the break. Fortunately for the Buffs, the Cyclones couldn't capitalize on the offensive end - and the second 20 minutes were anybody's to claim.

Marcus Relphorde, who scored 21 points in the 5-point loss in Ames and 19 in the final regular-season win against Nebraska, was 0-for-3 from the field and got just two free throws in Wednesday's first half.

But he opened the second half with a trey, putting CU up 29-28. The next 5 minutes were a battle to see who blinked - and it was the Buffs. With Jake Anderson hitting a trey and converting a three-point play, the Cyclones took their biggest lead (40-35) with 14:38 remaining.

It was time for CU to shake itself awake, and Burks and the Buffs did. They caught and passed the Cyclones (41-40) on two free throws by Burks and a layup by freshman Andre Roberson. But over the next 6-plus minutes, Anderson scored half of his team's 18 points and the Cyclones matched their previous five-point lead (56-51).

Burks wasn't ready to pack for home, scoring 11 of CU's next 15 points and pulling the Buffs to 58-55. They closed to 58-57 on a Higgins layup before baskets by Anderson and Diante Garrett restored a five-point (62-57) ISU lead with 5:55 to play.

Time was running on CU and its NCAA aspirations.

The Buffs got to within two on three occasions before Garrett buried a three-pointer from the left wing to make it 69-64 with 3:06 left. Just over a minute later, CU closed to 70-69 on a Burks baseline jumper and a three-pointer by Knutson.

Burks stepped up again with a three-point play, tying the score at 72-72 with 1:45 left. On ISU's following possession, CU controlled the rebound on a Garrett miss and Boyle called time out with 1:19 showing. The Buffs came out of that timeout and Burks played contortionist on the baseline, hitting a short jumper to give CU its first lead (74-72) since 44-43.

Roberson rebounded a Scott Christopherson miss, but CU gave the ball back on a travel by Relphorde. ISU called time out with 34.7 seconds to play. Vanderbeken missed a long three-pointer, but the ball went out of bounds to ISU. Garrett missed again, Roberson got the rebound and was fouled.

His two free throws with 15.6 to play put CU up 76-72 - and the Buffs' comeback was almost complete.

Anderson missed his second free throw with 10.5 to play, but Higgins - fouled on the rebound - made one of his two to put the Buffs up by four again (77-73).

Anderson hit a layup to pull the Cyclones to within 77-75 with 2 seconds showing - but the Buffs were there. They inbounded the ball to Knutson and he dribbled out the final two ticks.

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SHOW MENU

Boyle pleads Buffs' NCAA case

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 03/09/2011 11:47:28 PM MST

KANSAS CITY, Mo. -- Tad Boyle doesn't want to beg.

But the first-year Colorado head coach finally made a verbal pitch for his team to be included in the NCAA Tournament after the Buffs' 75-73 victory over Iowa State in the opening round of the Big 12 Tournament on Wednesday at the Sprint Center.

"We've got five top-50 RPI wins," Boyle noted after CU improved to 20-12. "We've got some bad losses, but everyone in the country has bad losses."

The selection committee will factor in the early-season blemishes at Georgia, San Francisco and Harvard. Boyle says the program deserves some credit for taking the show on the road.

"If we don't get in, then I've learned a lot about scheduling," said Boyle, whose team also won a true road game at Cal State Bakersfield and went 1-1 at the Las Vegas Classic. "There's no reason for us to go on the road."

CU's quality wins over Missouri, Kansas State (twice) and Texas will carry some weight on Sunday when 37 at-large teams are picked to fill out the expanded 68-team field.

"Obviously, it's a fine line. When you get to the at-large teams it becomes very gray," Boyle said. "It's all the glasses you're looking through and what you're looking for."

The Buffs' argument would be greatly enhanced if they could find a way to beat Kansas State for a third time today in the quarterfinals at the Sprint Center (1 p.m., Altitude).

That will be a lot to ask given all the purple shirts in the stands and the fact that the No. 19 Wildcats (22-9) have won eight of their last nine games.

"K-State is playing as well as anybody in the country right now," Boyle said. "The good thing is our guys have some confidence. K-State is looking to even the score with Colorado. It should be a heck of a matchup."

Hoiberg: Burks NBA ready

Alec Burks was the main catalyst in keeping CU's NCAA Tournament hopes alive Wednesday with 29 points, 15 rebounds and six assists against the Cyclones. Iowa State head coach Fred Hoiberg, a former NBA player and executive, was already sold on the sophomore's draft stock.

"I thought Burks was a lottery pick before and nothing changed my mind the way he went out there and performed," Hoiberg said after the 6-foot-6 guard scored seven points during CU's 13-5 run to end the game. "He's a big-time player. Prototypical wing in the NBA just the way he plays. ...

"Burks was awesome today."

Burks is projected as a first-round NBA pick this summer. He will not decide whether or not to pursue those hoops dreams or return to CU for his junior season until this run ends.

Of Boyle and ex-Buffs

Boyle joined Ricardo Patton as the only CU coaches to win 20 games in their first season.

Patton finished with a 22-10 record in 1996-97, his first official season running the program. But he had taken over for Joe

Harrington during the 1995-96 season as an interim head coach and went 4-9 down the stretch.

Harrington went 19-14 during his first season (1990-91). Sox Walseth went 14-9 during his first season (1956-57). And Boyle's predecessor, Jeff Bzdelik, was 12-20 during his first season (2007-08).

Patton was fired as the head coach at Northern Illinois on Wednesday after compiling a 35-83 record in four seasons, including a 9-21 record this season.

Bzdelik is 8-23 overall and 1-15 in the ACC in his first season at Wake Forest. The Demon Deacons can help CU out with an upset of Boston College, an NCAA Tournament bubble team, in the opening round of the ACC Tournament today.

The Minutes Man

Cory Higgins added 16 points on 7-for-13 shooting and eclipsed 1,000 minutes of playing time for the season. The senior extended his program record for minutes played to 4,290.

Higgins has played over 1,000 minutes in each of his four seasons at CU with a high of 1,146 minutes during the 2008-09 campaign.

Series update

Iowa State leads the all-time series 77-70, including a 13-4 advantage in neutral-court games. CU also won the only previous meeting in the Big 12 Tournament, 69-61, on March 3, 1999.

Notable

CU improves to 8-14 overall in Big 12 Tournament games. It was the program's first win since the Buffs became the first 12 seed to upset a No. 5 seed with a 91-84 double-overtime win over Baylor on March 13, 2008. ... The Buffs improved to 15-0 this season when shooting a higher percentage from the field than the opponent.

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CU Buffs rally to beat Iowa State, keep NCAA hopes alive

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

Posted: 03/09/2011 03:19:10 PM MST



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made. Yeah, he was terrific.

"I kept saying, 'I want to take him out and give him a rest.' But we couldn't get him out of the game."

The No. 12-seeded Cyclones (16-16) appeared to be poised for a second win over CU in seven days after taking a 70-64 lead -- their largest of the game -- with 3:02 remaining.

Burks answered with a basket and then found clutch senior sharpshooter Levi Knutson in the corner for a 3-pointer to cut the deficit to 70-69 with 2:20 to go.

"I thought the play of the game was when Alec was in transition and he found Levi in front of our bench, and Levi knocked it down to cut it to one," Boyle said. "That's when our guys started believing and we got our Mojo back."

The most spectacular play of the game came moments later when Burks was fouled on a potential four-point play.

The officials looked at a replay on the monitor and ruled that the 6-foot-6 guard's toe was on the 3-point line. He made the free throw to complete a three-point play to tie the score 72-72.

After a stop on the defensive end, Burks made his ninth and final field goal to give CU the lead (74-72) for good with 72 seconds left.

"I was just trying to do whatever my team needed me to do to win," said Burks, who is from nearby Grandview, Mo. "I was just trying to help my team come back."

Jamie Vanderbeken missed a go-ahead 3-pointer and, after an offensive rebound, Diante Garrett had a potential game-tying shot rim out with 15.6 seconds left.

Iowa State quickly fouled Andre Roberson after his 15th rebound and the freshman calmly iced the game with a pair of free throws.

KANSAS CITY, Mo. -- The Buffs don't know if their 20th victory of the season will be enough to receive an invitation to the Big Dance on Sunday.

But the 18,910 fans who witnessed Colorado's dramatic 77-75 victory over Iowa State on Wednesday in the opening round of the Big 12 Tournament at the Sprint Center are sure of this:

The NCAA Tournament will be better and even more exciting if Alec Burks is a part of it.

The sophomore superstar scored 25 of his 29 points in the second half to will the Buffs into the quarterfinals today against fourth-seeded and 19th-ranked Kansas State (1 p.m., Altitude).

"Holy cow!" CU head coach Tad Boyle said of Burks' performance, which also included 15 rebounds, six assists, three steals and a block in 38 minutes of court time. "He made every play down the stretch for us when we needed a play to be

"I just tried to relax myself and picture myself like I was in practice," Roberson said. "So I just knocked them down."

The No. 5 Buffs (20-12) will be wearing their black uniforms when they try to beat the No. 4 Wildcats (22-9) for a third time this season. CU won 74-66 in Manhattan on Jan. 12 and 58-56 in Boulder on Feb. 12.

This game is for March marbles.

"You know they're going to be ready to play, but we are too," Knutson said after finishing with 12 points. "We've got them twice, close games both times, so I expect a battle. ... It's hard to beat a team once in this league. It's one more game and the first two don't matter."

The Buffs trailed Iowa State 28-26 at the intermission after shooting 36.7 percent from the field and committing nine turnovers. CU shot 57.1 percent (16-for-28) in the second half and won the battle of the boards 48-36 for the game.

But Jake Anderson scored a game-high 33 points to give the Cyclones a chance to burst the Buffs' bubble.

"He was awfully good," Boyle said. "My hat goes off to that kid."

Cory Higgins volunteered to guard Anderson down the stretch, which forced Iowa State to put the ball in the hands of Vanderbeken and Garrett with the game on the line.

"Personally, it was taking guys into the huddle and just saying, 'Stay with it. No break, no break,'" Higgins said of the 13-5 CU run to close the game. "We put everything we had in defense and rebounding and we stuck together and we pulled it out."

The Buffs suffered what felt like a bubble-busting 95-90 loss in Ames on March 2 after allowing the Cyclones to out-rebound them 40-32 and shoot 70 percent from the field in the second half.

"You get into tournament basketball, it's all about surviving and advancing," Boyle said. "We survived today. And we're advancing."

And so close to dancing.

Colorado 77, Iowa State 75

IOWA ST. (75)

FG FT Reb

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

Ejim 22 1-3 0-0 4-7 0 4 2

Vandrbkn 24 2-11 1-2 0-5 0 5 6

Anderson 36 13-20 4-7 3-6 1 4 33

Garrett 40 6-14 6-6 0-2 6 3 19

Christopherson 36 3-16 0-0 0-4 5 1 8

Railey 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Palo 9 0-2 0-0 0-1 1 0 0

Godfrey 32 3-7 1-3 6-8 0 3 7

Totals 200 28-73 12-18 15-36 13 20 75

Percentages: FG .384, FT .667.

3-Point Goals: 7-23, .304 (Anderson 3-5, Christopherson 2-9, Garrett 1-2, Vanderbeken 1-5, Ejim 0-1, Palo 0-1).

Team Rebounds: 3.

Blocked Shots: 4 (Godfrey 4).

Turnovers: 8 (Anderson 3, Vanderbeken 2, Christopherson, Ejim, Garrett).

Steals: 9 (Godfrey 3, Ejim 2, Christopherson 2, Garrett, Vanderbeken).

Technical Fouls: None.

COLORADO (77)

FG FT Reb

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

Dufault 13 1-2 0-0 1-2 0 4 2

Tomlinson 20 0-0 0-0 1-2 4 2 0

Relphrde 35 2-7 4-4 0-6 1 3 9

Burks 38 9-16 11-14 4-15 6 1 29

Higgins 35 7-13 1-2 0-4 2 0 16

Sharpe 3 0-1 0-0 0-0 1 0 0

Roberson 30 3-7 3-4 7-15 0 5 9

Knutson 26 5-12 0-0 0-2 0 2 12

Totals 200 27-58 19-24 13-48 14 17 77

Percentages: FG .466, FT .792.

3-Point Goals: 4-13, .308 (Knutson 2-5, Relphorde 1-2, Higgins 1-3, Dufault 0-1, Burks 0-1, Roberson 0-1).

Team Rebounds: 2.

Blocked Shots: 3 (Relphorde, Burks, Tomlinson).

Turnovers: 15 (Burks 5, Relphorde 5, Higgins 2, Tomlinson, Roberson, Dufault).

Steals: 4 (Burks 3, Tomlinson).

Technical Fouls: None.

Iowa St. 28 47 --75

Colorado 26 51 --77

A -- 18,910.

Officials -- Joe DeRosa, Kipp Kissinger, Darron George.

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colorado 77, iowa state 75

Burks drives CU Buffs past Iowa State in Big 12 Tournament

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 03/10/2011 01:00:00 AM MST

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Will Colorado's chances at earning its first NCAA Tournament bid in eight years be on the line in today's Big 12 Tournament quarterfinal against Kansas State?

Or did Wednesday's 77-75 win over Iowa State clinch an invitation?

Colorado coach Tad Boyle said he has no clue.

"I don't know what it means; I don't have any better answer today than I had yesterday," he said. "It's one of those deals where you can't control it. You just gotta try to beat K-State."

This much is certain: Fifth-seeded Colorado (20-12, 8-8 Big 12 regular season) absolutely, positively needed to get past No. 12 seed Iowa State for the Buffaloes to remain in the national

"bracketology" conversation. And Wednesday

afternoon at the Sprint Center became about as draining as it gets, even with CU sophomore guard Alec Burks seemingly carrying the team on his back with 29 points and a career-best 15 rebounds.

Iowa State (16-16, 3-13) led for much of the game and was up 70-66 with 2 1/2 minutes remaining. That's when Burks and senior guard Levi Knutson combined for what Boyle called the play of the game.

Burks drove toward the lane and attracted the attention of three Iowa State defenders. He passed the ball to Knutson, who drained a 3-pointer from the left side.

"That got us back to one (down) and got our mojo back," Boyle said.

A jumper by Burks finally put the Buffs up, 74-72 with 1:13 to go. Colorado then made a couple of defensive stops but it still took two free throws by CU's Andre Roberson with 15 seconds left before anybody could exhale.

Roberson is a freshman. A rebounding machine, he matched Burks with 15 boards but still needs work on his shot. He entered the game with a below-par average of 57.1 percent from the line.

"Iowa State wanted me at the foul line," Roberson said. "I just relaxed myself and pictured that I was at practice."

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Good. Good.

"I've told Andre that he's not a freshman anymore," Knutson said. "He wasn't scared. I knew he'd make them."

Playing in his hometown, Burks scored 25 points in the second half as nothing Iowa State tried against him worked.

"Obviously, Burks was a difference-maker," said ISU first-year coach Fred Hoiberg, a former NBA player and executive in the league who pegged Burks as a lottery pick whenever the sophomore decides to turn pro. "He goes in there, throws his body around and does a great job of drawing fouls."

As good as Burks was, Iowa State's Jake Anderson matched him — and more. A slithering 6-foot-2 senior guard, Anderson finished with a career-high 33 points.

CU won by outscoring Iowa State 13-5 in the final three minutes.

"I told the guys in the locker room, sometimes you gotta win unconventionally and it's not always going to be pretty," Boyle said.

Colorado defeated Kansas State in both regular-season meetings, sparking gold stars for the Buffs' NCAA resume. The 19th-ranked and fourth-seeded Wildcats (22-9, 10-6) have not lost since losing 58-56 in Boulder, winning six in a row and eight of their past nine.

"Kansas State is physical, they're tough," said Burks, who was recruited by the Wildcats.

Nobody said reaching the NCAA Tournament would be easy.

FG FT Reb

ISU (16-16) Min M-A M-A O-T A PF PTS

Ejim 22 1-3 0-0 4-7 0 4 2
 Vanderbeken 24 2-11 1-2 0-5 0 5 6
 Anderson 36 13-20 4-7 3-6 1 4 33
 Garrett 40 6-14 6-6 0-2 6 3 19
 Christopherson 36 3-16 0-0 0-4 5 1 8
 Railey 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0
 Palo 9 0-2 0-0 0-1 1 0 0
 Godfrey 32 3-7 1-3 6-8 0 3 7

Totals 200 28-73 12-18 15-36 13 20 75

Percentages: FG .384, FT .667. **3-point goals:** 7-23, .304 (Anderson 3-5, Christopherson 2-9, Garrett 1-2, Vanderbeken 1-5, Ejim 0-1, Palo 0-1). **Team rebounds:** 3. **Blocked shots:** 4 (Godfrey 4). **Turnovers:** 8 (Anderson 3, Vanderbeken 2, Christopherson, Ejim, Garrett).

Steals: 9 (Godfrey 3, Ejim 2, Christopherson 2, Garrett, Vanderbeken). **FG FT Reb**

CU (20-12) Min M-A M-A O-T A PF PTS

Dufault 13 1-2 0-0 1-2 0 4 2
 Tomlinson 20 0-0 0-0 1-2 4 2 0
 Relphorde 35 2-7 4-4 0-6 1 3 9
 Burks 38 9-16 11-14 4-15 6 1 29
 Higgins 35 7-13 1-2 0-4 2 0 16
 Sharpe 3 0-1 0-0 0-0 1 0 0
 Roberson 30 3-7 3-4 7-15 0 5 9
 Knutson 26 5-12 0-0 0-2 0 2 12

Totals 200 27-58 19-24 13-48 14 17 77

Percentages: FG .466, FT .792. **3-point goals:** 4-13, .308 (Knutson 2-5, Relphorde 1-2, Higgins 1-

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3, Dufault 0-1, Burks 0-1, Roberson 0-1). **Team rebounds: 2. Blocked shots: 3** (Relphorde, Burks, Tomlinson). **Turnovers: 15** (Burks 5, Relphorde 5, Higgins 2, Tomlinson, Roberson, Dufault). **Steals: 4** (Burks 3, Tomlinson). **Iowa State 28 47 — 75**
Colorado 26 51 — 77
18,910. Officials —Joe DeRosa, Kipp Kissinger, Darron George.

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MARCH 9, 2011, 6:36 PM

CU must match Kansas State's intensity, Buffs coach says

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Colorado coach Tad Boyle's early scouting report on Kansas State for Thursday's 1 p.m. Big 12 Tournament quarterfinal matchup:

"You have to match their intensity," Boyle said. "They're a tough, tough team. When the ball goes to the glass, it's almost two different games. You have the game when you're on offense and defense. But when that ball goes on the glass, it's a whole different game with them."

"We've done a good job of matching their intensity (with CU sweeping both regular-season meetings). But we have to rebound the ball as a group, kind of gang rebound, if you will, because that's what it takes."

"And obviously, (KSU senior guard) Jacob Pullen is a guy we have to keep the ball out of his hands and make him work for everything he gets. He's the straw that stirs their drink, there's no doubt about that."

After Wednesday's victory over Iowa State, I asked CU senior guard Levi Knutson about the old sports adage that it's tough to beat a good team three times in a season, obviously referring to Thursday's battle with Kansas State.

"It's tough to beat a team twice; it's tough to beat a team once," Knutson said.

Good answer.

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All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post

MARCH 9, 2011, 6:21 PM

Boyle: CU's Higgins underrated defensively

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Apparently having about run out of ideas on how to stop Iowa State senior guard Jake Anderson, Colorado coach Tad Boyle asked for a volunteer during a timeout at the Big 12 tournament.

Anderson finished with a career-best 33 points but only one field goal in the final 4:57 — a meaningless field goal with one second remaining for the final points in Colorado's 77-75 victory.

"We asked who wants to guard Anderson in the huddle, Cory (Higgins) raised his hand," Boyle said of his senior guard. "I really think Cory did a great job on him late. Cory, I think, is one of the most underrated defenders in this conference.

"I nominated him for (Big 12) defensive player of the year. He didn't make the all-defensive team."

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[1] Former NBA exec Hoiberg on CU's Burks: "Lottery pick": http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2011/03/09/former-nba-exec-hoiberg-on-cus-burks-lottery-pick/16259/?source=ARK_sports

[2] CU must match Kansas State's intensity, Buffs coach says : http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2011/03/09/cu-must-match-kansas-states-intensity-buffs-coach-says/16264/?source=ARK_sports

[3] CU lists usual lineup for today's game vs. Iowa State: http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2011/03/09/cu-lists-usual-lineup-for-todays-game-vs-iowa-state/16257/?source=ARK_sports

[4] Nuggets to sign George Karl's son, Coby : http://blogs.denverpost.com/nuggets/2010/04/11/nuggets-to-sign-george-karls-son-coby/?source=ARK_sports

[5] Carmelo Anthony to miss tonight's game at San Antonio : http://blogs.denverpost.com/nuggets/2010/12/22/carmelo-anthony-to-miss-tonights-game-at-san-antonio/?source=ARK_sports

[6] LeBron's "Rise" commercial : http://blogs.denverpost.com/nuggets/2010/10/26/lebrons-rise-commercial/?source=ARK_sports

All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post

MARCH 9, 2011, 4:46 PM

Former NBA exec Hoiberg on CU's Burks: "Lottery pick"

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Following Colorado's 77-75 victory Wednesday over Iowa State at the Big 12 Tournament, Cyclones coach Fred Hoiberg was asked about CU sophomore guard Alec Burks, who had just scored 29 points and grabbed 15 rebounds.

"I thought Alec Burks was a (NBA) lottery pick before today," Hoiberg said.

Hoiberg's assessment of a player's pro potential carries some weight. After starring for ISU, Hoiberg played in the NBA and then was a longtime executive in the league.

(Burks is) a big-time player," Hoiberg said, "a prototypical wing in the NBA, just the way he plays. (He) does such a good job of drawing fouls and drawing contact. He handles the ball extremely well, and he's great in transition. And he shoots the ball."

Burks has said that he will wait until after the season to decide whether or not to make himself available for the 2011 NBA draft.

Burks' 25 points in the second half are tied for the sixth most in CU history for a regulation half.

More from All Things Colorado Sports

- [CU's Burks doesn't bite on questions about NBA](#) ^[1]
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<http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2011/03/09/former-nba-exec-hoiberg-on-cus-burks-lottery-pick/16259/>

URLs in this post:

[1] CU's Burks doesn't bite on questions about NBA: http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2011/03/08/cus-burks-doesnt-bite-on-questions-about-nba/16245/?source=ARK_sports

[2] CU lists usual lineup for today's game vs. Iowa State: http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2011/03/09/cu-lists-usual-lineup-for-todays-game-vs-iowa-state/16257/?source=ARK_sports

[3] Boyle: CU's Higgins underrated defensively: <http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2011/03/09>



Iowa State men's basketball: Cyclones fall short against Colorado



Written by

RANDY PETERSON

3:16 PM, Mar. 9, 2011|

Kansas City, Mo. — Jake Anderson could barely look up as he was sitting on a chair surrounded by reporters.

"Man, this was tough," the Iowa State senior said, still feeling the emotional and physical wounds of Wednesday's 77-75 loss against Colorado in the opening round of the Big 12 Conference Tournament at the Sprint Center.

"It's my last college game. I didn't want it to end like this."

It ended with Anderson's best performance, a 33-point outburst that wasn't enough to provide the Cyclones their first conference tournament win since 2005.

"While some of the rest of us were out there missing shots, Jake was holding us together," Scott Christopherson said, mentioning himself among the errant

shooters. "He carried us."

He carried 16-16 Iowa State, much like Alec Burks' 29-point 15-rebound performance led 20-12 Colorado into the next round against Kansas State.

"I said before the game that he's a lottery pick, and I still think that," Cyclone coach Fred Hoiberg said of Burks. "He was a difference-maker."

Burks especially made a difference after Iowa State led 70-64 with 3 minutes to play. He cut the lead to four with a basket, then made it 72-72 with a basket and free throw with 1:45 remaining.

"Just doing what my team needed me to do," said Burks, who scored 25 of his 29 points in the second half.

The score was tied six times, there were 16 lead changes, and Anderson was the Cyclones' best hope to provide success against a team with which they split home-and-home games this season.

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He scored on short jumpers. He scored in the lane. He even made a trio of 3-pointers as Colorado focused defensive attention on wing shooters Christopherson and Jamie Vanderbeken.

"No excuse," said Christopherson, who missed 13 of 16 shots, including seven of nine from 3-point range.

"A lot of the shots were in and out," he said. "A lot of them weren't long shots, they were short shots — shots that I thought were good."

"I was able to get looks basically anytime I wanted to. I just missed them."

Ditto Vanderbeken, whose 3-pointer with 34 seconds left bounced three times on the rim before not falling in. The shot came after a timeout and the Cyclones trailing 74-72.

"In the huddle, I asked Jamie if he was ready to win the game for us," Hoiberg said. "He said, 'yeah, I'm ready.'"

"The ball hit every part of the rim three times before it finally bounced out. He had a great look."

Andre Roberson's two free throws with 15.6 seconds remaining gave Colorado a 76-72 lead that Anderson cut to 76-73 by making the first of two free throws with 10 seconds left. Colorado won a rebounding scrum that ended with Cory Higgins making one of two free throws with 8 seconds to play.

The final basket of Anderson's career, with 1.9 seconds to play, made it a two-point game before Colorado ran out the clock on Iowa State's ninth loss by six or less points. Seven of them came against conference opponents.

"A microcosm of our season," Hoiberg said. "Our guys fight, they claw and they play hard."

He said that while looking toward Anderson, still sitting in the locker room with a bag of ice on his right knee.

"We went out with a fight," Hoiberg said. "We went down swinging."

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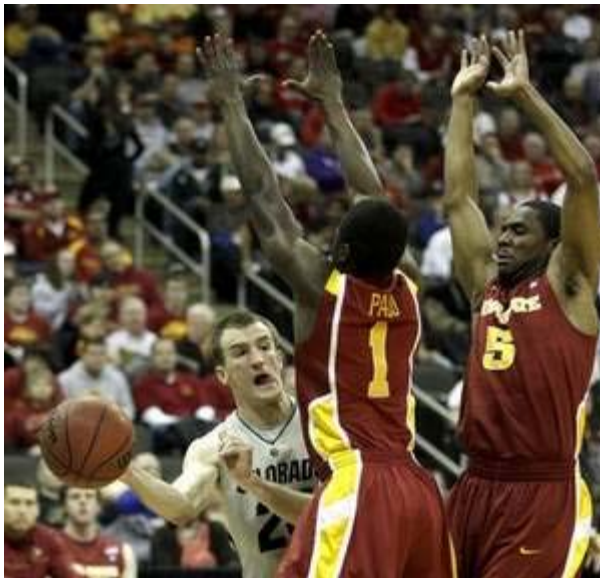
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Colorado guard Alec Burks (10) is pressured by Iowa State forward Jamie Vanderbeken (23) as he goes up for a shot during the first half of a Big 12 Conference Tournament game on Wednesday, March 9, 2011 in Kansas City, Mo. Burks scored 29 points in Colorado's 77-75 win.



Colorado guard Levi Knutson, left, passes around Iowa State guards Bubu Palo (1) and Darion 'Jake' Anderson (5) during the first half. / CHARLIE RIEDEL/AP PHOTO

Big 12 Tournament Scores and Schedule

Wednesday's First Round

Oklahoma State 53, Nebraska 52

Colorado 77, Iowa State 75
Oklahoma 84, Baylor 67
Missouri 88, Texas Tech 84

Thursday's Quarterfinals

11:30 a.m. — Kansas (29-2) vs. Oklahoma State (19-12)

2:00 — Kansas State (22-9) vs. Colorado (20-12)

6:00 — Texas (25-6) vs. Oklahoma (14-17)

8:30 — Texas A&M (23-7) vs. Missouri (23-9)

Friday's Semifinals

6:00 — First semifinal

8:30 — Second semifinal

Saturday's Final

5:00 — Semifinal winners (ESPN)

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Posted on Thu, Mar. 10, 2011

K-State-Colorado quarterfinal preview

2 p.m. today | Ch. 38 | WHB (810 AM)

FRONT COURT

•**Colorado:** The Buffaloes are a guard-based team that doesn't rely on its forwards to grab the majority of its rebounds. Austin Dufault is Colorado's top big man.

•**Kansas State:** Curtis Kelly and Jordan Henriquez-Roberts are playing their best basketball at the moment. Both are threats to score, rebound and block.

BACK COURT

•**Colorado:** Alec Burks and Cory Higgins are one of the most difficult guard tandems in the conference to guard. They have size, touch and combine for more than 35 points per game.

•**Kansas State:** Jacob Pullen was a consensus All-Big 12 first-teamer and averaged more than 20 points per game in conference play. Rodney McGruder is a threat to make three-pointers and rebound.

COACHING

•**Colorado:** First-year coach Tad Boyle has Colorado on the verge of the NCAA Tournament.

•**Kansas State:** Frank Martin switched his team's offense midseason, and the move is paying off. K-State has won six straight.

OUTLOOK

•**Colorado:** The Buffaloes can more or less punch their ticket to the NCAA Tournament with a victory today. They have plenty to play for.

•**Kansas State:** K-State is in search of a Big 12 tournament championship after letting the regular-season race get away from them. The Wildcats are motivated by more than revenge.

P	No.	Colorado	Ht.	Yr	PPG
F	33	Austin Dufault	6-9	Jr.	7.4
G	1	Nate Tomlinson	6-3	Jr.	3.1
G	5	Marcus Relphorde	6-7	Sr.	11.7
G	10	Alec Burks	6-6	So.	19.5
G	11	Cory Higgins	6-5	Sr.	15.7

•**ABOUT COLORADO (20-12):** Colorado is the only team to beat K-State twice this season. ... Levi Knutson lifted the Buffaloes to a win at Bramlage Coliseum by hitting six three-pointers. ... At the Coors Events Center, Cory Higgins and Knutson combined for 33 points. They were just enough to hold off K-State, which lost when a potential game-winning shot from Rodney McGruder was ruled to have gone in late.

P	No.	Kansas State	Ht.	Yr	PPG
F	32	Jamar Samuels	6-7	Jr.	8.7
F	24	Curtis Kelly	6-8	Sr.	10.0
G	0	Jacob Pullen	6-0	Sr.	19.6
G	1	Shane Southwell	6-6	Fr.	1.7
G	22	Rodney McGruder	6-5	So.	11.4

•**ABOUT KANSAS STATE (22-9):** The Wildcats haven't played since Saturday, when they defeated Iowa State on senior day. It was their sixth straight victory to close out the regular season. ... If not for a 58-56 loss at Colorado, K-State would enter today's game on a nine-game winning streak. For that reason, the Wildcats said they wanted to play the Buffaloes today so they could have a shot at revenge. "Knowing we lost to them twice, gives us an edge," sophomore Jordan Henriquez-Roberts said.

Kellis Robinett's prediction: K-State 72, Colorado 65. The Wildcats gave some bulletin-board material to Missouri two weeks ago and still beat the Tigers by 10. Expect a similar result today.

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Posted on Wed, Mar. 09, 2011

Burks helps Buffs beat Cyclones

By KELLIS ROBINETT
The Kansas City Star

Jake Anderson came close to setting a Sprint Center record, but he couldn't match Alec Burks.

For that reason, as much as any other, Colorado came through with a 77-75 victory over Iowa State in the first round of the Big 12 tournament on Wednesday.

Behind a sensational performance — 29 points, 15 rebounds and six assists — from Burks, a sophomore guard who grew up in Grandview, the fifth-seeded Buffaloes advanced to the quarterfinals at 2 p.m. today against Kansas State.

They also ended the 12th-seeded Cyclones' season in agonizing fashion. Despite trailing by six points with fewer than 3 minutes remaining, Burks did more than enough to carry Colorado in the game's final moments.

"Obviously, Burks was a difference-maker," Iowa State coach Fred Hoiberg said. "He made big plays all game long."

After falling behind 70-64, Burks stayed poised and attacked the basket. During one stretch, he had a hand in 10 straight points, scoring seven and finding Levi Knutson in the corner for a key three-pointer.

"We fought back," Burks said. "We played hard in the second half. That's what won us the game."

Still, it wasn't easy. Anderson lit up the scoreboard for 33 points — only Roburt Sallie, who scored 35 for Memphis in the 2009 NCAA Tournament, managed more in this building — and Iowa State showed the same competitive nature it has all season despite a last-place conference finish.

Iowa State gave up 48 rebounds and made just 38.4 percent of its shots but still managed to take a 28-26 lead at halftime and was close to becoming the second No. 12 seed to win a game at the Big 12 tournament. Nebraska beat Missouri in the first round last year.

Colorado coach Tad Boyle credited Anderson for the closer-than expected outcome.

"He was awfully good," Boyle said. "My hat goes off to that kid. He's been getting better and better ... He was feeling it today."

Just not enough to help his team win.

"A microcosm of our season," Hoiberg said.

Iowa State, 16-16, heads to the offseason. Colorado, 20-12, will continue its quest for an at-large berth in the NCAA Tournament.

A win today against the Wildcats, whom the Buffaloes beat twice in the regular season, will significantly help that cause.

"K-State is a great team," Burks said. "They're physical. They're tough. They play hard. That's what you've always got to overcome when you're playing them."

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