

Chauncey to be in the house for CU Buffs

Former Buff great to attend CU's NIT Final Four games

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No word on whether or not Spike Lee or Jay-Z are into the NIT.

The Buffs will have at least one famous New York face in the crowd when they play at Madison Square Garden next Tuesday.

Chauncey Billups, the former Colorado great and current New York Knicks point guard, plans to watch Tad Boyle's team at the Final Four.

"He's excited and ready to see us," said Rodney Billups, Chauncey's younger brother, who is CU's director of basketball operations. "He'll be at our games."

Next week the Knicks host Orlando on Monday and New Jersey on Wednesday. CU will play Alabama or Miami in the semifinals on Tuesday and would advance to the NIT championship game on Thursday with a win.

Rodney Billups said if the NCAA and CU compliance offices allow it, the Buffs would like to attend the Knicks-Nets rivalry game to watch "Mr. Big Shot" in action.

"I think it's just outstanding for Colorado basketball," Boyle said. "We're excited about going to New York, and Chauncey is excited to see us, too. I know he follows us religiously, even though it might be harder now that he's out there. I'm excited to reconnect with him."

Chauncey Billups' wife and daughters will also be in New York next week on spring break. The family still lives in Denver.

The Buffs (24-13) thought they had a chance to be the first team to win an NCAA Tournament game since Chauncey Billups led the program to a first-round victory over Indiana in 1997.

After getting left out of the field, CU has responded with three consecutive home wins over Texas Southern, Cal and Kent State en route to the NIT Final Four.

"We spoke a lot about making the selection committee eat their words and showing everyone what we're all about," Rodney Billups said of his recent conversations with his brother.

Chauncey Billups was traded to New York by the Nuggets in the Carmelo Anthony deal last month. The Knicks have verbally told the former NBA Finals Most Valuable Player that they will pick up the option on his contract for the 2011-12 season.

Boyle said adding Rodney Billups, who earned a degree in business management at the University of Denver while playing for the Pioneers, to the staff has turned out to be a great move for the CU program.

"I think Rodney, quite frankly, has been a pleasant surprise. I didn't know what we would be getting when we hired him," Boyle said. "What we've got is a hard-working, loyal, bright and well-organized professional. He's going to be very successful in the business in whatever direction he chooses to go."

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