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cu basketball

## Burks, Alabama star freshman share K.C. roots

By **Natalie Meisler**  
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BOULDER — Alabama-Colorado is a storied football bowl rivalry dating back to the 1969 Liberty Bowl.

But basketball? Tuesday's NIT semifinal foes have never played each other on the hardwood.

CU's Alec Burks and Alabama's Trevor Releford, however, do not need an introduction. They have known each other since grade school in the Kansas City area.

"He's like my little brother. I grew up playing with him," Burks said Friday. "I've know him for a long time, probably fourth, fifth or sixth grade."

Burks, a sophomore, played for Grandview High School in Missouri, where he was the Kansas City metro player of the year in 2009. He immediately moved into the CU starting lineup as a freshman. The younger brother of Kansas' Travis Releford followed Burks as Kansas City's metro player of the year last season.

Although they went their separate ways in high school, they met a few times in open gyms.

### Bufs back at practice.

The Bufs regrouped for their first practice Friday since beating Kent State on Tuesday night to advance to the NIT semifinals next week. Cory

Higgins and Burks said they still hadn't completely recovered from the undiagnosed bug that has bothered them all week.

They won't have a complete Alabama scouting report for another 24 hours, but coach Tad Boyle has told them they will be facing a difficult matchup.

"They are very athletic, a typical SEC team," said Boyle, who spent the past two days recruiting. "They have unbelievable athletes."

Alabama went 24-11 and was undefeated at home.

"It's not going to be anything we haven't seen," Higgins said of Bama. "That's the benefit of the Big 12."

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