

## Two Buffs on Wooden list

### Colorado one of six teams with two players honored

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

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Duke, Gonzaga, Michigan State, Purdue, Syracuse ... and Colorado?

That's right, the Buffs are one of only six programs to have at least two players named to the John R. Wooden preseason top 50 list.

On Monday the Los Angeles Athletic Club announced that CU senior Cory Higgins and sophomore Alec Burks are both on the preseason watch list.

Higgins enters the season ranked ninth in CU history with 1,391 points and has started all 94 games of his career.

Burks is the reigning Big 12 freshman of the year after averaging 17.1 points and 5.0 rebounds last season. He was the first freshman in school history to score over 500 points.

Both players are excited about playing the 2010-11 season together in Tad Boyle's uptempo style after putting up impressive numbers in Jeff Bzdelik's more methodical Princeton-style offense.

"Bzdelik didn't really run too much, but Boyle says we're going to run it a lot. We're athletic people, so we love to run and gun," Burks said during a recent interview with the Camera. "With the altitude, the way me and Cory get deflections, it's going to be a nightmare for people to try and get the ball up."

The only other CU players to make the prestigious preseason Wooden list are David Harrison (2003-04), Chauncey Billups (1995-96), and Donnie Boyce (1994-95).

"Anytime you get recognized for your hard work, it's an honor, especially to be named on this list," Higgins said.

The Buffs will begin practices on Oct. 15 and will open the season on Nov. 12 against Idaho State at the Coors Events Center.

The preseason Wooden Award list is highlighted by Duke's Kyle Singler, Purdue's Robbie Hummel and Michigan State's Kalin Lucas.

Other Big 12 candidates include Baylor's Lacey Dunn, Kansas' Marcus Morris, Kansas State's Jacob Pullen, Missouri's Kim English and Texas' Jordan Hamilton.

"To be honored by the committee is a great feeling, and to be listed among the nation's elite, shows the hard work is paying off," Burks said.

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## Higgins, Burks named to pre-season John R. Wooden list

Senior-sophomore duo selected among top basketball players

*By Esteban L. Hernandez on October 5, 2010*

5

With the start of the Colorado men's basketball season more than a month away, two Buffs are already receiving an encouraging season outlook.

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Senior guard Cory Higgins and sophomore guard Alec Burks were among the athletes named to The John R. Wooden Top 50 list, announced on Monday in Los Angeles. The list compiles the top players vying for college basketball's top honor, based on last season's performance.

It is the first time in CU history that two Colorado players are named on the list in the same year.

For the 2011 ballot, the Buffs share this two-player distinction with only five other schools including Gonzaga, Michigan State, Syracuse and last season's national champions Duke who each have two players named to the list. Purdue saw three of its players named to the Wooden Award list.

Higgins and Burks are the fourth and fifth Buffs respectively to have their names added to the list after Donnie Boyce in the 1994-95 season, Chauncey Billups in the Buffs 1995-96 campaign and the most recent, David Harrison during the 2003-04 season.

Higgins, a senior out of Danville, Calif., has started in every game since arriving in Boulder and enters his senior year with 94 career starts for the Buffs. He sits at fourth place on the school's all-time scoring list with 1,391 points.

"Anytime you get recognized for your hard work, it's an honor, especially to be named on this list," Higgins said in a news release.

The Big 12 Conference Freshman of the Year last season, Burks finished with the accolade thanks to a fourth place ranking in the nation among all freshmen with his 17.1 points per game.



Guard Cory Higgins drives down the court during a game last season on Feb. 17 against the University of Oklahoma in the Coors Events Center. The Buffs beat the Sooners 77-67. (CU Independent/Lee Pruitt)



In this file photo, guard Alec Burks attempts a shot at the basket during CU's game against Kansas State last season on Jan. 16 at the Coors Events Center. (CU Independent file/Charlie Sievers)

Finishing the season with 512 points, Burks also shattered Richard Roby's previous record of 480 points to become the Buffs all-time freshmen leader in points scored.

"To be honored by the committee is a great feeling, and to be listed among the nation's elite, shows the hard work is paying off," Burks said.

Last season, the pair averaged out 36 points per game combined.

The Big 12 was well represented with seven individuals, one more than CU's future conference, the Pac-10. The Big 10 lead the group of 11 conferences with 10 players from the league chosen to the list.

Previous winners include Larry Bird, Michael Jordan, Tim Duncan and Maya Moore of Connecticut.

Named after legendary UCLA head coach and former Purdue player John Wooden, the 35th annual Wooden Award ceremony will take place the weekend of April 8 to April 10, 2011.

Contact CU Independent Sports Editor Esteban L. Hernandez at [Esteban.hernandez@colorado.edu](mailto:Esteban.hernandez@colorado.edu).

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OCTOBER 5, 2010, 11:06 AM

## With two on Wooden list, CU hoops becoming relevant again

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

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BOULDER – Ordinarily I don't feel the need to do separate stories or blogs each time a CU athlete is named to the "watch list" of a national award.

Those watch lists often include so many names, dozens if not hundreds of names. That dilutes the meaning and prestige.

But the fact that two players on the Colorado men's basketball team were named this week to the John R. Wooden Award preseason top-50 list should not be overlooked. And its significance should not be underappreciated.

With senior guard Cory Higgins and sophomore guard Alec Burks, Colorado is one of just six programs with two on the list. The other programs are perennial NCAA powerhouses: Duke, Gonzaga, Michigan State, Purdue and Syracuse.

If I'm first-year CU coach Tad Boyle, I'd have a copy of that announcement placed on top of any packet of recruiting material given to prospects that have been targeted by the Buffs.

Reaching the NCAA Tournament this season for the first time since 2003 would be an even bigger accomplishment, of course. But getting two players on the watch list for college hoops' most prestigious award — and being mentioned in the same breath with five traditional powers — shows that CU basketball is relevant again.

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