

Dinwiddie: CU Buffs have offensive firepower

Boyle's squad working on putting pieces together

By Ryan Thorburn Buffzone.com
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Play loose and aggressive.

Since hearing Tad Boyle's simple message loud and clear after the Air Force game on Nov. 23, Spencer Dinwiddie has played loose, aggressive and like a Pac-12 freshman of the year candidate.

Dinwiddie averaged 4.8 points over his first five collegiate games but has led Colorado in scoring three times and averaged 15.2 points in the last five games.

Now the 6-5 guard expects the rest of the Buffs to step up their level of play more consistently on the offensive end.

"I feel like it's one of those things we're just piecing together as we go. We have a lot more offensive firepower than people think," Dinwiddie said. "We haven't found a way to get a full 40-minute game with everybody clicking. It seems like somebody is clicking on one night, somebody else on another night."

The Buffs (6-4) should be able to fire on all cylinders tonight against Texas Southern at the Coors Events Center (7 p.m., no television).

The Tigers (1-8) have lost seven consecutive games, including an 85-61 defeat at Colorado State on Monday, and are already 0-8 on the road this season.

"That's the one thing about college basketball that's not fair. When you look at what they have to do with their scheduling," Boyle said. "I've been on that side of it. I was at Northern Colorado for four years and I know what they're going through. We've got to take advantage of that."

Texas Southern funds the majority of the school's athletic department budget via men's basketball non-conference paydays on the road. Last season the team rebounded from a 1-8 record in such games to win the SWAC.

CU beat the Tigers 88-74 on March 16 in the first round of the NIT at the Coors Events Center.

"They're very athletic, they're very talented, and they have a lot of pieces," Boyle said of the 2011-12 Texas Southern squad. "They're a dangerous team."

Entering Wednesday's action, Texas Southern ranked 344th nationally in scoring (52.0 ppg), 344th in rebounding (27.3 rpg) and 341st in assists (8.2 apg).

CU is clearly the superior team, but the Buffs still have plenty of improving to do after averaging 70.0 points (146th), 36.7 rebounds (120th) and 12.7 assists (198th) through the first third of the season.

"I think we're a mediocre basketball team right now," Boyle said during Tuesday's Pac-12 coaches teleconference. "I think we're also a basketball team with a high ceiling for improvement."

The Buffs held Cal State Bakersfield to 39 percent shooting but were out-rebounded 33-30 during Monday's 70-64 victory at the Coors Events Center.

"You can see where we're inconsistent," Dinwiddie said. "Even when we're winning we're only doing half of what we're supposed to."

The good news for Boyle's bunch is there are a lot of very flawed teams in the Pac-12.

And the Buffs have a chance to improve and continue to build momentum before conference play begins. The team will take a short holiday break after tonight's game before wrapping up non-conference play against New Orleans on Dec. 28.

The Buffs finish off this month-long home stand with three Pac-12 games against Utah, Washington and Washington State.

"Of course your goal is always to win," Dinwiddie said. "And when you look at your conference and you see that opportunity, your eyes kind of light up."

KOA expands coverage

The Colorado men's basketball team will be featured on KOA (AM 850) throughout the Pac-12 season.

Clear Channel Radio's 850 KOA and AM 760 (KKZN), in conjunction with Learfield Sports and Buffalo Sports Properties, announced the expanded coverage plans for the Buffs on Tuesday.

Buffs Warm-Up, a pregame show will begin one-hour prior to tip-off. The first of the KOA broadcasts will begin at 6 p.m. on Dec. 28 when CU plays New Orleans in a 7 p.m. game at the Coors Events Center.

Other KOA featured home games: Utah (Dec. 31), Washington State (Jan. 7), Arizona (Jan. 21), Oregon (Feb. 4), and California (Feb. 26).

Buffs road games that will air on KOA are Stanford (Jan. 14), UCLA (Jan. 28), Arizona State (Feb. 11), Utah (Feb. 18), and Oregon State (Mar. 3).

Mark Johnson and Chris Lewis will call the action. Games not heard on 850 KOA will continue to air on AM 760.

Additionally, AM 760 is debuting a new CU Basketball program entitled Buffs PrimeTime. This weekly show will feature interviews with head coaches Tad Boyle and Linda Lappe, in addition to the student-athletes.

Buffs PrimeTime is hosted by Johnson and will air Tuesday nights from 7 to 8 p.m., live from Carelli's of Boulder. The first program is scheduled for Jan. 3. All fans are welcome to join Buffs PrimeTime live at Carelli's of Boulder, located at 645 30th Street in Boulder.

In addition to airing on AM 760, Buffs PrimeTime will also be streamed live on AM760.net and on the BuffsVision tab on CUBuffs.com, and will be available on the iHeartRadio application.

Tonight's game info

TONIGHT: The Colorado Buffaloes (6-4) will play the Texas Southern Tigers (1-8) at 7 p.m. at the Coors Events Center.

BROADCAST: No television. Radio on KKZN (AM 760) with Mark Johnson (play-play-by) and Chris Lewis (color). Follow on Twitter [@RyanThorburn](https://twitter.com/RyanThorburn).

STORYLINES: CU is coming off a 70-64 victory over Cal State Bakersfield on Monday. ... Andre Roberson scored 18 points and grabbed five rebounds to lead the Buffs. ... Jeremy Adams scored two points in his first career start. ... Texas Southern is coming off an 85-61 loss at Colorado State on Monday. ... The Tigers, who are the defending SWAC champions, have already played eight road games and arrive in Boulder on a seven-game losing streak.

KEY STAT: The Buffs are 9-0 all-time against teams from the SWAC.

COACHES: Tad Boyle is 30-18 in his second season at CU. Tony B. Harvey is 44-62 in his fourth season at Texas Southern.

PROBABLE STARTERS: Colorado -- G Nate Tomlinson, 6-3, Sr., 7.2 ppg, 3.2 apg; F Andre Roberson, 6-7, So., 11.7 ppg, 11.1 rpg; F Austin Dufault, 6-9, Sr., 11.1 ppg, 4.7 rpg; G Spencer Dinwiddie, 6-5, Fr., 10.0 ppg, 4.1 rpg; G Carlon Brown, 6-5, Sr., 12.7 ppg, 3.5 rpg. **Texas Southern** -- F Timothy Price, 2.7 ppg, 2.6 rpg, F Fred Sturdivant, 7.7 ppg, 4.3 rpg, G Dexter Ellington, 6.0 ppg, 1.7 apg, G Omar Strong, 10.8 ppg, 1.7 rpg, F DeAngelo Scott, 3.6 ppg, 2.4 rpg.

SERIES: CU leads 2-0, including an 88-74 victory in the NIT last season on March 16, 2011, in Boulder.

UP NEXT: Colorado will host New Orleans on Dec. 28 at the Coors Events Center (7 p.m., Root Sports).

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