



# COLORADO BUFFALOES

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Photo Courtesy: Joel Broida



## Brooks: Buffs Hammer Hawks, Eye Pac-12 Opener

Release: 12/29/2012 Courtesy: B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

**BOULDER** - When the Colorado Buffaloes step onto the basketball court next week in the Arizona desert, the degree of difficulty will soar. But based on their final two non-conference games, the Buffs believe they are very close to being Pac-12 ready.

CU hammered Hartford 80-52 on Saturday afternoon at the Coors Events Center, opening 10-2 for the first time since the 2005-06 season. Eight days earlier, the Buffs polished off Northern Arizona 98-51 - but don't expect a repeat of those kinds of scores anytime soon.

On Thursday, CU opens its Pac-12 schedule at No. 3 Arizona. Figure on the Wildcats playing with an extra-large chip on their shoulders; the Buffs defeated them 53-51 in last season's Pac-12

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championship game in Los Angeles. And following the trip to Tucson, CU visits Arizona State on Sunday, Jan. 6.

Starting in Tucson, reminded Buffs coach Tad Boyle, "the price of poker goes up, the intensity goes up, the level of competition goes up . . . but I think we're ready for conference play."

Rather than concentrating on Saturday's final snapshot of non-league work, Boyle preferred to reflect on the big picture - the Buffs' 10-2 non-conference record.

"Right now, what's on my mind is perspective," he said. "We're 10-2 and for the most part I'm happy. There are still areas for us to get better and taking care of the ball is one of them (CU had a season-worst 21 turnovers). But when you look at our schedule and the strength of our schedule, 10-2 feels good. We're not satisfied, but we've taken care of most of the opportunities in front of us."

He said the Buffs "should dominate Northern Arizona and Hartford, but now the test comes. Can we dominate Arizona? They've got men, they've got animals. I'm not sure we can dominate, but we can stay with them . . . our guys love challenges; they're competitive and believe in themselves."

CU quickly disposed of Hartford (7-6). In fact, the Buffs hardly were challenged, romping to a 45-21 halftime lead and holding at least a 25-point lead for most of the second half. Their largest second-half lead was 37 with just under 12 minutes to play.

Freshman post Josh Scott led CU with 21 points and 10 rebounds, while sophomore guard Askia Booker added 19 points. Junior wing Andre Roberson had 14 points and 14 rebounds for his 31st career double-double - the sixth this season. Sophomore point guard Spencer Dinwiddie added 11 points, his second straight game in double figures after getting five total in the previous two contests.

The Buffs hadn't played since Dec. 21, but the long Christmas break left no ugly marks on any part of their game. After bolting to an 11-0 lead, they increased their advantage to 31-9 with 6 minutes remaining before intermission, then led by 24 points at the break.

Said Dinwiddie: "I think that every time you have an extended period of time off (and) have a lot of practices between games you're more focused."

Hartford was a long way from home and way out of its league, which happens to be the American East. The Hawks lost 71-63 in early December at Arizona State, and they will reflect on that loss as their closest call with a Pac-12 team. Their first 20 minutes in Boulder were seriously forgettable; they shot only 25 percent (7-for-27) from the field and didn't reach double digits (12) until the 5:51 mark of the half.

Meanwhile, CU was in another holiday sharing mood, particularly in the game's first 6 minutes. After recording a season-high 24 assists against Northern Arizona, the Buffs dished out 10 assists in Saturday's first half. That helped them hit 60 percent (18-for-30) from the field and also was instrumental in outscoring the Hawks 28-0 in the paint in the first 20 minutes.

The first-half board battle wasn't close to even being a skirmish: CU outrebounded the visitors 28-6 and finished with a 52-21 board advantage. The Buffs prevailed in the paint 44-11.

Said Scott: "We're always trying to get a hefty rebound margin . . . we just went out and did it."

By intermission, three CU players already were in double figures - Booker and Scott with a dozen points each and Roberson with 11.

Large halftime leads sometimes can result in an early second-half malaise, but it didn't work that way for the Buffs. Not quite 4 minutes into the second half, they had increased their lead to 33 (56-23) and showed no signs of slowing to rest.

Still, with 7:35 remaining, playing mostly against Buffs reserves, the Hawks cut their deficit to 25 (68-43), prompting Boyle to return his five starters to the court. He said his bench "is not where it needs to be mentally. With 11 minutes to go, I wanted to let our bench take us home."

Instead, Boyle's reserves gave up some layups, committed a handful of their 21 turnovers and were generally not as crisp as Boyle envisioned. When conference play opens, Boyle conceded "our bench has to get better - and I think it will. There are guys there we're going to have to count on."

Of the turnover total, Dinwiddie said, "We definitely heard about that (from Boyle). We went to keep our turnovers in an eight to ten range and today, we didn't do that. Our turnovers continue to be a work in progress. Part of it is a product of how we play, because we try to play fast. So we're going to be higher than most teams. But we always want our (assist-to-turnover) ratio to be positive, of course."

By the 5:07 mark of the last half, the Buffs had righted themselves and surged to a 32-point advantage (75-43) on a pair of Sabatino Chen free throws. A three-point play by Jeremy Adams brought a 78-43 lead, and at that point, Boyle inserted sophomore center Ben Mills for the second time in two games. Just under 3 minutes later, sophomore guard Beau Gamble left the bench, marking the second time in two games Boyle has used all of his players.

Boyle said his starters "are playing together, playing at a high level, sharing the ball, moving the ball . . . I told our team that there's not one guy who can beat the Pac-12 on his own; we've got to do it together as a collective group. I like where we are."

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## Boyle's team finishes 10-2 in nonconference play

By Pat Rooney Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

BOULDER--It's no secret the stakes, in addition to the competition, is going to increase dramatically in the very near future for the CU men's basketball team.

Saturday's matinee, which saw the Buffaloes return from an eight-day holiday hiatus to complete their nonconference schedule against Hartford, showcased a Buffs squad looking much like the team that dismantled Northern Arizona in its previous pre-break tilt.

While past two games certainly failed to provide the sort of competition CU must brace for when it opens Pac-12 Conference play on Thursday at nationally-ranked Arizona -- indeed, CU's eventual 80-52 victory on Saturday hardly was in doubt not long after the Coors Events Center crowd settled into their seats -- CU once again did not allow any aspect of its game grow lax against an inferior opponent.

Like last week's win against Northern Arizona, CU dominated Hartford on the glass, battled defensively, and never turned off the gas while improving to 10-2 for the first time since the 2005-06 season.

"You look at our first unit, and they were playing at a high level and really playing together," CU coach Tad Boyle said. "They were sharing the ball, they were moving the ball. And we've got to rely on each other. I told the team that there's not one guy in here who can beat the Pac-12 on their own. You have to do it together, as a collective group."

After shooting a season-best .667 from the floor against Northern Arizona, the Buffs wasted little time shaking off whatever rust had accumulated over the previous eight days. CU shot 18 for 30 (.600) during the first half while quickly piling it on Hartford. The Buffs scored the game's first 11 points, making six of their first seven shots and turning that lone miss into a basket after an offensive rebound.

Meanwhile, Hartford missed six of its first seven shots and never recovered. CU jumped to a 26-6 lead and built a 47-21 lead at halftime. CU extended its cushion to as much as 37 points during the second half before cruising to the win.

"I think we're just coming out ready to go," freshman forward Josh Scott said. "I think we learned our lessons from the Texas Southern and Wyomings that we have to come ready to play. It shows our maturation."

CU received double-doubles from Scott (21 points, 10 rebounds) and Andre Roberson (14 points, 14 rebounds). Askia Booker contributed 19 points for the Buffs while combining with Scott and Roberson to give CU a 23 for 33 effort from the floor. Sophomore guard Spencer Dinwiddie finished with 11 points, six rebounds, and six assists.

If there was a coaching point in the aftermath for Boyle to ruminate as his club prepares for Arizona, it was the production of his team's bench. Despite extended minutes, CU's reserves contributed just 12 points while being responsible for 11 of the Buffs' 21 turnovers.

"I like where we are, but I do think our bench has to continue to get better," Boyle said. "We have to develop that as the year goes on. We've got some capable guys coming off that bench that we're going to have to count

on at times during this run."

## Notable

CU has topped 10,000 in attendance in five of six home games. ... The Buffs have outrebounded their opponents in 9 of 12 games. ... Roberson's double-double was his sixth of the season and 31st of his career. ... CU hoops alum Levi Knutson, on break from playing professionally in Poland, was in attendance.

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Colorado 80, Hartford 52

## HARTFORD

FG FT Reb

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

Nwakamma 26 3-13 0-0 1-8 0 4 7

Sikma 24 2-8 0-0 0-2 5 4 6

Wroe 14 0-0 0-0 0-0 2 1 0

Moore II 15 1-4 0-0 0-0 1 4 3

Cooper 32 5-8 1-2 1-3 3 4 14

Cole 13 3-5 0-0 1-1 0 1 9

U'u 16 3-7 0-0 1-1 1 0 9

Aska 2 0-0 0-1 0-1 0 0 0

Dyson 14 1-6 0-0 0-0 0 0 2

Peterson 13 0-1 0-0 2-2 1 1 0

Burrell 3 0-0 0-1 0-1 0 0 0

Akerland 2 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Faulk 13 0-2 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Schneck 13 1-2 0-0 0-0 0 1 2

Totals 200 19-56 1-4 7-21 13 20 52

Percentages: FG .339, FT .250.

3-Point Goals: 13-31, .419 (Cole 3-4, U'u 3-5, Cooper 3-5, Sikma 2-7, Nwakamma 1-2, Moore II 1-2, Peterson 0-1, Dyson 0-5).

Team Rebounds: 2.

Blocked Shots: 2 (Sikma, Nwakamma).

Turnovers: 19 (Sikma 4, U'u 4, Moore II 4, Cooper 2, Nwakamma 2, Aska, Schneck, Faulk).

Steals: 13 (Nwakamma 4, U'u 4, Cole 2, Dyson, Sikma, Faulk).

Technical Fouls: None.

## COLORADO

FG FT Reb

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

Roberson 28 6-8 1-1 2-14 1 0 14

Scott 23 9-12 3-5 7-10 0 1 21

Booker 26 8-13 0-0 1-4 2 1 19

Chen 20 0-3 3-4 1-1 3 1 3

Dinwiddie 27 2-5 7-7 0-6 6 1 11

Johnson 18 1-6 2-2 2-2 1 2 4

Talton 14 0-1 1-3 0-1 0 1 1

Stalzer 13 0-2 0-0 0-1 2 2 0

Gamble 3 1-3 0-0 0-2 0 0 2

Harris-Tunks 9 1-1 0-0 1-3 0 0 2

Adams 14 1-3 1-1 2-2 0 2 3

Mills 5 0-2 0-0 1-3 0 0 0

Totals 200 29-59 18-23 19-52 15 11 80

Percentages: FG .492, FT .783.

3-Point Goals: 4-16, .250 (Booker 3-5, Roberson 1-1, Talton 0-1, Johnson 0-1, Gamble 0-2, Dinwiddie 0-

3, Chen 0-3).

Team Rebounds: 3.

Blocked Shots: 4 (Roberson 3, Scott).

Turnovers: 21 (Dinwiddie 3, Stalzer 3, Booker 3, Harris-Tunks 3, Talton 2, Johnson 2, Scott, Roberson, Adams).

Steals: 10 (Stalzer 3, Roberson 2, Dinwiddie, Scott, Adams, Chen, Booker).

Technical Fouls: None.P

Colorado 45 35--80

A -- 10,228.

## Thorburn: Boyle's CU Buffs still have a long way to go

By Ryan Thorburn Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

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Colorado's fan base still had a case of March Madness in the middle of October.

The Buffs' storybook run through the Pac-12 Tournament and into the NCAA Tournament filled the bandwagon in a hurry.

CU's ticket office finally stopped season ticket sales at just under 6,700 with the C-Unit adding about 2,500 to the total.

After about three fall Saturdays the football season was a lost cause and the question on campus was:

Is it November yet?

As Tad Boyle prepared to take on a daunting nonconference schedule with one senior and six true freshmen in the program, CU's third-year head coach did his best to calm outside expectations for the 2012-13 Buffs.

"Let me say this, the expectations of this team are far ahead of where the team is," Boyle said at CU's basketball media day as practices began in mid-October. "They are a little out of whack right now."

After Saturday's assertive 80-52 victory over Hartford, the Buffs look like a team capable of making some more March memories.

Andre Roberson and Josh Scott combined for 35 points and 24 rebounds. Askia Booker had 19 points on 8-for-13 shooting, and Spencer Dinwiddie added 11 points, six rebounds and six assists.

So what are the expectations inside the locker room for Pac-12 play?

"We want to win it all. There is nothing less than that," Booker said. "That will be where our mark is set."

CU improved to 10-2 with a resume that includes the Charleston Classic championship, a decisive win over a very good Colorado State team, and road losses at No. 6 Kansas (11-1) and undefeated Wyoming (12-0).

Last season the Buffs were picked to finish tied for 10th in the preseason poll and finished the regular season tied for fifth before winning four games in four nights in Los Angeles.

This fall the media tabbed CU sixth behind Arizona, UCLA, Cal, Stanford and Washington.

It appears that my peers were wrong again.

"We'll find out," Boyle said. "I don't get too concerned with those (predictions), other than when I hear people say it's a given we're going to be in the NCAA Tournament or it's a given we're going to win this game or that game."

"Nothing is given in college basketball."



The Buffs will have a chance to find out how far they still have to go, or perhaps how much they've improved, on Thursday when they open conference play at No. 3 Arizona (12-0).

CU defeated the Wildcats in the conference tournament title game at the Staples Center to earn the automatic invitation to the Big Dance.

"I'm excited and I feel like we played a pretty tough nonconference schedule," Scott said after helping CU out-rebound Hartford 52-21. "This is obviously my first year, so maybe I don't know what I'm talking about."

The Buffs' best nonconference win last season was probably the 70-68 home victory over an average Georgia team or the 76-73 overtime win at below-average Air Force.

CU was 8-4 entering the Pac-12 schedule.

"Our nonconference was way better this year," Dinwiddie said. "And it will better help us prepare for the Pac-12."

Boyle can't look ahead, but those rules don't apply in this space.

CU should finish in the top four in the Pac-12 with Arizona, Oregon and UCLA.

If the Buffs can live up to that expectation, they will be playing in the NCAA Tournament again, even if they don't cut down the nets at the Pac-12 Tournament in Las Vegas.

Follow Ryan on Twitter:

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## Tad Boyle's Buffaloes are turning Colorado into a basketball school

By John Henderson *The Denver Post* *The Denver Post*

Posted:

DenverPost.com

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BOULDER —You can always tell when a university has become a basketball school. Take Colorado. The biggest cheer during a football game is the announcement of the basketball season opener. Students are no longer writing Western Civ papers in the stands during games.

And the team draws 10,000 fans. For Northern Arizona. When students have left for Christmas break.

This may not be the salad days of CU men's basketball. The elderly might remember a run to the 1955 Final Four. But never has the sport been more popular in Boulder.

CU sold a school-record 6,666 season tickets this year, the maximum allowed by the ticket office. It's averaging a school-record 10,252 fans per game and has had three sellouts. Now comes Pac-12 play, beginning Thursday with the Buffaloes, the defending Pac-12 Tournament champions, standing 10-2 with a No. 4 RPI national ranking and tagged as one of the few challengers to No. 3-ranked Arizona (11-0).

Oh, and CU visits the Wildcats on Thursday.

With apologies to new Buffaloes football coach Mike MacIntyre, this campus is abuzz about rebounds, not recruiting.

"It starts and ends with our student section," said third-year CU coach Tad Boyle. "That's the whole key. The whole community, and people come to the games who aren't students, feed off them."

Yes, only four years ago, when the Buffs averaged 4,637 fans to yawn for a 9-22 team, the only factor in their favor at the Coors Events Center was altitude. Under Boyle, Colorado has its own Coors Crazies.

Believe it or not, the basketball players have become BMOCs, which will happen when you are 38-4 at home the past three years.

"Some people ask me if it's awkward when people that you don't know ask you how's your day," said sophomore point guard Spencer Dinwiddie. "That gets kind of weird sometimes, but it's all love, so I like it."

Boyle can point to a number of home victories he said wouldn't have happened without the crowd support — Arizona and Oregon last season, Texas and Oklahoma State the year before — but you don't win without players, either. With only two starters back from last season's team that won its NCAA Tournament opener, CU is shooting the ball well and finally defending the perimeter, which had been a weakness.

Junior Andre Roberson has become one of the nation's top players. He's leading the Pac-12 in rebounding (averaging 12.1) and was fourth in steals (averaging 2.2). And his supporting cast is set in stone. Starting every game alongside Roberson has been Dinwiddie (averaging 14.4 points and 2.8 assists), back at his natural point guard position after playing off guard last year; sophomore shooting guard Askia Booker (14.8 points, 3.7 rebounds), 6-foot-10 freshman sensation Josh Scott (13.2, 5.9) and defensive star Sabatino Chen (4.1, 2.1).

Entering the weekend, the Buffs led the Pac-12 in 3-point shooting at .410.

"I've been pleasantly surprised with our consistency," Boyle said. "If you look at our roster, six of our top nine players are freshmen and sophomores. Consistency is something you worry about as a coach, but we've been pretty darn consistent."

Colorado has no wins over current top-25 teams. But Baylor was ranked No. 16 when the Buffs beat the Bears in the Charleston (S.C.) Classic. CU has three wins over teams in the RPI top 50: No. 18 Murray State (9-2 entering Saturday), No. 23 Colorado State (10-2) and No. 43 Baylor (8-4).

The Buffaloes' strength of schedule has been ranked fifth-toughest in the country. The problem is, when they have walked into a hostile environment, they haven't responded well. Wyoming upset them 76-69 on Dec. 1 and a week later then-No. 9 Kansas walloped them 90-54.

Boyle can hardly be blamed for the loss at Kansas but can certainly be kidded. In Lawrence, KU has beaten the Buffs 28 consecutive times, not losing to Colorado since a sophomore guard named Tad Boyle and the Jayhawks lost 75-74 in 1983.

"You look at our neutral-court games, we've been really good," Boyle said. "Where we have to get better is true road environments. Part of that is our maturity level. Part of it is our mental toughness. Both of those things are works in progress."

Also a problem — away or home — has been turnovers. The Buffs entered the weekend 10th in the Pac-12 in turnover margin (minus-1.91 per game) and last in assist-turnover ratio (0.7). But don't just blame Dinwiddie, who has 33 assists and 30 turnovers.

"It's throughout our whole team," Boyle said.

After this week's Pac-12 trip to Arizona and Arizona State, CU opens its home conference schedule Jan. 10 against Southern California.

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A dozen to go

Pac-12 men's basketball teams, with their order based on preseason media ranking:

## 1. Arizona

Record, rank: 12-0, No. 3 AP, No. 9 RPI

Where they stand: The Wildcats have signature wins over Florida and San Diego State, and their highest ranking in nine seasons.

Update: The Wildcats have the perfect blend of senior leadership, including Xavier transfer Mark Lyons, and blue-chip recruits such as 6-foot-8 McDonald's All-American Brandon Ashley. The Wildcats are on fire, entering the weekend leading the Pac-12 in field-goal shooting (.486) and foul shooting (.764). They also lead in rebounding (plus-11.3).

What to expect: In his fourth year at Arizona, coach Sean Miller has built the Wildcats into legitimate national championship contenders. Arizona not winning the league title would be one of the biggest shocks in the country.

## 2. UCLA

Record, rank: 10-3, No. 82 RPI

Where they stand: Coach Ben Howland has the nation's No. 1 recruiting class, and Friday's overtime win over seventh-ranked Missouri showed the Bruins' mind-numbing home loss to Cal Poly was a mere burp.

Update: Before Howland finished Thanks- giving leftovers, prized 2010 recruit Joshua Smith and starting guard Tyler Lamb left the program. The 305-pound Smith only lived up to expectations at the training table and Lamb wasn't getting much playing time this season. Still, star freshman Shabazz Muhammad, the nation's top recruit, ranks fourth in the league in scoring (averaging 18.8 points per game) and senior Larry Drew II leads in assists (averaging 8.5).

What to expect: Even though UCLA has only eight scholarship players, including four true freshmen, the Missouri win shows it may be addition by subtraction. Howland can have a more set rotation. But he'd better not miss the NCAAs for the second consecutive year.

### 3. California

Record, rank: 8-4, No. 41 RPI

Where they stand: No highlight wins to suggest the Golden Bears can challenge for an NCAA Tournament berth. And three straight losses, including an 81-56 drubbing at Wisconsin, may mean Cal isn't ready for a repeat trip to the NCAAs, either.

Update: With Abraham Lincoln grad Jorge Gutierrez, the Pac-12 player of the year, gone to the D-League's Canton Charge, Allen Crabbe leads the league in scoring (averaging 20.4 points). Justin Cobbs is at 16.5. They make up more than half the Bears' offense (72.4). Missouri transfer Ricky Krecklow is just returning from a foot injury that will linger.

What to expect: If veteran coach Mike Montgomery wants to contend, he needs more consistency from his two stars. Creighton held Crabbe to a 6-for-26 flop job. If no third option emerges, you will spell Cal with another three-letter word: NIT.

### 4. Stanford

Record, rank: 8-4, No. 61 RPI

Where they stand: Belmont is good, but should any Pac-12 team lose to Belmont? A win at Northwestern does make Stanford worthy of defending its NIT title. Whee!

Update: The Cardinal can't shoot. It ranks last in the league at .407 — and last in 3-point shooting at .283. Guard Chasson Randle's 3-point accuracy has dropped from 44 percent to 21 percent. But 6-9 forward Dwight Powell has picked up where he left off in the NIT, averaging 14.9 points.

What to expect: With four starters back and healthy, this could be the conference sleeper. It has postseason experience from a 26-11 team, but has no signature wins yet.

### 5. Washington

Record, rank: 8-5, No. 96 RPI

Where they stand: This could be the league's most disappointing team with losses already to Albany, Colorado State and Nevada, all at home.

Update: The kind of consistency that cost the defending Pac-12 regular-season champs an NCAA berth is killing the Huskies again. They're last in the league in shooting defense at .420 and were drubbed 73-55 by CSU. But the offense isn't too great either. The Huskies didn't make a basket in the last 9:44 against 2-8 Northern Illinois.

What to expect: Much hinges on the offensive improvement of 7-foot senior Aziz N'Diaye. He is a potential league defensive player of the year and has improved his scoring average from 7.8 to 11.8. But the Huskies are no longer invincible at home, and a repeat title would unearth the Space Needle.

## 6. Colorado

Record, rank: 10-2, No. 4 RPI

Where they stand: CU won the Charleston (S.C.) Classic with wins over Dayton, Baylor and Murray State. But awful losses at Wyoming and Kansas showed this team's youth.

Update: Their only two losses are against unbeatens, so the Buffaloes emerged as a threat to Arizona, as their RPI reflects. Andre Roberson leads the league in rebounds (11.9) and fab frosh Josh Scott (12.5 points, 5.5 rebounds) is living up to his billing.

What to expect: The Buffaloes will roll at home with the most improved home-court crowd in the league but may struggle on the road until they start taking care of the ball. They're last in assist-to-turnover ratio.

## 7. Oregon

Record, rank: 10-2, No. 57 RPI

Where they stand: The Ducks have an impressive win at then 18th-ranked UNLV and annihilated Nebraska (welcome to Lincoln, Tim Miles) 60-38.

Update: Rice transfer Arsalan Kazemi has helped Oregon stand second in rebounding margin at plus-10.7. The Iranian, at 6-7, leads in steals for the ball-hawking Ducks, who average 10.1 per game. Five Ducks are averaging double-figure points.

What to expect: With a veteran frontcourt and a freshman backcourt, the Ducks will have their klunker nights. But if frosh guards Damyean Dotson and Dominic Artis mature, they will team with Kazemi and steady E.J. Singler for some magical nights too.

## 8. Oregon State

Record, rank: 9-3, No. 147 RPI

Where they stand: The Beavers have proven little with no wins over top-150 teams, and Saturday's home loss to Towson, a 1-31 dog last season, took away any road cred from a narrow 84-78 loss at Kansas.

Update: Sophomore forward Eric Moreland has shot off the bench to become the league's No. 2 rebounder at 10.6. Sixth man Roberto Nelson is the league's top sniper at .524 from 3-point range. Despite the loss of all-league Jared Cunningham, this should be a deeper, more talented Beavers team.

What to expect: This could be another sleeper, with four starters back and last year's bench emerging. But the loss to a 3-8 Towson team showed why Oregon State hasn't had a winning league mark since 1989-90.

## 9. Southern California

Record, rank: 4-8, No. 212 RPI

Where they stand: The Trojans scheduled a murderers' row in nonconference play and are getting murdered. Illinois. Marquette. San Diego State. New Mexico. Minnesota. All have beaten USC, which does have one pelt from Texas.

Update: Coach Kevin O'Neill arrived three years ago to massive NCAA sanctions and injuries leveled him a year ago. To supplant the roster, he has transfers from Iowa, Cal- Irvine, Tennessee, Fordham, Rice and two from Wake Forest. Eric Wise, via UCI, at 10.8 and J.T. Terrell from Wake Forest at 10.1 are the only the Trojans in double figures.

What can we expect: Yawns. O'Neill's teams aren't always this dull, but he has two 7-footers and transfers still getting over introductions. The Trojans won't go 6-26 again, but they won't challenge .500 either.

## 10. Washington State

Record, rank: 8-4, No. 179 RPI

Where they stand: Not one win over a team in the top 200, and a loss at Pepperdine to boot. Where have you

gone, Tony Bennett?

Update: The Cougars lost at Gonzaga only by two points. But their biggest loss was senior point guard Reggie Moore, who was booted off the team in September. Senior Mike Ladd and Kansas transfer Royce Woolridge are picking up the playmaker slack.

What can we expect: The Cougars finished second in the CBI with 6-10 star Brock Motum injured. Now he's No. 2 in the league in scoring (averaging 19.9 points). But he will need help, and Moore is no longer around.

## 11. Arizona State

Record, rank: 11-2, No. 67 RPI

Where they stand: This is an improved Sun Devils team, with the lone losses to Creighton and DePaul and a win over Arkansas.

Update: What's worse for seven-year coach Herb Sendek — two consecutive losing seasons in the middling Pac-12 or 12 players leaving the last four years, including last season's leading scorer, Trent Lockett, who bolted to Marquette? No, this is worse: New athletic director Steve Patterson.

What can we expect: Sendek's fate rests in the hands of freshman Jahii Carson, the dynamic point guard he hasn't had before. Carson is averaging 17.9 points and 5.3 assists. If 7-2 center Jordan Bachynski continues his improvement, Sendek may survive.

## 12. Utah

Record, rank: 8-4, No. 114 RPI

Where they stand: Losses to Sacramento State and Cal State Northridge have marred any signs of improvement by the Utes.

Update: Coach Larry Krystkowiak survived a school-worst 6-25 inaugural campaign and has made the Utes the league's top defensive team, holding opponents to .364 shooting. He has a gem in grad student Jarred Dubois, a transfer from Loyola Marymount, who is averaging a team-high 14.1 points.

What can we expect: Even with the worst loss in modern school history, Krystkowiak still lost seven players, including three starters. Expect more rebuilding but a more competitive team. At least, don't expect the Utes to fall behind 34-2 and 52-18 again.

DECEMBER 30, 2012, 2:22 PM

## Bufs' offense riding league's second-ranked 3-point shooting

By **JOHN HENDERSON** |  No Comments

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BOULDER — Leading the leftovers from my Colorado/Pac-12 preview Sunday is coach Tad Boyle's look at his team's terrific long-range shooting. The Buffaloes, 10-2, led the league in 3-point accuracy until Saturday when they slipped to second but they're still at .395, led by point guard Spencer Dinwiddie's .465 (20-of-43).

"Whether it's 3-point shooting or free throw shooting, that's such a personal thing," Boyle said. "That's why you recruit guys like Askia Booker who has the work ethic to get into the gym in the off season or Spencer Dinwiddie who worked on his game in the off season. Andre Roberson has gotten better every year. Sabatino Chen's jumpshot, from the time he got on campus two years ago until today? He's shooting with confidence."

Boyle says he also has the right philosophy.

"I give our players a lot of freedom," he said. "That's a strength. They feel if they miss a three they're not worried about coming out of the game. That's a strength of ours. It's also a weakness because if those threes aren't going I look like a pretty stupid coach: 'He's got no control over them! They have too much freedom!'

"They understand, when it's going, ride it. When it's not going, let's be smart and get the ball into Josh (Scott). Let's get to the free-throw line. You look at our free throws compared to our opponents, that's really a strength of our team."

Colorado's 207 made throws are more than its opponents' 171 attempts. Now, about that .663 foul shooting percentage, 11th in the league ...

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## Colorado defeats Hartford 80-52; Scott scores 21

By DENNIS GEORGATOS Associated Press The Denver Post

Posted:

DenverPost.com

BOULDER, Colo.—Josh Scott scored a career-best 21 points, Askia Booker had 19, and Colorado led handily from start to finish in beating Hartford 80-52 on Saturday.

Andre Roberson added 14 points and 14 rebounds, and Spencer Dinwiddie had 11 points and six assists for Colorado (10-2), off to its best start since also opening 10-2 in 2005-06.

Evan Cooper had 14 points to lead Hartford (7-6). No other player scored in double figures for the Hawks (7-6), who remained winless in five games against members of the Pac-12 Conference over the last 28 years. Two of those losses are against Colorado.

Up by 24 points at the break, Colorado stretched its lead to 56-23 with an 11-2 burst to start the second half. Dinwiddie helped fuel the run with a three-point play, and Scott capped it by sinking a jumper. The only score by Hartford in that span came on a layup by Jamie Schneck with 19:21 left in the second half, Hartford's first points in the paint of the game.

Cooper's third 3-pointer pulled the Hawks to within 56-26, but the Buffaloes took off again on a 12-4 burst capped by Scott's three-point play to open a 37-point advantage.

Hartford responded with its only strong stretch of the game, getting a pair of 3-pointers from Wes Cole and outscoring the Buffaloes 12-0 over a nearly four-minute span before Colorado again halted their momentum with a 10-0 burst sealing the game.

Overall, the Hawks were outrebounded 52-21 and outscored from up close 44-11. It was the most points allowed in a game by Hartford this season.

Colorado scored the first 11 points of the game, starting with a dunk by Roberson 18 seconds into the contest and finished with its second highest scoring first half of the season in taking a 45-21 lead.

Hartford didn't collect its first rebound until John Peterson pulled one down off a missed jumper by teammate Yolonzo Moore II. By then, the Buffaloes had put together separate runs of 18-3 and 8-0 for a 26-6 lead over Hartford, which got all of its first-half points from seven 3-pointers, including three by U'u on 7 of 27 shooting from the floor.