



# COLORADO BUFFALOES

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**CU coach Tad Boyle wants more commitment from his 1-3 Buffs team.**

Photo Courtesy: Joel Broida



## Brooks: Buffs Face 'Totally Different' Huskies Team

Release: 01/15/2013 Courtesy: B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

**BOULDER** - Few will argue that timing is everything, but Tad Boyle doesn't want to hear that this might not be the most opportune time to take his Colorado basketball team to Seattle. The Pac-12 Conference schedule has the Buffs at Washington on Wednesday night . . . and that's that.

CU will show up - Boyle, of course, is hoping for more - at the Alaska Airlines Arena for its latest tip-time of the season (9:30 p.m. MST) and try to rekindle some of the grit, commitment and efficiency that seem to have waned since 2013 arrived.

UW, meanwhile, is not waning or wanting in many areas. But more on the white-hot Huskies in a bit.

Just for kicks, flip the calendar back about 21/2 months to late November when Larry Eustachy and his Colorado State guys visited Seattle to play U-Dub. Huskies coach Lorenzo Romar was patching together a lineup minus senior co-captain Scott Suggs, arguably UW's best perimeter defender, and power forward Shawn Kemp, Jr., whom Romar has called "potentially our best low-post scorer."

Suggs was out with a sprained arch tendon in his right foot, Kemp with a torn right patellar tendon. CSU didn't

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MBB Notes at Washington

win a sleepwalk in Seattle, but it was close: Rams 73, Huskies 55. Good victory for CSU, which visited CU two weeks later and lost, 70-61.

That was then and since, Suggs has returned to Romar's starting lineup while the 6-9 Kemp still appears to be working himself back into form. But the Huskies are unquestionably - these are Boyle's words - "a totally different team than in non-conference."

Part of that is due to what Suggs brings back - he's averaging 12.2 points - and part of it attributable to the play of C.J. Wilcox, the conference's scoring leader (21.3 ppg). Aziz N'Diaye, a 7-foot senior, is averaging 11.3 points and 9.3 rebounds. But it was Wilcox who almost singlehandedly pushed UW past Stanford last weekend, scoring 13 of his team's final 15 points in the 65-60 win and finishing with 27 points and nine rebounds.

UW (3-0) is one of three unbeaten Pac-12 teams, joining Oregon (3-0) and UCLA (4-0). But put the Huskies' perfect mark alongside those of the Ducks and the Bruins and a rather large difference is obvious: UW has yet to play a home conference game. The Huskies, 11-5 overall, have won at Washington State, at California and at Stanford - the latter 'W' giving UW its first 3-0 road start in league play since 1912.

Yes, the sun is shining in Seattle.

The Huskies, winners in nine of their past 11 games, haven't played at home since Dec. 22. Consider the welcome mat laid out invitingly for the Buffs, who also are 11-5 overall but 1-3 in the Pac-12 and trying to avoid a tailspin during a stretch that has them on the road for five of their next seven games.

Boyle isn't into looking that far ahead. "We'll play them as they come; (UW) is the next game and we have to be focused there," he said. "I'm not going to get caught up in how many are left, who's won on the road or at home. We have to figure out a way to compete."

Neither will Boyle rise to the bait of this being a "desperation" trip for the Buffs: "We're not in desperation mode; we're not going to hit the panic button," he said. "What we have to understand is why we are where we are and what we need to do to put ourselves in position to win games."

CU's leading rebounder, Andre Roberson, begs to differ on the desperation angle: "This trip is very desperate at this point . . . losing a game to UCLA at home (78-75 last Saturday) is definitely a big loss. We've got to get this thing turned around as quickly as possible. Washington is definitely beatable, but we have to get on the right page."

If you have a team and its coach disagreeing on anything, desperation in his players' approach to a road trip might be the one area that can put a gleam in Boyle's eye. He's been desperately trying to get the Buffs to play with more overall commitment and a tougher mental edge, intangibles he sees as lacking in Pac-12 play. If desperation delivers that, then by all means bring it to Seattle.

But, noted Boyle, "With all that being said, it's a fine, fine line as to why we are where we are. It's not like our offense is broken or our defense is not good enough. We're not doing the little things consistently enough to win close games or put ourselves in position where we're up six or eight points coming down the stretch."

On the mental toughness issue, much of that has been absent since the departure of Aussie point guard Nate Tomlinson, who brought a nasty streak as big as the outback. Almost daily, Tomlinson tried Boyle's patience as a coach, but he also delivered an on-court belligerence that worked.

Boyle had a recent conversation with one of his players about playing tougher and taking on a leadership role. The player, Boyle recalled, said he had played with Nate and that he was a prick." Boyle's response: Yeah, but in a very good way; it was among Tomlinson's values to that team - and it's among the things this team is lacking.

"Nate didn't care about scoring, didn't care about shooting," Boyle said. "All Nate wanted to do was win. The thing about Nate is he had enough nastiness to him and competitiveness to him that he held his teammates accountable to what we wanted to get done. We miss Nate a lot, and I knew we would.

"We don't have that guy right now who's calling his teammates out because we don't have anybody on the team

that's doing it consistently enough for his teammates to listen to him."

Roberson and Chen can fill that role, Boyle said, and sophomore guard Spencer Dinwiddie "to a degree." Roberson called Tomlinson "a special guy, but every person's different. He had a special characteristic that helped this team a lot. I feel like we don't have a guy like that this year; we have to go about it with a different type of leadership."

The day after CU's loss to UCLA, Roberson, a junior, and senior Sabatino Chen conducted a players' only meeting to allow the Buffs to discuss among themselves the reasons for their 1-3 conference start. Roberson said all of his teammates had their say, calling the half hour meeting productive.

"I think we're kind of soul-searching right now," said freshman post Josh Scott. "We got things sorted out (in the meeting), but we're still working. We need to win these next (two) games. There's a lot of season left."

Scott, who has averaged 14.3 points in 6.5 rebounds in the four conference games, was a CU signee last spring when the Buffs made their four-game run to the Pac-12 tournament championship then played two more in the NCAA tournament. He was more than an interested observer as he watched his team-to-be.

"I watched a lot of the season, and I remember they had their struggles just as much as we have," Scott said. "They pulled it together in the last six games of the year, but hopefully we can do it before the last six games so we don't have to win the Pac-12 championship (to get the NCAAs). If they can do it, we can do it right now and turn this around."

"I think there's a certain type of toughness that's been lacking. I think there's some 'toughness plays' that we need to be making. Yeah, there's some toughness lacking that we need to identify."

Starting the ID process late Wednesday night in Seattle would be timely. Continuing it Saturday night at Washington State would be nice, too. No doubt at 1-3 the Buffs are in a hole, but daylight is still visible . . . for now.

**Contact:** [BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU](mailto:BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU)

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## Men's basketball: CU Buffs face tough Washington road trip

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Andre Roberson says the Colorado basketball team is feeling desperate as it prepares for a road game Wednesday night at Washington. Coach Tad Boyle says it's too early in the season for his team to go into desperation mode.

Whether they're desperate or not, the Buffs have to find a way to earn a victory against the Huskies in a traditionally tough venue for visitors.

Washington is 3-0 in Pac-12 Conference play with all three of its victories coming on the road. The Buffs are 1-3 in conference play and looking to get back into the thick of the conference race after losing at home to UCLA last week and being swept in two games in Arizona two weeks ago.

"This trip is very desperate at this point," Roberson said. "Losing a game to UCLA at home was definitely a big loss. We've got to try to get this thing turned around as quickly as possible. Washington is definitely beatable and I feel like we need to get on the right page and everybody come together and go out there and prove that we are one of the top in the league."

This is a matchup between the defending regular season conference champions and the defending conference tournament champions. Roberson and his teammates were hoping to put themselves in a better position this year in mid-March and avoid having to win the conference tournament to earn an NCAA tournament bid.

So far, it isn't going as planned.

The Buffs are playing catch-up in an improved league this year.

"We're not in desperation mode," Boyle said. "We're not going to hit the panic button. What we have to understand is why we are where we are and what we need to do to put ourselves in position to win games. What we have to do is we have to get stops at key points in the game."

Boyle said the UCLA game is a perfect example of how the Buffs failed to make stops when they needed them most. He said during a roughly 4-minute stretch from the 5 minute mark until there was 1 minute remaining, UCLA had the ball six times and CU allowed the Bruins to score on four of those possessions. He said if the Buffs made stops on four of those possessions instead of two, it would have been a tie game entering the final minute.

"It's a whole different mindset when you get stops," he said.

Washington has a talented and experienced roster led by junior guard C.J. Wilson and senior center Aziz N'Daiye. The Huskies have allowed their first three Pac-12 opponents to average just under 57 points a game, best in the conference.

N'Daiye is a monster in the middle at 7-foot and 260 pounds. He has made 18 of 23 field goal attempts in Pac-12 play. The Buffs did not fare well the last time they saw a 7-footer. Arizona State center Jordan Bachynski blocked nine shots from the Buffs three games ago.

The Buffs started fast in that road game but allowed Bachynski to get in their heads. CU also started fast in a near-miss at No. 4 Arizona. Roberson said the Buffs leave Boulder with a sense of confidence but they have to avoid the lulls that have plagued them this season and have led to giving back double-digit leads in their past two road games.

"This year we've kind of struggled coming out in the second half and that's one thing we have to work on," Roberson said. "Out here on the floor we start good in practice and then kind of drop off. We've got to get all 40 minutes rolling on the court. If we do that, we'll be a hard team to beat."

Follow Kyle on Twitter:

@KyleRingo

CU men's hoops preview

WEDNESDAY: The Colorado Buffaloes (11-5, 1-3) visit the Washington Huskies (11-5, 3-0) at 9:36 p.m. at Alaska Airlines Arena.

BROADCAST: Television on the Pac-12 Network with Kevin Calabro (play-by-play) and Lenny Wilkens (analyst). Radio on KOA (AM 850) with Mark Johnson (play-by-play) and Chad Brown (analyst). Follow on Twitter: @RyanThorburn.

CU STORYLINES: The Buffs lost at home to UCLA on Saturday and are badly in need of a win to make up ground in the conference standings. ... CU is just 1-4 in true road games this season but has held a double-digit lead in two of those losses. The Buffs are 3-0 in neutral court games so they have shown they can play well away from the Coors Events Center. ... This is Colorado's first trip to Washington since the 1995-96 season. ... The Buffs have played the most games decided by 10 points or less in the Pac-12 Conference. They are 7-4 in those games.

WASHINGTON STORYLINES: The Huskies are 6-3 at home this season. ... Washington won three straight road games to start conference play for the first time since 1912, including sweeping Cal and Stanford on the road for the first time since 1985. ... Guard C.J. Wilcox is the reigning Pac-12 Player of the Week after averaging 23 points, nine rebounds and three assists last week. ... Washington has not been ranked in either major poll at any time this season. ... The Huskies are No. 58 in the latest RPI standings.

KEY STAT: Washington is 11th in the Pac-12 in field goal percentage defense allowing opponents to shoot .415. CU is fifth in the conference in field goal percentage shooting .457.

COACHES: Boyle is 59-31 in his third season at CU. Lorenzo Romar is 230-118 in his 11th season at Washington.

PROBABLE STARTERS: Colorado -- F Andre Roberson, 6-7, So., 10.9 ppg, 11.8 rpg; F Josh Scott, 6-10, Fr., 13.4 ppg, 6.1 rpg; G Spencer Dinwiddie, 6-6, So., 14.4 ppg, 2.7 apg; G Askia Booker, 6-1, So., 14.9 ppg, 2.3 apg; G Sabatino Chen, 6-4, Sr., 5.1 ppg, 2.1 rpg. Washington -- C Aziz N'Diaye, 7-0, Sr., 11.3 ppg, 9.3 rpg; F Desmond Simmons, 6-7, So., 6.0 ppg, 8.2 rpg; G Abdul Gaddy, 6-3, Sr., 11.7 ppg, 3.7 apg; G Scott Suggs, 6-6, Sr., 12.2 ppg, 2.5 rpg; G C.J. Wilcox, 6-5, Jr., 19.0 ppg, 5.0 rpg.

SERIES: Tied 7-7. Washington leads 5-1 in Seattle. The Buffs only win at Washington came Dec. 21, 1956

(76-68).

UP NEXT: The Buffs remain on the road at Washington State (8 p.m. Saturday). The game will be televised on the Pac-12 Network.

## Thorburn: Washington looking to regain some home-court magic

By Ryan Thorburn *Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera*

Posted:

Buffzone.com

SEATTLE -- What are the Buffs about to walk into here?

Colorado seeks its first Pac-12 road victory of the season tonight at Washington.

Since Hec Edmundson Pavilion (now called Alaska Airlines Arena) underwent a \$40 million renovation completed in November of 2000, the Huskies have enjoyed one of the best home-court advantages in the country.

Washington has won 921 games in the historic venue, which was originally completed in 1927, with head coach Lorenzo Romar winning 85 percent of his home games over the previous 10 seasons.

But the Huskies are only 6-3 at home so far this season with losses to Albany (63-62), Colorado State (73-55) and Nevada (76-73).

Washington has averaged 7,466 in attendance at the 10,000-seat American Airlines Arena through nine games.

"In years past we've had pretty good environments for our games. Our crowd is pretty good," Romar said on Tuesday's Pac-12 coaches teleconference with the media. "This year we haven't had the big crowds yet."

That figures to change given the fact that the Huskies (11-5, 3-0) have started conference play with road victories at Washington State, Cal and Stanford.

Washington junior guard C.J. Wilcox is the conference player of the week after averaging 23.0 points and 8.5 rebounds during the Bay Area sweep.

Are the Huskies, last season's regular-season conference champions, contenders again?

"They're not bad. They got three road breakthroughs, but it remains to be seen if those road breakthroughs are against the better teams," Cal coach Mike Montgomery said. "I don't know that they're a top-three team, but they got three road breakthroughs. That's pretty good."

The Buffs (11-5, 1-3) are 1-4 in true road games this season.

CU, which did not make the trip to Seattle or Pullman last season, could get back into the mix quickly with wins over Washington and Washington State this week.

"Washington to me is leading the league," said UCLA head coach Ben Howland, whose team improved to 4-0 in the Pac-12 with last Saturday's win in Boulder. "They have three wins and they're all on the road."

Travel plans

CU and Utah have different philosophies on how to travel for this week's Wednesday-Saturday schedule in the Great Northwest.

On Tuesday afternoon the Buffs made their way to Seattle, where they will face the Huskies late Wednesday (9:30 p.m. Mountain tip) on the Pac-12 Network.

Following the game, CU will fly to Spokane in the wee hours and will have two days to recover and prepare for Saturday's 8 p.m. tip in Pullman against Washington State.

"Our semester is just starting. We will be bringing an academic counselor and will stay on road," CU head coach Tad Boyle said. "The 8:30 p.m. (Pacific) tip off was deal-breaker there."

Boyle noted that with a two and a half hour flight home and losing an hour, the Buffs wouldn't have gotten home until 3 or 4 a.m. on Thursday.

"We're going to stay on the road and get some home work and study hall done and try to stay fresh," Boyle said.

Utah coach Larry Krystkowiak will fly his team back to Salt Lake City after their Wednesday game at Washington State. The Utes will then fly to Seattle on Friday night ahead of their 9 p.m. Mountain start on Saturday at Washington.

"I'm not in a position to complain about it," Krystkowiak said of the schedule, which is no longer the traditional Thursday-Saturday format due to the Pac-12 Network's need for programming. "We're all going to squeeze 18 (conference games) in at some point. You've just got to deal with it."

Long first day

Bob Cantu received a call Monday morning from USC athletic director Pat Haden, who informed the longtime assistant that Kevin O'Neill had been fired and he was the first choice to be interim head coach for the remainder of the season.

"Getting through yesterday was a big day just in handling the team and handling the media," Cantu said Tuesday. "And handling everything emotionally."

Now the Cantu-led Trojans (7-10, 2-2), who won at Utah in what turned out to be O'Neill's final game on the bench after a 66-60 loss at CU, will try to turn the page with a big home game against No. 21 Oregon on Thursday.

"I just got done watching Colorado and Utah. I thought (USC) played pretty darn good," Oregon coach Dana Altman said. "If they do get that (emotional) bump, then we're in trouble."

Three in AP poll

I voted for three Pac-12 teams -- Arizona (7), UCLA (22) and Oregon (23) -- in the Associated Press poll this week. The Wildcats were No. 7, the Ducks No. 21, and the Bruins No. 24.

"The more teams that get ranked the better it is for the Pac-12 overall," Howland said. "Our conference is much better than it was."

Saturday's matchup between Oregon and UCLA at Pauley Pavilion will be the first Pac-12 game between two



AP top 25 teams since March 13, 2009 (No. 23 Arizona State defeated No. 13 Washington, 75-65 in the Pac-10 Tournament).

The rest of my ballot: 1. Duke, 2. Louisville, 3. Indiana, 4. Michigan, 5. Kansas, 6. Syracuse, 8. Florida, 9. Gonzaga, 10. Minnesota, 11. Creighton, 12. Butler, 13. North Carolina State, 14. San Diego State, 15. Ohio State, 16. Michigan State, 17. New Mexico, 18. Kansas State, 19. Notre Dame, 20. Missouri, 21. VCU, 24. Marquette and 25. Boise State.

### RPI update

Despite losing its first game of the season at Oregon last week, Arizona moved up from No. 4 to No. 2 in the NCAA's official RPI ranking.

CU fell from No. 6 to No. 17 after splitting at home against USC and UCLA.

Oregon moved up from No. 48 to 26 after sweeping the Arizona schools while UCLA edged up from No. 39 to No. 34 after winning its ninth consecutive game in Boulder.

Washington jumped up from No. 73 to No. 58 following road wins at Cal (70) and Stanford (74).

### Cousy finalists

Two Pac-12 point guards, Arizona's Mark Lyons (14.6 ppg, 3.3 apg) and Arizona State's Jahii Carson (17.1 ppg, 5.2 apg), are among the 20 finalists for the Bob Cousy Award.

CU's Spencer Dinwiddie (14.4 ppg, 2.7 apg) was on the original list of 50 nominees.

### Quotable

"Don't give up on this season. We feel like there's a lot of basketball to be played. We've played three of the top teams and are getting ready to play the fourth top team," Oregon State head coach Craig Robinson.

The Beavers are 0-3 in the Pac-12 with home losses to Oregon, Arizona State and Arizona. Oregon State plays at UCLA on Thursday.

Follow Ryan on Twitter:

@RyanThorburn

## CU Buffs coach Tad Boyle wants to see toughness on road trip

By John Henderson The Denver Post The Denver Post

Posted:

DenverPost.com

BOULDER — It's too early for Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn to get chummy with NIT officials, but it's not too early to post "CAUTION" signs all along the Buffaloes' upcoming road trip.

After a terrific nonconference showing and a brief appearance in the top 25, Colorado has tripped out of the gate in the Pac-12, losing three of four games. True, two of the losses were to legit Sweet 16 candidates Arizona and UCLA, but danger signs have emerged.

Spotty defense. Wimpy rebounding. Swaths of scoreless stretches.

And the Buffaloes (11-5 overall) must solve them all to get their season turned around. Next up is a game at surging Washington (11-5, 3-0 in Pac-12) on Wednesday at 9:30 p.m. MST, followed by a game at Washington State (9-7, 0-3) on Saturday at 8 p.m.

"This trip is very desperate at this point," said junior Andre Roberson, who held a players-only meeting Sunday. "We've got to get this thing turned around as quickly as possible."

After this critical weekend in Washington, three of the next five are on the road, too. It's time to take a pulse.

"We're not going to hit the panic button," coach Tad Boyle said. "What we have to understand is why we are where we are and what we need to do to put ourselves in position to win games."

The biggest area that needs to improve is defense, specifically on the road.

In Colorado's four losses on enemy courts, opponents have shot .473 (106-of-224). In home or neutral site games, opponents are shooting .382 (278-of-727).

When opponents do miss, the Buffaloes aren't getting enough rebounds. In league play, Colorado is getting outrebounded by more than four a game.

"We're not committed," Boyle said. "It doesn't mean enough to us to box out or if a guy pushes us to push him back or get a stop when we need a stop. It all comes down to toughness, physical and mental.

"And right now we don't have it."

And, they miss the scoring of Carlon Brown, the Pac-12 Tournament MVP last spring. But the Buffaloes may miss point guard Nate Tomlinson more. The tough Aussie, now playing for the Melbourne Tigers of Australia's National Basketball League, wouldn't let teammates avoid taking a charge or shy away from contact. This year's team has only one senior, Sabatino Chen.

"Nate didn't care about scoring," Boyle said. "He didn't care about shooting. All Nate wanted to do was win. The thing about Nate was he had enough nastiness to him and competitiveness to him that he held his teammates accountable for what we need to get done.

"We miss Nate, and I knew we would."

After losing home nonconference games to Albany, Colorado State and Nevada, Washington has gotten healthy and righted itself. It has three consecutive league wins, all on the road, over Washington State, California and Stanford.

Junior guard C.J. Wilcox is third in the league in scoring at 19.0 points per game and 7-foot senior Aziz N'Diaye is fourth in rebounding at 9.3.

John Henderson: 303-954-1299, [jhenderson@denverpost.com](mailto:jhenderson@denverpost.com) or [twitter.com/johnhendersondp](https://twitter.com/johnhendersondp)