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Head coach Tad Boyle of the Colorado Buffaloes (Photo by William Mancebo/Getty Images)

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By Jon Rothstein

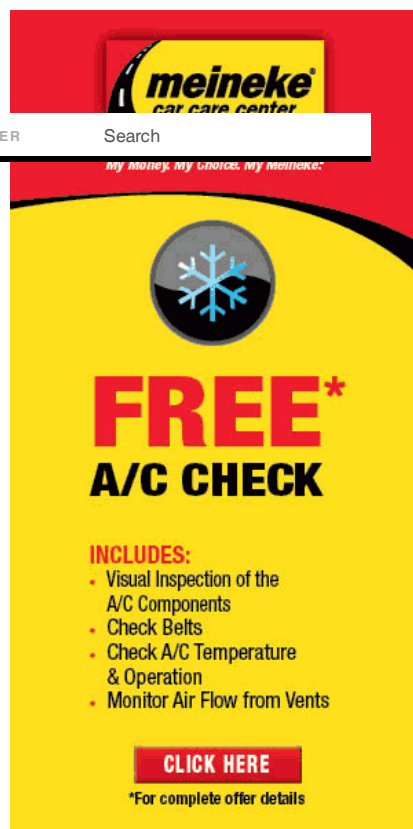
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- **Colorado** coach **Tad Boyle** said his team won't be afraid to push the pace next season. The Buffaloes — who many believe will be the top [challenger](#) to **Arizona** in the PAC-12 — have the potential to be an explosive offensive team. "We're going to play faster," Boyle told me this week. "We're going to be really long and spread people out. We won't be as good defensively though." No they won't, but

Colorado is really going to be able to score the ball. The Buffaloes return starting guards **Spencer Dinwiddie** and **Askia Booker** as well as sophomore wing **Xavier Johnson**, who according to Boyle is ready to explode. "You could see at the end of the year how talented he is," Boyle said of Johnson, who averaged 8.9 PPG and 4.8 RPG last season as a freshman. "The great thing about Xavier is the bigger the game, the better he plays." Boyle said he regularly plans to use Johnson as an undersized power forward, and is also really excited about 6-7 wing **Chris Jenkins** who red shirted this past season. **Colorado's** non-conference slate includes home games with **Harvard** and **Kansas** as well as neutral site contests versus **Baylor** and **Oklahoma State**.

- **Cornell** transfer **Erick Peck** is going to be a factor for **Purdue**. The 6-6 veteran averaged 9.7 points and 4.8 rebounds per game last season for the Big Red, and could start at power forward for the Boilermakers thanks to his experience and intangibles. Peck is eligible to play immediately since he already graduated from **Cornell**. Look for **Purdue** to be one of the more improved teams in the Big Ten next season.

- There's palpable buzz surrounding the defensive ability of **Kansas** freshman guard **Frank Mason**. Word out of Lawrence is that Mason emerged as a lethal on ball defender during summer practice. This former **Towson** commit is going to have a big role for **Bill Self's** team during the upcoming season.



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- Expect **Frank Kaminsky** to have a breakout season for **Wisconsin**. The Badgers need a front court player to emerge next to **Sam Dekker** after **Jared Berggren's** departure, and Kaminsky seems like the likely candidate. The 6-11 big man averaged just 4.2 PPG last year but only played 10.3 [MPG](#) [↗](#). **Bo Ryan's** team opens the 2013-14 season on 11/8 vs. **St. John's** in South Dakota.

- The NCAA's decision to deny **Jesse Morgan** the right to play for **Temple** next season ensures that **Fran Dunphy** is about to undertake one of the more difficult challenges of his coaching career. The Owls graduated four of their top five scorers and Morgan — a transfer from **Umass** — would have given **Temple** another experienced perimeter player as they make the jump to the American Athletic Conference. Without him, the Owls will turn to veterans **Will Cummings**, **Anthony Lee**, and fifth-year senior **Dalton Pepper** to lead them against teams like **Louisville**, **UConn**, **Memphis**, and **Cincinnati**. The biggest key for **Temple** next season? Getting [mileage](#) [↗](#) out of sophomores **Quenton DeCosey** and **Daniel Dingle**.

- How will **Alabama** replace **Trevor Lacey's** (transferred to **NC State**) outside shooting? Possibly **Retin Obasohan**. The 6-1 native of Belgium played 14 minutes or more in the Crimson Tide's last seven games last season, and had 14 points in an NIT win at **Stanford**. Obasohan is entering his third full season under **Alabama** coach **Anthony Grant** after red shirting his first year.

- **Tennessee** coach **Cuonzo Martin** told me this week that **Jeronne Maymon** "is back to his old ways" and has made a full recovery from a knee injury that sidelined him all of last season. The 6-7 forward averaged 12.7 PPG and 8.1 RPG two years ago but didn't play a single minute last season. If Maymon is healthy, **Tennessee** has the best power forward/center combination in the SEC with Maymon and **Jarnell Stokes**. Don't sleep on this team. The Vols will be right in the mix for the SEC title with **Kentucky** and **Florida**.

- The most underrated part of college coaching is scheduling. Schools across the country are still scrambling to fill out their non-conference slate. After recruiting, there's no debate about the second most important part of any program is — scheduling!

- **VCU** will play at **Virginia** on 11/12 as part of a home-and-home series. The Cavaliers will return the game at the Siegel Center during the 2014-15 season.

- I'm really looking forward to watching **Maryland** practice later today (Friday) in College Park. The Terps' coaching staff has been raving about **Michigan** transfer **Evan Smotrycz** as well as sophomore point guard **Seth Allen**. **Mark Turgeon's** team will participate in a Summer Basketball Tour in the Bahamas from August 6-9 where they'll play three exhibition games.

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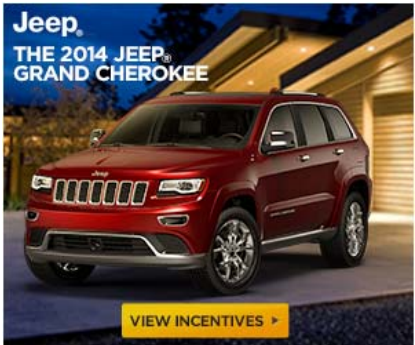
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