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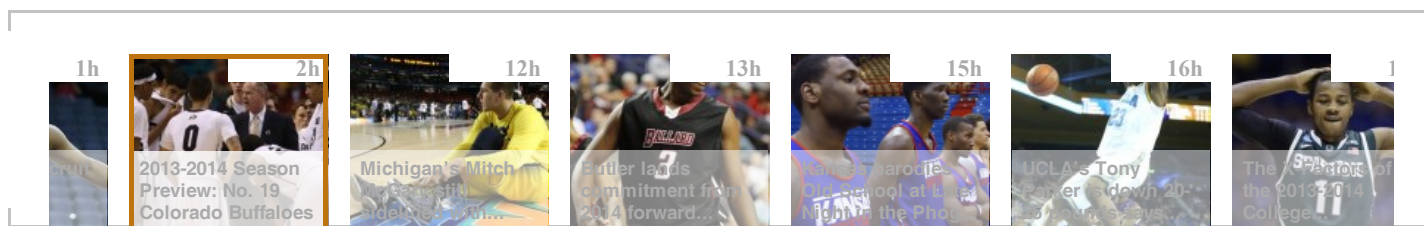
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2013-2014 Season Preview: No. 19 Colorado Buffaloes

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Oct 8, 2013, 9:00 AM EDT

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All month long, CBT will be rolling out our 2013-2014 season preview. Check back throughout the day, as we'll be posting three or four preview items every day.

To browse through the preview posts we've already published, [click here](#). The rest of our Top 25 Countdown can be found [here](#). For a schedule of our previews for the month, [click here](#).

Last Season: 21-12, 10-8 (5th Pac-12); Lost in the Round of 64 to Illinois

Head Coach: Tad Boyle (4th season at Colorado: 69-37 overall, 29-23 Big 12/Pac-12)

Key Losses: Andre Roberson, Sabatino Chen, Jeremy Adams

Newcomers: Jaron Hopkins, Tre'shaun Fletcher, Wesley Gordon, Chris Jenkins, Dustin Thomas, George King

Projected Lineup

- G: Spencer Dinwiddie, Jr.
- G: Askia Booker, Jr.
- F: Xavier Johnson, So.
- F: Wesley Gordon, Fr.
- C: Josh Scott, So.
- **Bench:** Jaron Hopkins, Fr.; Chris Jenkins, Fr.; Xavier Talton, So.; Eli Stalzer, So.; Dustin Thomas, Fr.

They'll be good because If all goes according to plan, Tad Boyle will have one of the best inside-outside combinations in the country. Spencer Dinwiddie is no longer a secret. The 6-foot-6 point guard is one of the most versatile players in the country, particularly on the defensive end of the floor. If he avoids his bouts of inconsistency, he's got a shot at being a first round pick in June. Josh Scott put on 20 pounds of muscle, which should allow him to a) better get position in the paint and b) be more durable when it comes to lasting through the entire season. Throw in Xavier Johnson, who should thrive with Andre Roberson off to the NBA, and the Buffs could end up with three all-Pac-12 performers on the roster.

Colorado will also have a roster that will be able to give a number of different looks this season. If they need to go big, they can play Johnson at the three and put one of their big guards at the two. If Boyle wants to use a smaller lineup, Johnson can slide over and play the four, allowing Dinwiddie to share the perimeter with two of Colorado's smaller guards. Tad Boyle will be able to create mismatches next season.



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But they might disappoint because There is quite a bit of youth on this roster. The two veterans are Dinwiddie and Askia Booker, who are both juniors. Scott and Johnson are the elder statesmen because they are sophomores. Experience can be overrated in a sport dominated by one-and-done players, but Colorado's freshmen aren't exactly Andrew Wiggins or Julius Randle. There is a learning curve here, and it may take a season or two for some of these guys to become capable of contributing at this level.

Along those same lines, Colorado's lack of front court depth could be a problem if there is an injury or foul trouble. We know about Scott and Johnson, and 6-foot-9 redshirt freshman Wesley Gordon should slide in quite effectively as the four-man. But outside of those three, there isn't much on this roster that is proven up front. Ben Mills has scored 40 points in three seasons. Dustin Thomas is a freshman that's known more for his perimeter stroke than his physicality around the rim.

Outlook: There are two things that signify a quality basketball program: the ability to identify and develop talent that others don't recognize, and being able to continue to grow as a team despite losing that talent earlier than expected. Twice in the last three years, Colorado has lost a player to early entry (Alec Burks and Roberson) that was a three-star recruit coming out of high school. And while Boyle didn't recruit either of them, he was the one that put together this entire roster, one that has been built on under-the-radar talent and will head into this season as a top 25 team.

Can the Buffaloes win the Pac-12? Well, that's a tough task considering that a) Arizona has a chance to be awesome this season and b) the conference will be as deep as it has been since Kevin Love and James Harden had normal facial hair. This is going to be one of those years where sixth place in the Pac-12 is two games behind first place, but anything short of at least one win in the NCAA tournament should be thought of as a disappointing year for these Buffaloes.

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