

HEAD COACH ROY EDWARDS



Roy Edwards is now in his ninth season as head coach of the University of Colorado men's golf team, having been named to the position on July 14, 2006, following in the footsteps of the only two coaches the program had ever known over a span of six decades.

Edwards, 38, is just the third full-time men's golf coach in Buffalo history. He came to CU with an impressive pedigree, joining the Buffaloes from his alma mater, the University of Kansas, where he had served as the assistant for both the men's and women's programs for the previous four years (2002-06). He held the same position at Vanderbilt University for a year prior to returning to KU.

Edwards replaced the late Mark Simpson, who passed away from complications due to lung cancer in December 2005. Simpson had held the post since 1977, when he followed in the footsteps of his college head coach, Les Fowler. Fowler took over as player-coach in 1948 and remained on board until Simpson, his assistant, replaced him. Thus, Edwards is only the program's third full-time head coach since 1948.

Each of his predecessors had to lead the Buffaloes into stronger conferences, Fowler into the Big Seven in 1949 and Simpson into the Big 12 in 1996; but Edwards was faced with the most daunting task in CU golf history. He led the charge when the Buffaloes joined the Pacific-10 Conference on July 1, 2011 (making it the Pac-12), with Colorado becoming a member of the most prestigious men's golf conference in the nation. A long-time force in collegiate golf, as many as seven or eight schools have regularly occupied the top 30 over the last several seasons.

It took less than three years for Edwards to put his stamp on the CU golf program, perhaps in no bigger way than completing the dream of both Fowler and Simpson. One of the few major golf programs in the nation without its own true home golf course and facilities, Edwards played an integral part in working with Colorado alum Steve Kerr in the latter's acquisition of Vista Ridge Golf Club in Erie in early

2009. The club officially became Colorado National Golf Club in March of that year and has since served as the official home for the university's men's and women's golf teams. In 2012, construction was completed on the George Boedecker Jr. Practice Facility, a state-of-the-art complex at CNGC that matches any in the nation.

He also initiated the Colorado Partners program, a group that quickly grew to well over 100 members who contribute financially to augment the school's golf budget, and established the Colorado Golf Day which is an annual celebration and fundraiser for CU golf.

On the course, under Edwards the Buffaloes have re-established themselves as a top 50 program (over 300 play Division I golf), and ended the 2014-15 fall season ranked No. 39, its highest in six years and second-best in the last dozen. His teams have won nine tournaments, the second-most under one coach in school history; Simpson's teams won 16 and Fowler's six.

The 2013-14 Buffaloes set school records for stroke average (73.76) and top five major tournament finishes (eight; all were actually in the top four), which included one win in CU's own Mark Simpson Invitational and three runner-up efforts. Over the course of four tournaments, the Buffs set two other impressive school marks: most consecutive rounds at or under par (12), and the most subpar in a row (6). According to GolfStat, CU had the nation's top performing freshman class, headlined by twin brothers Jeremy and Yannik Paul and Ethan Freeman.



The Buffs finished fourth at the Pac-12 Championships, 41 strokes behind No. 3 Stanford (1,438) and 26 behind runner-up and No. 10 Washington; No. 4 Cal was third, 12 ahead of the Buffs. But over the last two rounds, CU was second (718) to only Washington (716), making an impressive climb from 10th at the midway point into fourth place. The NCAA shipped the Buffaloes to Auburn for the regional, where CU finished 12th to end the season.

His seventh team, the 2012-13 squad, returned to the NCAA's after a three-year absence, finishing eighth in the Central (Fayetteville) Regional. The Buffaloes captured two major tournaments, the Air Force Falcon and Bandon Dunes invitational, marking the first time Colorado had won a major in both the fall and spring portions of the season (in the latter, CU was the first team in the four-year history of the event to finish under par as

a team). The Buffs also finished second on three other occasions and posted nine top 10 finishes overall.

In 2011-12, his sixth season, the Buffs stormed out of the gate to win its first two fall tournaments, their own Mark Simpson Invitational and Air Force's Miranda Invitational; the victories propelled CU to an early No. 10 national ranking. The team successfully navigated its way through its first season in the ultra-competitive Pac-12 Conference, finishing eighth in a league championship that featured eight teams ranked in the top 30. The Buffs just missed qualifying for the NCAA championships but Derek Fribbs was selected to play as an individual.

The 2009-10 and 2010-11 teams, his fourth and fifth, respectively, had their moments but did not advance to the postseason, though Justin Bardgett qualified individually in 2010. The Buffs finished ninth and 10th in their last two appearances in the Big 12 Conference meet. The disappointments only created more resolve in the program and thus the turnaround in year six.

His third Buffalo team (2008-09) sported one of the nation's dynamic duos in Patrick Grady and Derek Tolan, as each won two tournaments and combined for 14 top 10 finishes. But the team was also balanced as a whole, with 32 top 20 performances posted by seven different golfers, and recorded a 74.06 stroke average, second lowest in school history (topped only by 73.77 in 2003-04). The Buffs posted 11 top 10 finishes in major tournaments, the second-most in school history that included a record-tying seven in the top five, and highlighted by a 34-stroke win in the DU-Ron Moore and three runner-up finishes in the USF Olympic Club, Western Intercollegiate and its own CU-Stevenson Ranch Invitational.

In earning a fourth straight trip to the NCAA's, in the Big 12 Championships, the Buffs posted their best conference finish in 28 years when they took second place; it tied for the largest improvement from one season to another in Big 12 history after finishing 10th in 2008 (CU moved from 11th to 3rd from 1997 to 1998 as did Missouri on one occasion). The Buffs were in the hunt for the title until the back nine of the fourth and final round, when Oklahoma State finally was able to get some distance and eventually won by 14 shots.

His second team, in 2007-08, became just the third in school history to win two major tournaments in the same season, as the Buffs won the Louisiana Classics and the Ohio State Kepler Intercollegiate. The Buffs finished 10th in the Big 12 meet, which moved to a 72-hole format for the first time, and was again invited to the NCAA's, placing 18th in the Central Regional. Junior Derek Tolan was one of two individuals to advance out of the regional into the finals, the first Buff to do so since 1993.

Edwards' first CU team (2006-07) had moderate success, and finished 11th in the Big 12 Championships; while that was disappointing, his team did something that neither Fowler's or Simpson's did, qualify for the NCAA Championships (though in fairness, more teams are invited today than when they coached,



but it still was an impressive accomplishment). The team placed 20th in the NCAA Central Regional.

At Kansas, he was heavily involved in recruiting and the day-to-day functions for both the men's and women's teams, managed the Jayhawks' Birdie Club and was the main contact for both golf camps. A KU graduate, he returned to his alma mater in August 2002 as the assistant coach for both the men's and women's programs and further developed all the skills necessary to one day become a head coach. Among his many duties were coordinating and managing a \$1 million-plus fundraising campaign for KU's golf practice facility and establishing an annual booster club program.

During his time at Kansas, he was one of three finalists for the Golf Coaches Association of America Assistant Coach of the Year in 2004 and helped coach six first-team All-Big 12 players (five men, one woman) and four Academic All-Americans. He started his coaching career as a volunteer/graduate assistant in 1998, working three years in that capacity before moving on to Vanderbilt for his first full-time assistant coaching position. During this time, he was also the Junior Golf Director for the Kansas Golf Association, running all activities for over 600 junior members of the KGA.

He was the assistant for both the men's and women's teams at Vanderbilt for the 2001-02 season. He was a part of history as both teams experienced two of the best seasons in the programs'

existence the year he was a part of the program. He had a hand in coaching a pair of first-team All-Southeastern Conference players, including Brandt Snedeker, a first-team All-American, the 2007 PGA Tour Rookie of the Year and current star on the Tour.

Between KU and Vanderbilt, he coached five players who attained some level of All-American status, ranging from first-team to honorable mention.

A three-year member of the Jayhawk golf team, he lettered as a senior under legendary and long-time coach Ross Randall and earned his bachelor's of science degree in business administration from Kansas in 2000. Simultaneously while finishing his degree, he worked as a volunteer assistant coach for the men's team. His career playing highlights include being named the PGA Midwest Section Player of the Year in 1995 and the Heart of America Four-Ball champion in 1997. As a student, he was also heavily involved on KU's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and held several leadership roles on campus.

Born October 14, 1976 in Kansas City, Mo., but truly a native of Hutchinson, Kan., he was a four-year letterman in golf at Hutchinson (Kan.) High School under legendary Kansas high school coach Rusty Hilst, one of his early mentors in the game. His hobbies include playing golf, cooking and traveling, and he was also an Eagle Scout in high school. His father, R.A., is a distinguished KU alum who was awarded the 2002 Fred Ellsworth Medallion for "unique and significant service to the university" (which two grandparents also earned). An uncle, Ray Evans, is recognized as one of the greatest athletes in KU history, as he was a two-time All-American in basketball (1942-43) and was KU's first football All-American after returning from World War II in 1947.

Edwards is married to the former Shelly Bonfantine of Albuquerque, N.M., as they wed on July 7, 2007 (07-07-07); she is a former golfer at the University of New Mexico. They are the parents of two sons, Ashton Ross (6) and Luke Leo (3).

