



Privateers steal win in Boulder

Roby scores 27, but New Orleans hits game-winner in final 5 seconds

By Ryan Thorburn
Thursday, December 13, 2007

New Orleans wasn't big or easy.

And after the Privateers' 67-65 victory over Colorado on Wednesday night at the Coors Events Center, Jeff Bzdelik looked like he was suffering through a Bourbon Street-strength headache.

"Successful people only momentarily get discouraged," the first-year CU head coach said.

So far this season Colorado has cruised to wins over some inferior foes (Florida A&M, Savannah State, Colorado Christian), won a couple of road games in the state (Denver, Air Force) and been blown out by the two opponents it has played from BCS conferences (Wisconsin, Stanford).

Losing a nail-bitter at home to a Sun Belt team may have fractured the CU locker room, at least for one night.

After scoring a season-high 27 points and grabbing 14 rebounds, senior guard Richard Roby said at least one of his teammates assisted on New Orleans' game-winning hoop.

Cory Higgins hit his second clutch 3-pointer in the final moments of the game to give CU a 65-64 lead with 9.2 seconds remaining. But before the crowd of 2,972 could catch its breath, Shaun Reynolds was fouled by Xavier Silas on his way to the rim.

The basket and ensuing free throw both dropped to provide the Privateers (6-1) with their fourth road victory of the season.

"Before the game that's what we said: 'No matter what it takes, we've got to win,'" Roby said. "No matter what it takes. And to come this close and have the lead with I don't even know how many seconds left in the game, then let a man just drive coast-to-coast and get an and-one ... you have to have something inside of you to not let a man do that."

After a basket by Bo McCalebb, who finished with 24 points, New Orleans led 61-57. Roby scored to cut the deficit to two points, and Higgins gave CU a 62-61 lead on a 3-pointer.

McCalebb, the reigning Sun Belt Conference player of the year, answered with a three-point play to make the score 64-62 with 1:19 remaining.

"It has to be everybody. You can't have four guys ready to go and one guy not doing what it takes or being in the wrong position. It breaks down the whole defense," Roby said. "It takes a whole team to get tired of losing. I know everybody cares about winning or losing ... but you can't let a man just drive by you five straight times. I don't see how that's possible."

The Buffs took a 32-26 advantage to the locker room at the intermission after Roby and Hall combined for 21 points on 8-for-13 shooting. New Orleans fell behind by as many as 10 points (16-6) but tied the score 26-26 on a basket by Kyndall Dykes with 2:50 remaining.

CU was 10-for-34 (29.4 percent) from the field in the second half, including nine missed layups by the head coach's count. New Orleans was 15-for-30 shooting and outscored the home team 41-33 over the final 20 minutes.

"Everybody needs to look at themselves first," Bzdelik said when told of the frustration his seniors were feeling. "Believe me. ... The culture needs to change as much as anything else."



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Higgins provides Buffs' bright spot

By Ryan Thorburn

Thursday, December 13, 2007

Who's going to take the pressure shot when the game is on the line?

It's a question every team needs an answer to. And, on an otherwise disappointing night for the Colorado men's basketball team, the bright spot was the clutch shooting of Cory Higgins.

The true freshman gave the Buffs leads of 62-61 and 65-64 on 3-pointers in the final moments of Wednesday's nonconference game against New Orleans, but the Privateers answered both times and escaped the Coors Events Center with a 67-65 victory.

"Every shot's the same," Higgins said. "You've got to look at it like that."

Higgins was 2-for-2 from behind the arc in the second half and finished with 10 points and five rebounds. His teammates were 0-for-7 from 3-point land after halftime.

"Those are big shots. He stepped up and shot them with confidence," said Richard Roby, who scored 27 points on 9-for-20 shooting, including a 1-for-4 night from behind the arc. "We didn't make shots in the second half. We missed a lot of easy shots."

Marcus Hall and Xavier Silas also scored 10 points each, but combined to make only six of 19 shots from the field. Hall turned the ball over on the final possession of the game after Silas had been beaten for what proved to be the game-winning field goal by Shaun Reynolds.

At 5-5 the Buffs are frustrated and disappointed. But this team was 7-20 last season.

"It's still a long season. We can still turn this thing around," Roby said. "We believe that. It takes work. It's better than last year, I'll say that."

Notable

Marcus King-Stockton played his best game of the season for the Buffs, making a key block and basket to tie the score at 57-57 with 3:54 remaining. The senior forward had six points and six rebounds in 18 minutes. ... Hall had to change from No. 1 to No. 55 after getting blood on his original jersey. ... There were a number of NBA scouts in attendance including representatives of the Washington Wizards, Charlotte Bobcats, Portland Trail Blazers, Orlando Magic and Dallas Mavericks. ... The Buffs will not play again until Dec. 22 at Colorado State.



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Woelk: Frustration building for Buffaloes

By Neill Woelk

Thursday, December 13, 2007

Tired of losing?

Evidently, not yet. Not quite.

The Colorado Buffaloes, who coach Jeff Bzdelik said last week would start playing to win when they got tired of losing, came close to beating a good team at home Wednesday night. Close as in a Cory Higgins 3-pointer for a one-point lead over New Orleans with nine seconds left in the game. Close as in needing just one defensive stop to win.

But not close enough to stop New Orleans' Shaun Reynolds from going coast-to-coast for what proved to be the winning basket just five seconds later. Not close enough to even get the ball upcourt for a last-second shot after Reynolds hit a driving layup and a free throw to give the Privateers the lead and ultimately the 67-65 win.

Not close enough — and now, the Big 12 season looms ever closer. Winnable games have slipped away, and instead of building confidence, the 5-5 Buffs are only building their frustration level.

"There wasn't intensity in all five guys on the court," said Buff senior Richard Roby, who had 27 points and 14 rebounds. "You can't have four guys ready to go and one guy not willing to do what it takes. ... You can't just let a man drive by you five straight times. I don't even see how that's possible."

In some respects, there is progress being made. As Bzdelik pointed out, "They lost 20 games last year. They lost by a lot of points. Now we're competitive, but now we have to learn how to win. We have to take that next step."

But taking the next step doesn't include the almost inexplicable lapses the Buffs still display far too often.

Wednesday night, the Buffs jumped out to a 16-6 lead. Then, by Bzdelik's count, they committed seven turnovers in the next few minutes, allowing the Privateers to cut the lead to one.

Fast forward to the second half. Midway through the period, Colorado had a seven-point edge after a Roby bucket and free throw. Six minutes later, the lead had turned into a one-point deficit, fueled by a pair of New Orleans layups and ensuing free throws, plus a long 3-pointer. CU did come back to take the lead twice in the final two minutes, but both times, New Orleans regained the edge by virtue of a layup and an "and one."

"I can't explain it," senior Marcus Hall said. "At worst, we should be 8-2. We're giving away games. We've got to get everybody out there willing to sacrifice and do the right thing."

Bzdelik agrees — but he's by no means absolving his seniors of their responsibility in CU's inability to put forth a wire-to-wire effort.

"We missed nine layups in the second half," Bzdelik said. "On the flip side, we can't contain the ball. We never took a charge. We knew it had to be a wire-to-wire game and we didn't do that. We let up.

"Everybody needs to look at themselves. Believe me. Everybody. Players, coaches, everybody."

Already, Colorado has lost three home games, two of them — New Mexico and New Orleans — games they could have won. With only four games remaining until the Big 12 season begins, there's precious little time to address the problems that are still evident.

"We have to learn how to play 40 minutes of intelligent, hard-nosed basketball," Bzdelik said. "You have to put yourself in position to win, and I think we've done that — but now we have to take that next step."

There are stretches when the Buffs play the way Bzdelik envisions. Desperate on the defensive end, smart on the offensive end. But the lapses — turnovers, matador defense and missed layups — are still far too prevalent.

"Successful people only momentarily get discouraged," Bzdelik said. "That's a quote we try to live by."

But unless the Buffs can cure their lapses, there won't be anything momentary about their troubles.



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cu basketball

Buffaloes fall apart at crunch time

NEW ORLEANS 67, COLORADO 65

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

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Colorado guard Xavier Silas, who scored 10 points, drives down the lane against New Orleans' T.J. Worley in the first half Wednesday night. (Joshua Lawton, The Daily Camera)

BOULDER — The most frustrating losses in any sport are those in which a game-long lead is given away at the end. That was never more evident than Wednesday night after the Colorado men's basketball team fell 67-65 to visiting New Orleans.

"I know everybody on the team cares about winning and losing," said CU senior Richard Roby, who tried to carry the Buffaloes with season bests of 27 points and 14 rebounds. "But you have to do everything that it takes to win."

The Buffaloes (5-5) saw their losing streak extended to three games when several CU defenders stood and watched the Privateers dribble down the lane for easy baskets down the stretch. Guards Bo McCaleb and Shaun Reynolds both converted three-point plays after getting

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fouled on drives down the lane.

Reynolds weaved through Buffs defenders as if

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they were statues, drawing a foul by Xavier Silas on his made layup with 4.6 seconds left. After Reynolds made the free throw for a two-point lead, CU fumbled away its final possession.

Colorado had led almost the entire game, including a 32-26 halftime advantage. The Buffs have lost three of their four home games, beating only Division II Colorado Christian.

Nine missed layups in the second half is a good way to lose control. Colorado shot 29.4 percent after halftime.

"When I first came here I said, 'I can't wave a magic wand,'" said CU coach Jeff Bzdelik, who went 50-16 the past two seasons at Air Force.

Colorado led 16-6 early, but committed seven turnovers in its next eight possessions. The Buffs didn't relinquish the lead, but missed an opportunity to gain some separation on a short but feisty New Orleans team (6-1) that is 3-0 on the road, including a win at North Carolina State.

It might be more fun for the Privateers to travel. They certainly act like it. New Orleans continues to play home games in a high school gym while the school's arena undergoes repairs after Hurricane Katrina.

A trip to the Front Range was nothing new to the Privateers, who face the University of Denver each season in the Sun Belt Conference. And in McCaleb, they have an NBA prospect to take over in crunch time. A 6-foot senior, McCaleb

scored 20 points in the second half and finished with 24.

"We couldn't stop the drive defensively," Bzdelik said. "We never took a charge."

NEW ORLEANS (6-1) Dykes 4-7 1-2 9, Elias 3-6 0-0 6, McCaleb 10-21 2-2 24, Parlow 3-7 0-0 8, Reynolds 2-5 2-2 6, Tyrna 0-0 1-2 1, Manning 0-0 0-0 0, Worley 3-9 2-2 11, Myers 1-4 0-0 2. Totals 26-59 8-10 67. Jackson-Wilson 1-4 0-0 2, Hall 4-12 0-0 10, Higgins 4-7 0-0 10, Silas 2-7 6-7 10, Roby 9-20 8-9 27, Thorne II 0-1 0-0 0, Patterson 0-1 0-0 0, Knutson 0-0 0-0 0, King-Stockton 2-4 2-4 6. Totals 22-56 16-20 65. Colorado 32-26. 3-point goals — NO 7-16 (Worley 3-5, McCaleb 2-4, Parlow 2-6, Myers 0-1), Colorado 5-13 (Higgins 2-2, Hall 2-4, Roby 1-4, Silas 0-1, Patterson 0-1, King-Stockton 0-1). Fouled out — None. Rebounds — New Orleans 31 (Dykes 9), Colorado 38 (Roby 14). Assists — NO 12 (Reynolds 5), Colorado 12 (Roby 4). Total fouls — NO 17, Colorado 13. A — 2,972.

COLORADO (5-5)

Halftime —

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Frustrated Buffs

Loss doesn't sit well with seniors

By Patrick Ridgell

Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Coach Jeff Bzdelik went off after his Colorado Buffaloes lost Saturday. On Wednesday night, it was a couple of his seniors' turn.

Clearly annoyed by bad defensive play late in CU's 67-75 loss to the University of New Orleans, Richard Roby and Marcus Hall vented afterward.

What mainly annoyed them was how New Orleans' guards twice drove to the basket in the final 1 minute, 19 seconds, to create three-point plays that proved vital.

The second one came right after CU's Cory Higgins sank a 3-pointer to put the Buffs up, 65-64, with 9.2 seconds left. New Orleans' Shaun Reynolds then drove the lane, scored, drew a foul on Xavier Silas and hit the free throw for a three-point play, and the final score. CU fumbled away its final possession before it could take a shot.

Roby and Hall didn't have explanations. Just frustration.

"It takes a whole team to get tired of losing," Roby said.

"Not just two or three people," Hall added.

"I know everybody cares about winning and losing, but you have to go in there and knowing you're going to do whatever it takes to win," Roby continued. "You can't take off a possession, you can't let a man just drive by you five-straight times. I don't see how that's possible."

Bzdelik's gripes after Saturday's loss at Wyoming were about intensity, or CU's lack of it early.

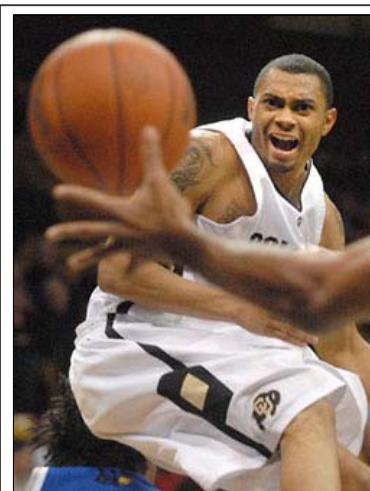
That wasn't the problem Wednesday; the Buffs jumped ahead, 16-6. But they couldn't stand prosperity, and promptly committed turnovers on six of their next seven possessions to let New Orleans hang around.

Bzdelik listed three key reasons for the loss, including the turnover spree, missing nine second-half layups and getting beat off the dribble. He said containing the ball is a team problem.

"Everybody needs to look at themselves and know what they can do better," he said.

"Successful people only momentarily get discouraged. That's a key statement." It might be a lost statement on Roby and Hall. Roby had one of the best nights of his career with 27 points and 14 rebounds. But the two are seeing their senior seasons flash before their eyes, and it ain't pretty.

CU (5-5) has lost three straight, and couldn't handle the likes of New Orleans, which isn't a bad mid-major team, but



Colorado's Xavier Silas passes the ball to a teammate during the first half of Wednesday night's game against New Orleans at the Coors Events Center in Boulder. **Lewis Geyer / Times-Call**

don't get carried away. Privateers coach Joe Pasternack called Wednesday's win "huge," "terrific" and "monster" for their program.

Bzdelik is building a program, and said it must learn to take the next step, which Wednesday, included executing late in a close game. Such sentiment won't placate Roby or Hall. Asked how frustrating this is getting, Hall answered, "I can't even explain it."

"Guys were just too tentative I guess," Hall said about the defense. "I have no idea. Maybe they were trying not to get fouls. I don't know. Maybe they were trying not to get hurt."

Said Roby: "To come this close and have the lead ... and to let a man drive coast to coast and get an and-one, it's like man, you have to have something inside you to not let a man do that."

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New Orleans 67, Colorado 65

By Associated Press

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BOULDER — Shaun Reynolds figured all the attention would be paid to New Orleans career scoring leader Bo McCalebb in the final seconds. So when the Colorado defense put a double team on McCalebb, the senior guard reacted.

Reynolds hit a driving layup and free throw with 4.3 seconds left, and McCalebb scored 24 points to lead New Orleans to a 67-65 victory over Colorado on Wednesday night.

"I saw them deny Bo. They didn't want him to get the ball, so as soon as I crossed half court I sliced the court because it was all open," Reynolds said. "I saw Cory Higgins try to foul me even before I got the ball up, so I just kept my eyes on the basket and made a good play."

McCalebb hit 8-of-11 shots and scored 20 of his points in the second half after a slow start. T.J. Worley added 11 points and Reynolds finished with six points for New Orleans (6-1).

"It was just a matter of time before Bo got going," New Orleans coach Joe Pasternack said. "He missed some easy shots in the first half and his competitive nature and toughness came out."

Richard Roby led Colorado (5-5) with a season-high 27 points. The Buffaloes had seven-point leads twice in the second half in losing their third straight.

Roby's put back of his own miss and layup put the Buffaloes ahead 47-40 only to have New Orleans get within 47-46 on McCalebb's jumper with 11:15 remaining. Colorado converted six straight free throws, four by Roby, to lead 53-49. But the Privateers answered with a 3-pointer and two free throws by Worley to take a 54-53 edge with 6:11 left.

Baskets by James Parlow and McCalebb put New Orleans ahead 61-57 with 2:35 left. That lead disappeared on a layup by Roby and a 3-pointer by Higgins to put Colorado up 62-61.

"We've been down before with two minutes to go, one minute to go, and our guys have stayed tough," Pasternack said. "It's just a great group of guys, a tough group of guys, and you can't teach that."

Higgins' second 3-pointer gave the Buffaloes their last lead, 65-64 with 39 seconds left. New Orleans quickly pushed the ball up the floor to set up Reynolds' layup and free throw.

Colorado turned the ball over before crossing midcourt after calling two timeouts.

"I was supposed to take the ball out and throw it into Xavier Silas," said Colorado guard Marcus Hall. "But the pass never made it there."

Colorado led 32-26 at intermission as both teams combined for 17 turnovers. McCalebb had only four points on 2-for-10 shooting in the first half after getting poked in the right eye 32 seconds into the game.

Marcus Hall had a 3-pointer and Roby turned a pass from Hall into a layup as Colorado outscored the Privateers 6-0 in the final 2:15 of the half.

"We were so casual, missing nine layups and we didn't defend the ball in the second half," Colorado coach Jeff Bzdelik said. "We allowed them to put their heads down and drive to the basket."

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