



# Bufs trying to avoid looking ahead to trip

## Hawaii tournament on tap after La.-Monroe game Tuesday

By Ryan Thorburn  
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Jeff Bzdelik has been an NBA coach in Washington D.C., New York, Miami and Denver.

During the past offseason his travels included a goodwill mission to Iraq and a recruiting trip to Australia.

So CU's well-traveled head coach scoffed at the notion that his team might overlook Tuesday's opponent -- Louisiana-Monroe -- with a Christmas trip to Honolulu on deck for the Buffs.

"Hawaii is ... if we are that immature to worry about that, then that's not good," Bzdelik said after Friday night's business-like 72-47 victory over Prairie View A&M at the Coors Events Center.

Obviously participating in the Rainbow Classic isn't the coolest thing Bzdelik has ever done in his distinguished career. But this might be the only opportunity a lot of the players ever have to walk on Waikiki Beach or attend a real luau.

"We have Louisiana-Monroe to take care of. That's the politically correct answer to say," CU forward Jermyl Jackson-Wilson said. "Obviously, Hawaii is Hawaii, but we're in Boulder right now. We have a game before we go, so we're going to hopefully take care of that one, get a good win and then we can get on that plane ... and Mele Kalikimaka."

It will be a merry Christmas for Bzdelik if the Buffs can continue to play the way they did in the second half against Colorado State (outscored the Rams 47-28) and the first half against Prairie View A&M (outscored the Panthers 43-18) on a consistent basis.

Cory Higgins racked up 43 points in those 40 minutes. The sophomore guard is a team captain and mature beyond his years, which explains why Bzdelik isn't worried about his young team taking care of its business before, during and after the upcoming tournament in paradise.

"This game is for men only. We use that phrase a lot," Bzdelik said. "It's not about being macho. What's the difference between little boys and men? Little boys can't concentrate. Little boys argue among themselves. They get into mischief. Little boys don't really know the difference between right and wrong.

"When you say this game is for men only, it's about maturity, it's about focus and concentration. And about ownership and being the best you can be individually and collectively. Bringing out the best in each other as teammates. All of those kinds of things factor into maturity."

Despite winning back-to-back games in blowout fashion, Bzdelik had plenty to bark about at practice on Saturday. CU turned the ball over 18 times and was 8-for-15 from the foul line against Prairie View A&M.

However, the Buffs (5-3) lead the Big 12 in field goal percentage (.505), and Higgins is the conference's third-leading

scorer (18.3 ppg).

The game against Louisiana-Monroe is scheduled to tip off at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Coors Events Center and the Buffs will fly to Honolulu on Wednesday morning.

### Notable

Cody Ellis, a 6-foot-8 forward on Australia's under-19 national team, visited CU this week. Bzdelik, who already has a verbal commitment from Shane Harris-Tunks, one of Ellis' teammates, has one more scholarship to offer for the spring signing period in April. Freshman guard Nate Tomlinson is also from Down Under and played against Ellis growing up. ... Casey Crawford scored six points in 11 minutes against Prairie View A&M after missing the CSU game with an ankle injury. The 6-9 forward declared himself "100 percent" healthy after the game.



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