



# Bufs slip past Warhawks

By Ryan Thorburn

Tuesday, December 23, 2008

Jeff Bzdelik went directly from his post-game press conference to the training room on Tuesday night to receive some fluids intravenously.

The Colorado head coach was suffering flu-like symptoms before the Buffs' 65-62 victory over Louisiana-Monroe at the Coors Events Center.

After looking at the box score and seeing that his team shot 41.1 percent from the field and was out-rebounded 45-22, Bzdelik wondered aloud if he could have some beer in the IV.

"We have to get our nose dirty, get bloodied up, skin our knees," Bzdelik said. "And that's what we talked about after the game."

On the bright side, when the game was on the line some of CU's young players were clutch.

Casey Crawford, who had just six points in 11 minutes during the 72-47 victory over Prairie View A&M last Friday, made a 3-pointer with 37 seconds remaining to give the Buffs a 62-60 lead.

The 6-9 sophomore had hit nothing but nothing on his previous attempt from behind the arc.

"I knew after I air-balled that one that if I didn't make the next one there was something wrong," Crawford said. "Coach told me to stay confident."

The Warhawks (3-8) answered with a hoop by Lawrence Gilbert that tied the score 62-62 with 15.4 seconds left.

Then Nate Tomlinson aggressively took the ball to the basket and was fouled with 6.6 ticks on the clock. The freshman point guard swished both foul shots and then pressured Jarvis Hill, who dribbled the ball off his foot and out of bounds heading toward the ULM basket.

"We made the right plays at the right time," Bzdelik said. "And that's a positive to build on."

Austin Dufault kept the Buffs in the game, which included 10 ties and nine lead changes in the second half, by scoring a career-high 21 points on 9-for-14 shooting. The freshman forward was 1-for-6 from the floor with three points against Prairie View A&M.

"My teammates were finding me. Last game, I was forcing things and rushing it too much," Dufault said. "This game I slowed down and my teammates put me in a position to score and I knocked them down."

The Buffs (6-3) were trailing 56-51 with 4:22 remaining before Dwight Thorne hit a shot and Cory Higgins was intentionally fouled by Malcolm Thomas on a breakaway.

Higgins made the dunk and the two ensuing free throws to give CU a 57-56 lead and possession of the ball with 3:03 left.

Dufault rebounded Crawford's air-ball, drew a foul and made a pair of free throws to complete a six-point sequence for the home team.

The Warhawks regrouped and took a 60-59 lead with 1:03 remaining.

"There are no moral victories," ULM head coach Orlando Early said. "They have some great coaches and they executed when they needed to. Hats off to Colorado.

"But we continue to make mistakes and not take care of the ball. We can't come on the road against a Big 12 team and expect to win with 21 turnovers."

The Buffs only had 10 turnovers and 17 assists on their 23 made field goals. But Bzdelik's team can't expect to get beaten on the boards by a 2-to-1 margin and win any games in the Big 12.

"Tonight we got lucky," Dufault said after grabbing just two rebounds in 38 minutes. "But it's not always going to go down that way."

CU trailed 16-9 early in the first half and 27-24 at the intermission.

Dufault scored six points during a 12-4 run by the Buffs, including a field goal with 3:49 left in the half to give CU a 21-20 lead.

Crawford had a chance to tie the score at the break but his open 3-point attempt rimmed out as the horn sounded.

Both teams were 11-for-25 (44 percent) from the field and 1-for-7 (14.3 percent) from behind the arc through 20 minutes of play but ULM won the battle of the boards 19-10.

"We had an off-night shooting but we stuck with it," Crawford said. "You can't put your head down when you miss a shot."

CU will travel to Honolulu today to begin preparing for the Rainbow Classic.

The Buffs open up the three-game tournament on Sunday against Coppin State at 10:30 p.m.

## Notable

The Buffs are 5-0 when Tomlinson, Higgins, Thorne, Dufault and Jermyl Jackson-Wilson all start. ... CU was 5-for-18 from behind the arc but has made a 3-pointer in 204 consecutive games. ... Higgins finished with 15 points and played all 40 minutes of his 41st consecutive start. ... Jackson-Wilson has blocked a shot in every game this season and leads the team with 11. ... CU leads the series with ULM 2-0. ... Attendance was 3,589.

**Colorado 65,**

**Louisiana-Monroe 62**

**LOUISIANA-MONROE**

## FG FT Reb

### Min M-A M-A O-T A PF PTS

Turner 21 4-6 4-4 1-3 0 5 12

Gilbert 32 8-14 1-1 3-5 2 2 19

Averette 29 0-1 0-0 0-1 4 3 0

Thomas 38 5-14 3-3 3-14 0 2 13

Hill 21 2-3 0-0 0-4 2 3 4

Forbes 21 3-11 0-0 1-4 0 3 8

Williams 11 0-0 0-0 0-0 3 1 0

Nweke 10 1-3 0-0 1-4 0 1 2

Hampton 17 2-3 0-0 3-8 0 3 4

Totals 200 25-55 8-8 14-45 11 23 62

**Percentages:** FG .455, FT 1.000.

**3-Point Goals:** 4-14, .286 (Gilbert 2-4, Forbes 2-7, Thomas 0-1, Hill 0-1, Averette 0-1).

**Team Rebounds:** 2.

**Blocked Shots:** 6 (Hampton 3, Turner 2, Gilbert).

**Turnovers:** 21 (Hill 5, Hampton 3, Thomas 3, Gilbert 3, Forbes 2, Nweke 2, Turner, Williams).

**Steals:** 1 (Thomas).

## COLORADO

## FG FT Reb

### Min M-A M-A O-T A PF PTS

Jkn-Wlsn 22 0-4 1-4 0-2 2 1 1

Dufault 38 9-14 2-2 0-2 3 0 21

Tomlnsn 20 1-4 2-2 1-3 4 4 5

Higgins 40 4-8 7-7 2-7 3 3 15

Thorne II 32 5-11 0-2 1-2 0 4 11

Veal 4 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Knutson 24 3-10 0-0 0-2 2 1 7

Zehnder 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Crawford 12 1-5 2-4 0-2 1 2 5

Eckloff 7 0-0 0-0 1-1 2 0 0

**Totals** 200 23-56 14-21 6-22 17 15 65

Percentages: FG .411, FT .667.

**3-Point Goals:** 5-18, .278 (Dufault 1-2, Thorne II 1-3, Crawford 1-3, Tomlinson 1-3, Knutson 1-5, Higgins 0-2).

**Team Rebounds:** 1.

**Blocked Shots:** 3 (Higgins 2, Jackson-Wilson).

**Turnovers:** 10 (Higgins 3, Thorne II 3, Knutson 2, Jackson-Wilson, Dufault).

**Steals:** 6 (Higgins 4, Thorne II, Knutson).

**Louisiana-Monroe 27 35--62**

**Colorado 24 41--65**

A -- 3,589.

**Officials** -- Curtis Shaw, Don Daily, Kevin Mathis.



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## Buffs, coach a little cold

CU shoots just 41 percent from the floor in win

*By Patrick Ridgell  
Longmont Times-Call*

BOULDER — Colorado men's basketball coach Jeff Bzdelik needed an I.V. Tuesday following the Buffaloes' 65-62 defeat of Louisiana-Monroe. It was the flu, and not sickness brought on from watching his team struggle all night — though any confusion on the matter would be understandable.

CU didn't shoot well. It hit only 41 percent from the floor. Far worse was its rebounding. ULM grabbed 45 boards; CU 22. Those statistics figured heavily into why the Buffs (6-3) wound up in such a fight with a team in ULM (3-8) that's lost to Tennessee Tech by 38, to Louisiana-Lafayette by 28, and twice to McNeese State.

"We made the right plays at the right time," Bzdelik said. "That's a positive to build on."

The plays to which Bzdelik referred came with great frequency in the closing moments.

With 3 minutes, 3 seconds to play, ULM's Malcolm Thomas was called for an intentional foul on Cory Higgins' break-away dunk following a scramble for a loose ball that CU won. Higgins made the two free throws, and Austin Dufault, who scored a career-best 21 points, capped the next possession with two free throws. The series gave CU six points in 30 seconds and a 59-56 lead with 2:33 to go.

With 37 seconds left, CU's Casey Crawford hit a 3, about 2 minutes after he had air-balled a 3, to make it 62-60 with the Buffs ahead. ULM answered with Lawrence Gilbert's basket, tying it at 62 with 15 seconds remaining.

Then CU's Nate Tomlinson drew a foul on a drive and made both free throws to give the Buffs a two-point lead with 6.6 seconds to go. ULM's Jarvis Hill dribbled up the floor on the next possession. But with Tomlinson shadowing him the whole way, Hill bounced the ball out of bounds, ending ULM's last, best chance with a turnover.

Crawford hit a free throw with 1.3 seconds to go to account for the final score.

Out of all the plays made at the end of the game, the one Bzdelik liked best was coming up with the loose ball.

"We finally had two people hit the floor," he said. "Dwight (Thorne) and Austin hit the floor and came up with the ball."

The Buffs leave today for Honolulu, where they'll play three games Sunday through Tuesday in the Rainbow Classic. Players joked that flying to Hawaii with their coaches the day after a loss would have made a long trip longer. Otherwise, they saw little humor in Tuesday's win.



CU's Dwight Thorne goes in for a layup as Monroe's Dynile Forbes and Mitchell Hampton defend Tuesday night at the Coors Events Center. **Jill P. Mott/Times-Call**

## COLORADO 65, LOUISIANA-MONROE 62

### LOUISIANA-MONROE (3-8)

Turner 4-6 4-4 12, Gilbert 8-14 1-1 19, Averette 0-1 0-0 0, Thomas 5-14 3-3 13, Hill 2-3 0-0 4, Forbes 3-11 0-0 8, Williams 0-0 0-0 0, Nweke 1-2 0-0 2, Hampton 2-3 0-0 4. Totals 25-55 8-8 62.

### COLORADO (6-3)

Jackson-Wilson 0-4 1-4 1, Dufault 9-14 2-2 21, Tomlinson 1-4 2-2 5, Higgins 4-8 7-7 15, Thorne 5-11 0-2 11, Veal 0-0 0-0 0, Knutson 3-10 0-0 7, Zehnder 0-0 0-0 0, Crawford 1-5 2-4 5, Eckloff 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 23-56 14-21 65.

### Halftime—ULM 27-24. 3-Point

**Goals**—ULM 4-12 (Gilbert 2-4, Forbes 2-7, Averette 0-1, Thomas 0-1, Hill 0-1), CU 5-18 (Dufault 1-2, Tomlinson 1-3 Thorne 1-3, Knutson 1-5, Crawford 1-3, Higgins 0-2).

### Fouled Out—Turner (ULM).

**Rebounds**—ULM 45 (Thomas 14), CU 22 (Higgins 7). **Assists**—ULM 11 (Averette 4), CU 17 (Tomlinson 4). **Total Fouls**—ULM 23, CU 15.

“We can’t get beat on the boards like this and expect to win a lot,” Crawford said. “We can’t do this in the Big 12 by any means.

<b>Technicals</b> —none. A—3,589.
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“It’s about us. It’s about having a will and want to.”

Said Bzdelik: “The lesson to be learned is we have to block people out with great force. They got 15 points off the offensive glass; they probably should have had more.

“We have to rebound, take charges, get our noses dirty, get bloodied up, skin our knees, for all 40 minutes from everybody. That’s what we talked about after the game.”

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