



# Turnovers plague Bzdelik's Buffs

## CU gave up 55 points off 44 turnovers in first two Big 12 games

By Ryan Thorburn  
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BOULDER, Colo. — The Buffs respect the talent level and tradition at Kansas.

Colorado big man Trey Eckloff praised the play of counterpart Cole Aldrich after the KU center scored 15 points and grabbed 10 rebounds during the Jayhawks' 73-56 victory at the Coors Events Center.

Cory Higgins and other CU players embraced playing in front of 10,212 fans in Boulder, even though half of them were cheering against them.

But the consensus in the locker room after the game was that CU wasn't beaten by the defending national champions as much as the Buffs simply beat themselves.

Jeff Bzdelik's team -- despite the constant focus on taking care of the ball and boxing out in practice -- continues to sabotage its opportunities for success by turning the ball over and allowing opponents extra possessions due to poor rebounding.

"Knowing that we lost the game rather than them winning it is disappointing," freshman point guard Nate Tomlinson said after committing seven turnovers and only assisting on one basket in 33 minutes.

The Buffs finished with 18 turnovers that led to 25 points. They also allowed the Jayhawks to grab nine offensive rebounds that led to 12 second-chance points.

In the Big 12 opener at Missouri, a 107-62 loss, CU gave up 30 points off 26 turnovers and 13 points off seven offensive rebounds. The Tigers probably would have had more rebounds but they didn't miss a lot of shots.

"Obviously, in order to have a chance for success in basketball the first two criteria are: No. 1, value the possession of the basketball. No. 2, yield nothing easy for your opponent," Bzdelik said. "Those are the two areas that our young basketball team hasn't really consistently done. And they're learning the hard way."

There are other areas of concern.

The Buffs shot about 49 percent from the field during non-conference play but are shooting a conference-worst 37.1 percent in Big 12 play through two games.

CU ranks 11th in assists per game (8.50) and sports an ugly turnover margin (12th, -8.0), not to mention the defensive rebounding (12th, 16.5) numbers.

"Hopefully all this experience that they're gaining right now is going to pay off," Bzdelik said. "They're going to have to take this experience and grow from it. These things are correctable."

The Buffs (8-8, 0-2) play at Texas Tech on Tuesday. Pat Knight's Red Raiders (10-7, 0-2) are also struggling against Big 12 competition right now.

It sounds like CU's players will arrive in Lubbock with plenty of confidence despite the struggles on the scoreboard.

"Give them their dues," Eckloff said of Kansas. "But they didn't greatly outplay us, it was mistakes we made that cost us the game."



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