



Mizzou hands CU its 7th loss in row

By Ryan Thorburn

Saturday, February 21, 2009

BOULDER, Colo. — After Colorado's seventh consecutive Big 12 defeat coach Jeff Bzdelik said stopping the painful streak is the players' responsibility.

The Buffs were out-rebounded 35-31, outscored 36-18 in the paint and allowed the visitors to shoot 50 percent from the field during Saturday's 66-53 loss to No. 11 Missouri at the Coors Events Center.

This is CU's longest losing streak since the 1995-96 team dropped eight in a row.

"They need to grow up," Bzdelik said. "They'll win when they get tired of losing."

Austin Dufault is sick of it.

The freshman forward from Killdeer, N.D., came out hunting for Tigers stars DeMarre Carroll and Leo Lyons during the second half. After scoring just two points and failing to grab a rebound at the intermission, Dufault finished with a game-high 15 points and a team-high five rebounds.

"Coach got on me a little bit and got me fired up and got me ticked off," Dufault said when asked what motivated his aggressive play. "I came out in the second half with a different attitude that I wasn't going to let anybody push me around."

Bzdelik believes many of Dufault's teammates have that same fire burning inside of them.

Even though the Buffs (9-17, 1-11) are headed for another last-place conference finish and a third consecutive 20-loss season, the coach sees behind-the-scenes signs that the program is on the verge of future success.

"This is a challenge, and I'm committed to it. And we've got some guys who are committed to it, too. I'm excited about where we're headed," Bzdelik said. "They're wired right. We've got some guys that are competing."

Just not for 40 minutes.

The Tigers led 37-26 after Lyons -- who did not play in the first meeting due to a suspension -- personally out-rebounded the Buffs 11-10.

Missouri had a 21-10 overall edge on the boards at the break, including seven offensive rebounds (four by Lyons).

"I was too tentative the first half and I just basically looked to be more aggressive in the second half,

especially rebounding," Dufault said. "I was letting Lyons and Carroll push me around a little bit. I have to get over that, playing against seniors.

"No matter how old you are, you have to go out there and play the game. I think I figured that out in the second half."

Dufault scored back-to-back field goals to cut the deficit to 52-43 with 7:17 remaining, but that would be as close as CU would get.

Missouri answered with a powerful run and took a 19-point lead with 2:08 remaining to send most of the 6,271 witnesses to the exits.

"We played a team with three seniors and a couple of juniors. They understand," Bzdelik said. "They do it physically and mentally. They're tough, they're hard-nosed and they're not going to be denied."

The Tigers (23-4, 10-2) were led by Lyons' 13 points and 15 rebounds. Marcus Denmon (11) and Carroll (10) also scored in double figures with a total of nine Missouri players scoring points.

"You can get down a little bit, but you have to bounce back," Jermyl Jackson-Wilson said. "I guess as long as the sun shines ... there's always a new day."

Missouri blasted CU 107-62 in the first meeting to open conference play. Against other Big 12 teams CU is 1-8 with six single-digit losses.

"If you're honest, you've got to say they're trying and competing," Bzdelik said of his team.

The Buffs next host Oklahoma State at 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

Missouri 66, Colorado 53

MISSOURI

FG FT Reb

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

Carroll 34 4-9 2-2 1-8 4 3 10

Lyons 21 4-8 5-5 4-15 1 5 13

Tiller 16 2-5 1-1 1-3 2 2 5

Taylor 31 2-5 0-0 0-1 7 2 4

English 12 2-4 0-0 0-0 0 3 6

Paul 8 0-2 0-0 0-0 0 2 0

Denmon 25 3-6 4-4 1-2 1 2 11

Andrsn Jr 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Ramsey 17 2-2 0-1 1-2 0 2 4

Bowers 8 3-3 0-0 0-1 1 1 6

Safford 2 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Moore 2 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 2 0

Lwrnce 23 3-6 0-0 0-2 1 2 7

Totals 200 25-50 12-13 9-35 17 26 66

Percentages: FG .500, FT .923.

3-Point Goals: 4-16, .250 (English 2-4, Denmon 1-4, Lawrence 1-4, Carroll 0-1, Taylor 0-1, Paul 0-2).

Team Rebounds: 1.

Blocked Shots: 5 (Lyons 2, Ramsey, Bowers, Taylor).

Turnovers: 18 (Lyons 4, Carroll 3, Lawrence 3, English 3, Ramsey 2, Bowers, Taylor).

Steals: 4 (Taylor 3, Lyons).

Technical Fouls: None.

COLORADO

FG FT Reb

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

J-Wilson 15 1-2 2-2 0-2 1 3 4

Dufault 38 5-9 4-5 3-5 1 1 15

Tomlnsn 23 1-2 0-0 0-2 3 2 3

Higgins 39 5-12 4-8 0-4 3 2 14

Thorne II 31 2-10 2-2 0-3 2 1 8

Kelley 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Coney 23 2-5 0-1 1-3 1 3 5

Knutson 20 1-2 0-0 0-0 1 1 2

Eckloff 10 1-1 0-1 0-0 0 2 2

Totals 200 18-43 12-19 4-21 12 15 53

Percentages: FG .419, FT .632.

3-Point Goals: 5-13, .385 (Thorne II 2-6, Tomlinson 1-1, Dufault 1-2, Coney 1-4).

Team Rebounds: 2.

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

Turnovers: 17 (Tomlinson 4, Jackson-Wilson 3, Higgins 3, Coney 2, Dufault 2, Kelley, Thorne II, Knutson).

Steals: 5 (Higgins 3, Thorne II, Coney).

Technical Fouls: None.

Missouri 37 29--66

Colorado 26 27--53

A -- 6,271.

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Buff bench can't keep up with MU

By Ryan Thorburn
Saturday, February 21, 2009

BOULDER, Colo. — Missouri 28, Colorado 9.

That would be the advantage the No. 11 Tigers had in points off the bench during a 66-53 victory over the Buffs on Saturday at the Coors Events Center.

Jeff Bzdelik has found four solid pieces to the rebuilding puzzle in Cory Higgins, Dwight Thorne, Austin Dufault and Nate Tomlinson.

Higgins, Thorne and Dufault have started all 26 games this season. Tomlinson (25) missed one game due to an injury.

But depth has been an issue throughout the campaign and was a problem against Missouri once again as nine visitors scored while shooting 50 percent (25-for-50) from the field as a team.

"If this doesn't sting you ... I hurt, our fans hurt," Bzdelik said after the Buffs' seventh consecutive loss. "At some point you have to say, 'I've had enough.'"

Before Saturday's matchup, Bzdelik reiterated that the reason talented players like Casey Crawford and Toby Veal are not playing is because they need to improve their defense and play with more energy.

Neither forward pulled off the warm-ups on Saturday.

Javon Coney, a walk-on, played 23 minutes and finished with five points and three rebounds. Levi Knutson and Trey Eckloff each scored two points off the bench.

Marcus Denmon had 11 points in relief for Missouri.

"I thought fatigue was a big factor in the game," Tigers coach Mike Anderson said. "We had some other guys come off the bench and they played well. We are getting a lot of other guys that are starting to contribute.

"So our (starters) like Leo (Lyons), DeMarre (Carroll) ... they can play quality minutes because they know they have some guys coming off the bench. You can just see the trust continuing to grow in our basketball team."

Missouri had six players score in double figures in the first meeting, a 107-62 rout of CU in Columbia. Lyons, who finished with 13 points and 15 rebounds on Saturday, didn't even play in that game due to a suspension.

"Colorado is a way better team than they were when they came to Mizzou," Carroll said.

Just not a deeper team.

Burks update

Colorado did achieve one impressive victory in Missouri this season by signing Grandview (Mo.) High School star Alec Burks to a national letter of intent back in November.

Entering its district tournament this week, Grandview is 23-1 overall and ranked No. 3 in the state's largest classification. Burks, a 6-4 shooting guard, is averaging over 21 points a game and has scored over 30 points six times with a season-high of 38.

Burks chose CU over Kansas State after visiting Boulder and storming the field with students after the Buffs' victory over West Virginia in football.

CU has also signed Shane Harris-Tunks, a 6-11 center from Australia, and Keegan Hornbuckle, a 6-6 forward from Los Angeles.

Bzdelik plans to add at least one more player to the class during the spring signing period in May.

Notable

Ryan Kelley saw his first action since sustaining a knee injury in practice on Jan. 14. The freshman guard only played one minute and had a turnover. ... The Buffs have trailed at the half in 11 of 12 Big 12 games this season (one tied). ... Mizzou scored 19 points off of 17 CU turnovers while the Buffs scored 15 points off of 18 Tiger turnovers. ... CU has made a 3-pointer in 221 consecutive games dating back to the 2001-02 season.

By the numbers

0 -- Lead changes in the game. Missouri lead from wire-to-wire; CU never had the lead during last Wednesday's 46-41 loss at Nebraska, either.

6-0 -- Third-year Missouri coach Mike Anderson's record against CU.

7 -- Number of free throws the Buffs missed. Cory Higgins, an 86 percent free throw shooter, was 4-for-8 at the stripe.

8:37 p.m. -- Approximate start time for CU's next home game on Wednesday against Oklahoma State.



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CU stretches slide to seven

Bzdelik puts onus on Buffs to "grow up"

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

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Missouri's Leo Lyons passes over Colorado's Cory Higgins during the first half of the Big 12 game Saturday at the Coors Events Center in Boulder. Lyons, a 6-foot-9 senior forward, led the 11th-ranked Tigers with 13 points and a game-high 15 rebounds. Higgins scored 14 points for the Buffaloes. (Jack Dempsey, The Associated Press)

BOULDER — About ready to bite through a towel on the bench, Colorado coach Jeff Bzdelik tried to push all the buttons Saturday during a 66-53

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loss to 11th-ranked Missouri.

Bzdelik used Colorado's last timeout with 13 minutes still to play. He gave a walk-on (Javon Coney) substantial playing time. And the coach all but challenged the manhood of his players at halftime.

Colorado (9-17, 1-11 Big 12) lost its seventh straight, its longest losing streak since eight in a row during the 1995-96 season. A Coors Events Center crowd of 6,271 had little to cheer about. CU never led.

"These kids are wired right; we have guys competing," Bzdelik told reporters afterward. "But I'm putting pressure on them to grow up. I told them they

CU Basketball

View slide show of Texas-CU men's basketball Feb.

- 14 . Visit the CU Stats Page for men's boxscores, Big 12 standings, team leaders and more
- Visit the CU Stats Page for women's boxscores, Big 12 standings, player pages and more
- Visit Tom Kensler's All Things Buffs blog for a behind-the-scenes look at CU sports

will win when they get tired of losing. It's beyond coaching."

The late Abe Lemons, known as the Will Rogers of basketball coaches, once told a 7-footer, "You had one more rebound than a dead man!" Bzdelik could have used a similar line on 6-foot-9 forward Austin Dufault, who finished the first 20 minutes with no rebounds and two points.

Whatever Bzdelik said to Dufault, it struck a nerve. By game's end, the CU freshman had team bests of 15 points (his high for a conference game) and five rebounds.

"Coach (Bzdelik) got on me a little bit (at halftime), got me fired up and a little ticked off," Dufault said. "I was pushed around in the first half.

"It doesn't matter how old you are, you still have to go out there and play."

Missouri (23-4, 10-2) had blitzed the Buffaloes 107-62 in the Big 12 opener Jan. 14 and is a tough matchup for Colorado. This time, the senior duo of 6-9 Leo Lyons and 6-8 DeMarre Carroll outrebounded Colorado by themselves, with Lyons snaring 15.

The Tigers are experienced, have a deep bench (28 points from reserves) and rattled the Buffs' young guards with full-court pressure designed to trap the ballhandler against the sideline or in a corner.

"We played to our depth against Colorado," Missouri coach Mike Anderson said.

MISSOURI (23-4, 10-2 BIG 12)

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Carroll 4-9 2-2 10, Lyons 4-8 5-5 13, Tiller 2-5 1-1 5, Taylor 2-5 0-0 4, English 2-4 0-0 6, Paul 0-2 0-0 0, Denmon 3-6 4-4 11, Anderson Jr. 0-0 0-0 0, Ramsey 2-2 0-1 4, Bowers 3-3 0-0 6, Safford 0-0 0-0 0, Moore 0-0 0-0 0, Lawrence 3-6 0-0 7. **Totals 25-50 12-13 66 .**

COLORADO (9-17, 1-11)

Jackson-Wilson 1-2 2-2 4, Dufault 5-9 4-5 15, Tomlinson 1-2 0-0 3, Higgins 5-12 4-8 14, Thorne II 2-10 2-2 8, Kelley 0-0 0-0 0, Coney 2-5 0-1 5, Knutson 1-2 0-0 2, Eckloff 1-1 0-1 2. **Totals 18-43 12-19 53 .**

Halftime — Missouri 37-26. **3-point goals** — Missouri 4-16 (English 2-4, Denmon 1-4, Lawrence 1-4, Carroll 0-1, Taylor 0-1, Paul 0-2); Colorado 5-13 (Thorne II 2-6, Tomlinson 1-1, Dufault 1-2, Coney 1-4). **Fouled out** — Lyons. **Rebounds** — Missouri 35 (Lyons 15), Colorado 21 (Dufault 5). **Assists** — Missouri 17 (Taylor 7); Colorado 12 (Higgins 3, Tomlinson 3). **Total fouls** — Missouri 26, Colorado 15.

A — 6,271.

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