



Relphorde rounds out Bzdelik's third class

Juco transfer signs on to play with Buffs

By Ryan Thorburn
Wednesday, April 29, 2009

BOULDER, Colo. — Juco is usually a four-letter word for the Colorado men's basketball coaches.

Jeff Bzdelik's primary recruiting philosophy is to build the program with high school seniors who fit his system and consider GPA an important statistic.

And filling in some of the holes with Big 12-ready talent from the junior college ranks has been a daunting task for the coaching staff as a number of promising candidates interested in CU have been unable to meet the university's academic qualifications for enrollment.

That all changed on Wednesday morning when Marcus Relphorde -- a versatile 6-foot-7, 220-pound guard/forward from Indian Hills Community College in Iowa -- signed a national letter of intent to play at CU.

"My parents are really high on academics. It's something they've pushed for me," Relphorde said during an interview with the Camera. "I'm high on academics, too. That's one of the reasons I liked Colorado."

Relphorde began his college career at Saint Louis University but decided it wasn't a good fit after Rick Majerus replaced Brad Soderberg, who had recruited him, as head coach. The Chicago native spent last season at Indian Hills, where he started on a 30-3 team that will send at least six players to Division I programs next year.

"The main thing with me was the relationship I had with coach Bzdelik and (CU assistant) coach (Steve) McClain," Relphorde, who also made recent visits to TCU and Arkansas, said when asked what put the Buffs over the top. "They're getting close and just need a couple pieces to make some noise."

The Buffs also signed Shannon Sharpe, a 6-0 point guard from Corona, Calif., during the spring period. Alec Burks (6-5, guard, Grandview, Mo.), Shane Harris-Tunks (6-11, center/forward, Sydney, Australia) and Keegan Hornbuckle (6-6, forward, Los Angeles) signed last November.

"The signing of Marcus Relphorde completes an excellent recruiting class for the Buffs," Bzdelik said in a release. "His addition should have an immediate positive impact on our team because of the much-needed maturity and experience that he brings. Marcus combines size and strength with an overall skill package that makes him a difficult match up defensively."

Last season Relphorde averaged 12 points and five rebounds per game at Indian Hills.

"I think he'll have an opportunity to go in there and have an impact right away. I'm not sure what their

roster looks like, but he's ready to play," Indian Hills head coach Jeff Kidder said. "He's a really good student. He's not a typical junior college player academically because he was qualified out of high school. ...

"He's the type of kid who loves basketball and he really wants to do something the next two years."

Relphorde said that Bzdelik and McClain both made multiple trips out to Iowa to watch Indian Hills play and convinced him that he was a key piece to the CU puzzle.

"I'm definitely a good rebounder, especially on the offensive side," Relphorde said. "And I think the part of my game that will translate well is my versatility. I can play four positions on the court and can create some matchup problems for the defense."

Relphorde plans on arriving in Boulder in June to begin classes and workouts with his new teammates.

"Coach Bzdelik told me a lot of young guys were playing heavy minutes last year, too many minutes," Relphorde said. "And that experience is going to really help next season."

For the second consecutive season there will only be one senior -- guard Dwight Thorne -- on the roster. Relphorde will be a junior along with Cory Higgins, Casey Crawford and Levi Knutson. Austin Dufault, Trey Eckloff, Nate Tomlinson, Toby Veal will be sophomores.

The other member of last year's recruiting class, Ryan Kelley, decided to leave the program after the 9-22 season, which opened up a scholarship for Relphorde, who plans to major in business or marketing.

CU's non-conference schedule features an appearance in the Maui Invitational. The field includes Arizona, Cincinnati, Gonzaga, Maryland, Vanderbilt and Wisconsin. The Buffs also play at Colorado State, Oregon State and Tulsa before Big 12 play.

"To play in the Maui, that's something I've always wanted to play in," Relphorde said. "And I'm really looking forward to the competition every night in the Big 12."



© 2006 Daily Camera and Boulder Publishing, LLC.

[Print page](#)[Close window](#)

Longmont, Colorado
Thursday, April 30, 2009

Publish Date: 4/30/2009

Relphorde signing completes CU recruiting class

By Patrick Ridgell
© 2009 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — The Colorado men's basketball program announced the signing of guard/forward Marcus Relphorde on Wednesday.

Relphorde, the first junior college transfer CU coach Jeff Bzdelik has signed during his tenure in Boulder, gives the Buffs 13 players on scholarship.

"The signing of Marcus Relphorde completes an excellent recruiting class for the Buffs," Bzdelik said in a press release. "His addition should have an immediate positive impact on our team because of the much-needed maturity and experience that he brings. Marcus combines size and strength with an overall skill package that makes him a difficult matchup defensively."

After originally signing with Saint Louis University under then-head coach Brad Soderberg, Relphorde, 6-foot-7, 225 pounds, averaged 4.3 minutes in 21 games as a freshman in 2007-08. Relphorde left school after the 2007-08 season under current Billikens head coach Rick Majerus. Relphorde averaged 12 points and five rebounds per game as a sophomore during the 2008-09 season at Indian Hills Community College in Iowa. The Warriors finished the season at 30-3. He has two seasons left to play.

Relphorde is the second player CU has signed this spring, joining guard Shannon Sharpe to complete the five-member class. The Buffs signed guard Alec Burks, center Shane Harris-Tunks and forward Keegan Hornbuckle in November.

Walk-on juniors Trent Beckley and Javon Coney round out CU's roster. Beckley was on scholarship in 2008-09.

Patrick Ridgell can be reached at pridgell@times-call.com.