



# Veal leaving CU basketball

## Forward is second player to transfer this offseason

By Ryan Thorburn  
Friday, May 29, 2009

BOULDER, Colo. — Through tough injuries, study sessions and personal issues, Ryan Kelley and Toby Veal helped one another get through a difficult year at the University of Colorado.

Both players showed flashes of brilliance as true freshmen in the struggling men's basketball program, but neither played much during their first season for Jeff Bzdelik.

CU announced on Friday that Veal would be leaving the Buffs, just as Kelley decided to do shortly after a miserable 9-22 season.

"Me and Toby are best friends," Kelley said in the middle of the campaign when he was keeping a seat warm on the end of the bench next to Veal. "We try to motivate each other to go out there and work hard in practice, try to show the coaches we're really paying attention and ready to play."

Veal -- the most athletic member of last year's five-man recruiting class, which also includes Nate Tomlinson, Austin Dufault and Trey Eckloff -- admitted during the season that missed classes contributed to his lack of playing time.

After working with academic counselors and recovering from having his wisdom teeth pulled, the 6-foot-7 forward earned the coaching staff's confidence and scored a career-high 10 points on March 4 against Texas A&M.

Cory Higgins, CU's leading scorer and rebounder, said Veal was blossoming into a potential impact player during workouts this spring.

"I think we saw spurts at the end of the season from him that we could have used the whole year, but his potential, I think, is unlimited," Higgins told the Camera last month.

"He's so raw right now and you can just see him getting better and better every day. It's pretty amazing."

According to Bzdelik, Veal is transferring due to family issues that the head coach was not privy to on the recruiting trail.

"After signing Toby Veal in November 2007, he revealed to me that he had fathered a daughter," Bzdelik explained in a release. "Throughout the past school year, Toby struggled with being too far from his newborn. Consequently, he has decided to return closer to home so he can be with her on a regular basis."

"He's a good young man and we wish him well."

The coaching staff has now bid farewell to 10 young men since Bzdelik was hired by CU on April 4, 2007.

Before Bzdelik's first season in Boulder, four players -- Kal Bay, James Inge, Sean Kowal and Marc Van Burck departed. After the 2007-08 campaign, four more players -- Caleb Patterson, Xavier Silas, Jeremy Williams and Kyle Wright -- left the program.

Veal, who is from Savannah, Ga., substituted in for Jermyl Jackson-Wilson at center late in the season, but he was expecting to thrive as a small forward this fall.

"Next year all the pieces will come together after playing this whole season together," Veal predicted. "It's all going to be easier to comprehend, and I think it's going to be an interesting season because everyone on our team is going to be a lot better. ...

"Next year is the year when we get over the hump and the close games go our way."

Veal only averaged 1.8 points and 1.6 rebounds for CU. Kelley averaged 2.6 points and 0.5 rebounds.

Bzdelik and his staff will welcome a new recruiting class to campus this summer that includes Alec Burks, Keegan Hornbuckle, Shane Harris-Tunks, Shannon Sharpe and Marcus Relphorde.

The spring signing period ended on May 20, which means Bzdelik won't be able to use the open scholarship until 2010.



© 2006 Daily Camera and Boulder Publishing, LLC.