



Big 12 coaches: Buffs will finish in basement

By Ryan Thorburn

Originally published 11:54 a.m., October 7, 2008

Updated 11:36 p.m., October 7, 2008

Jeff Bzdelik's office was unoccupied.

Steve McClain and the other assistants weren't around either.

The Colorado men's basketball coaching staff was scattered from coast to coast recruiting.

And perhaps that's the best possible response any of them could give a reporter looking for a reaction to the Big 12 preseason coaches poll, which was released Tuesday.

Bzdelik's peers tabbed the Buffs to finish in last place. CU only received 13 points while Iowa State, picked 11th, received 20.

Oklahoma, the team that struggled to end the Buffs' second consecutive 20-loss season at the Big 12 Tournament last March with a 54-49 win in the quarterfinals, is the preseason favorite for the first time in Big 12 history.

"We mostly ignore it," CU sophomore shooting guard Levi Knutson said of the preseason projections. "There's an aspect where you want to prove people wrong, but that's not where we get most of our motivation."

Bzdelik's background gives him a lot of respect in the Big 12 coaching fraternity. But Bill Self and Rick Barnes obviously believe there is a lot more rebuilding to do before the Buffs are a serious threat.

After all:

There is a good chance CU will start three freshmen and two sophomores this season.

Last year's two best players, Richard Roby and Marcus Hall, are out of eligibility.

And losing Jeremy Williams, who decided to leave the program after watching Xavier Silas, Caleb Patterson and numerous other Ricardo Patton recruits march out of Boulder, will hurt Bzdelik's depth and size.

"Obviously, we're a really young team and nobody expects young teams to win a conference like the Big 12," Knutson said. "But when you get out there it's just five guys against five guys and you just go out and play. Your age doesn't matter. All that matters is how you play when you're out there."

Knutson watched film in CU's posh new locker room on Tuesday before shooting on the bright new

floor at the Coors Events Center. Since Bzdelik was hired a new basketball operations center has been added to the arena, work on a new weight room has started and there are plans to build a \$10 million practice facility.

"We would anticipate that his basketball team continue to go on the same curve as those elements are," CU athletic director Mike Bohn said when asked about his expectations for the program in Bzdelik's second season. "And when it all comes together, I think we're going to have something special. Fan support is a part of it, too. That helps recruit players, that helps win games. ...

"I think that's indicative of the type of growth we expect. I know Jeff expects that, he's an impatient guy. But he and his staff are working their tail off and doing a great job in recruiting and we'll get there."

OU received 109 points in the coaches poll. Texas, which actually had the most first-place votes, was second with 107 points. Baylor and reigning national champion Kansas were tied for third with 103 points.

Texas A&M (79 points) was fifth, followed by Oklahoma State (69), Missouri (51), Kansas State (50), Nebraska (49) and Texas Tech (39).

"We're not really concerned with where other people view us," Knutson said. "We're just trying to play our game and see what happens."

The Buffs open the season at home on Nov. 14 against Arkansas-Pine Bluff.



© 2006 Daily Camera and Boulder Publishing, LLC.

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

sports - region report

CU men's hoops picked last

Denver Post staff and wire services

Article Last Updated: 10/07/2008 11:49:19 PM MDT

The Colorado men's basketball team was tabbed to finish in the conference basement, and Oklahoma was the preseason favorite for the first time in the Big 12 coaches poll released Tuesday. Defending national champion Kansas was picked third along with Baylor.

Only six points separated the top four teams in the poll, led by the Sooners with 109 points and three first-place votes. Second-place Texas had the most first-place votes with four and tallied 107 points. Colorado received 13 points.

Kansas, which beat Memphis 75-68 in overtime for the school's first national championship since 1988, had 103 points along with Baylor, which had two first-place votes.

Texas A&M, Oklahoma State and Missouri were picked fifth, sixth and seventh. The remainder of the poll was Kansas State at No. 8, followed by Nebraska, Texas Tech, Iowa State and Colorado.

CU women's soccer drops rank.

Last week's 1-1 record cost the University of Colorado women's soccer team five spots in the National Soccer Coaches Association rankings, as

the Buffs (9-2-2) fell to No. 22 after a 1-0 loss to Missouri and a 2-0 win over Kansas State.

In the Division II rankings, the Fort Lewis men (8-1-2) maintained their No. 3 spot, while Metro State (7-2-2) moved up three spots to No. 15, and Mesa State (7-4-0) dropped one spot to No. 25. The Metro women (7-1-2) moved up one spot to No. 12.

Rage gets Reid back.

The Rocky Mountain Rage have goaltender Scott Reid back on the roster after he was returned to the Central Hockey League club after a tryout with the American Hockey League's Quad City Flames.

Reid appeared in one preseason game for Quad City, recording 16 saves during a 4-1 win over the Iowa Chops on Saturday. The Rage released goalie Cameron Clemenson.

The Rage plays its first preseason game tonight against the Colorado Eagles at the Budweiser Events Center in Loveland at 7 p.m.

CU golfers tie for third.

The University of Colorado women's golf team climbed one spot to finish in a tie for third at the McHaney/Morehead Invitational on the Texas Tech Rawls Golf Course in Lubbock, Texas, the same course that will host the women's Big 12 Championship next spring.

Arkansas-Little Rock won the team title with a 32-over-par 908 total, five shots better than Baylor and 12 better than CU and the host Red Raiders.

Emily Talley shot a 76 in the final round for a 10-over 229 total and a 10th-place finish, her third top 10 in four tournaments in her freshman campaign.

Advertisement

FACTORY OVERSTOCK BLOWOUT!

Leather High-Back
\$219

Leather Mid-Back
\$199

Bookcases
Various Sizes
\$149-\$259

2-Drawer Lateral File
\$399



OFFICE LIQUIDATORS

Profit From Our Experience

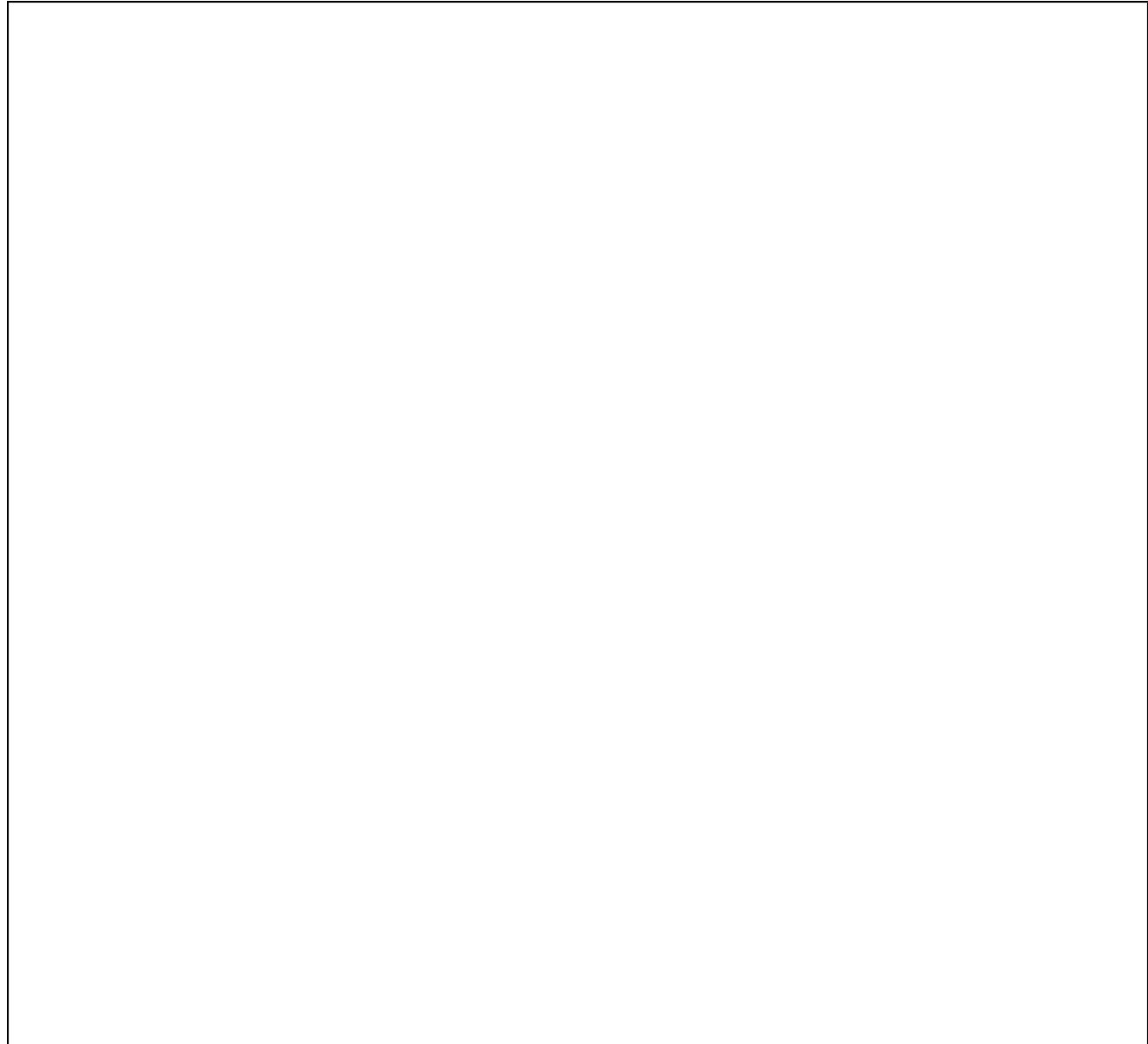
11111 W. 6th Ave/ LAKEWOOD
Between Kipling & Simms

303-759-3375
www.OfficeLiquidators.com

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST



Advertisement

FACTORY OVERSTOCK BLOWOUT!

Leather High-Back \$219		Leather Mid-Back \$199	
Bookcases Various Sizes \$149-\$259		2-Drawer Lateral File \$399	

 **OFFICE LIQUIDATORS**
Profit From Our Experience
11111 W. 6th Ave/ LAKEWOOD
Between Kipling & Simms
303-759-3375
www.OfficeLiquidators.com



Print Powered By  **FormatDynamics™**