



Buffs lose on senior night

By Ryan Thorburn

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

BOULDER, Colo. — Jeff Bzdelik will not be calling in sick this month to watch NCAA Tournament games on the couch like many hoops junkies.

Not after this winter of discontent.

“I don’t even turn on the TV. I can’t even hear about March Madness,” Bzdelik said. “It’s going to be March recruiting for me.”

Needless to say, “senior night” at the Coors Events Center — much like the entire 2008-09 season — did not go well.

Colorado lost 72-66 to a very beatable Texas A&M bubble team after allowing the Aggies to erase an eight-point deficit with a late 16-2 run.

The Buffs (9-20, 1-14) have now lost 10 consecutive games, the longest streak since the 1985-86 team dropped its final 17 games, and clinched the No. 12 seed at the Big 12 Tournament for the third straight year.

And for the first time in the 108-year history of the program, CU has lost 20 games in three consecutive seasons.

So while Jermynl Jackson-Wilson was bidding farewell to the 4,973 diehards, Bzdelik was barking at the visiting Keegan Hornbuckle — one of three high school recruits CU has already signed for next season — to make sure the future freshman was doing all the right things to prepare himself for the jump to the Big 12.

“We’re headed for better days, trust me,” Bzdelik said.

Jackson-Wilson, the only senior in the program, had to watch all but seven minutes of the latest agonizing defeat from the bench.

After scoring the first basket of the game, the 6-foot-6 forward only was just another helpless spectator and finished his final home game with two points, one rebound and five turnovers.

“I didn’t feel like it,” Jackson-Wilson said when asked if he was pressing. “But numbers don’t lie, so I must have been.”

The Buffs appeared to be in control after a field goal by Cory Higgins gave them a 54-46 lead with just under six minutes left.

Texas A&M's comeback didn't take long.

B.J. Holmes started it with a 3-pointer. After a turnover by Austin Dufault, he buried another shot from behind the arc while being fouled by Casey Crawford.

The ensuing free throw completed Holmes' personal 7-0 run in 30 seconds.

"That really changed the game," Aggies coach Mark Turgeon said. "The lead went from eight (points) to one like that and we were right back in the game."

Moments later, Donald Sloan made it 10 unanswered points for the visitors with a hoop off an offensive rebound to give the Aggies a 56-54 lead. Texas A&M took a 62-56 lead with just over two minutes left.

Casey Crawford was able to cut the deficit to 68-66 on a 3-pointer with 17.4 seconds remaining, but Turgeon's team put the game away by making four free throws from that point.

"We take possessions off mentally," Bzdelik lamented. "And we have very little margin for error."

It took 15 games but the Buffs finally had a halftime lead in conference play (32-24) thanks to 16 turnovers by the Aggies that led 24 points for the home team.

Higgins had three of CU's nine steals and led all scorers with 14 points at the intermission. The sophomore finished with 27 points.

CU's 11 single-digit losses this season have been by an average of 4.5 points.

"I would think it's probably mental toughness," Higgins said when asked for a common denominator.

The Buffs finish the regular season on Saturday at Kansas State. CU has lost 28 consecutive conference road games, which is a Big 12 record.



© 2006 Daily Camera and Boulder Publishing, LLC.



Senior night rough for Jackson-Wilson

By Ryan Thorburn
Thursday, March 5, 2009

BOULDER, Colo. — Jermyl Jackson-Wilson had a great "senior night."

Until the game started.

After being presented with a framed jersey, getting some love from his grandma, watching his mother perform the national anthem and then being introduced to the home crowd for the final time ... well, things went down hill for Colorado's only senior.

Jackson-Wilson scored the first basket of the game but only played a total of seven minutes with two points, one rebound and five of the Buffs' 10 turnovers.

Instead of going out a winner, Jackson-Wilson mostly watched CU's 72-66 loss to Texas A&M on Wednesday night at the Coors Events Center.

"No one else had more than one turnover but me," Jackson-Wilson said. "I don't mind sitting if my teammates are doing better. It was tough, but they were fighting, so you can't be mad. ...

"I'm sad that we lost. I'm upset with myself. I didn't show up for the game. My teammates did their job, and I didn't do mine."

Freshman forward Toby Veal gave the Buffs an early spark with a dunk in transition to make the score 13-2 with 14:35 to play. He finished with a career-high 10 points on 5-for-7 shooting before fouling out in the second half.

"Sometimes when you get the opportunity to get out there, you have to be ready. You may have only three minutes to prove yourself, and in those three minutes you may not be as ready as you think you are," Jackson-Wilson said when asked about Veal's surprising performance. "But tonight he proved that he can play in the Big 12. He did a really good job for us."

CU head coach Jeff Bzdelik said one of the reasons why Veal, the most athletic player on the roster, hasn't played more this season is because he had some maturing to do. And that included taking care of his academics after missing some classes.

"He is a young player that is now making the positive adjustment to college," Bzdelik said. "You can see that as he gets stronger and continues to develop his skill, he can have a positive impact on the game. He is a work in progress and a part of our future in a big way."

Casey Crawford also played well off the bench with 16 points, which is the most the sophomore has scored since netting 18 against Harvard on Nov. 22.

"Crawford hurt us tonight," Texas A&M coach Mark Turgeon said. "He hit some big shots for them and they're harder to guard when he's hitting 3s."

Crawford, who is averaging 11.6 points over the last three games, was 3-for-8 from behind the arc.

Tomlinson returns

Nate Tomlinson was back in the starting lineup after missing the previous two games due to a concussion.

The freshman point guard played very well with seven assists and one turnover. Tomlinson was also 2-for-2 from the field for four points.

"That's good stuff," Bzdelik said. "Something to build on."

Veal also sat out of last week's losses to Oklahoma State and Baylor after having some wisdom teeth pulled. The freshman forward had only scored nine points all season with a previous career-high of three points against Prairie View A&M.

Knutson honored

CU guard Levi Knutson was one of 17 players named to the Big 12's all-academic first team on Wednesday. To qualify for the honor members had to have recorded a grade-point average of 3.20 or better in the two previous semesters and participated in 60 percent of his team's games.

Freshmen are not eligible for the honor or the Buffs would have been better represented. Texas led the conference with four members on the first team.

Knutson, a sophomore majoring in business, finished with three points and five rebounds on Wednesday. He scored a career-high 19 points a week earlier against Oklahoma State.

Notable

CU leads the all-time series 9-7, but the Aggies are closing fast with wins in the last six meetings. ... The Buffs lost despite having a 34-26 advantage in points in the paint and a 27-11 edge in points off turnovers. ... Bzdelik's team led 32-24 at halftime. CU's previous halftime lead in a Big 12 game was last season's "senior night" win over Iowa State.

By the numbers

4.5 -- Average margin of victory in CU's 11 single-digit defeats this season.

10 -- Consecutive losses for CU. That's the most since the 1985-86 team dropped its final 17 games of the season.

12 -- The Buffs seed in the Big 12 Tournament for the third straight year.

53.3 -- Percentage CU shot at the free throw line (8-for-15). Texas A&M was 19-for-27 at the stripe.

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

sports

CU scares Aggies, but streak hits 10

TEXAS A&M 72, COLORADO 66

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 03/05/2009 12:30:00 AM MST

BOULDER — With his basketball team squarely on the bubble for an NCAA Tournament bid, Texas A&M coach Mark Turgeon told a staff member that he didn't get much sleep before the Aggies' Wednesday night matchup against Big 12 cellar-dweller Colorado at the Coors Events Center.

Turgeon must have known something. Playing in their final home game, the Buffaloes showed some spunk. But this one ended the way many of Colorado's games have gone this season — losing 72-66 for another heartbreaking near-miss.

Colorado (9-20, 1-14) failed to avoid its first 10-game losing streak since the 1985-86 season, when the Buffaloes dropped their final 17 games in Tom Apke's final year as head coach. CU clinched the 12th (last) seed for next week's Big 12 Tournament in Oklahoma City and

reached 20 losses for a third straight year, a first for the program.

This building process still needs a lot of work. CU coach Jeff Bzdelik and top assistant Steve McClain are headed on a flight to Los Angeles this morning in search of talent.

"I can't even watch (college basketball on) TV," Bzdelik said. "I don't want to hear about March Madness. It's going to be March recruiting for me."

Texas A&M (22-8, 8-7 Big 12) took its first lead with 16 minutes remaining in the game when junior guard Donald Sloan swished a 3-pointer from the top of the key to put the Aggies up 35-34. But Colorado didn't give in and jumped back in front, 46-41.

The visitors regained the lead for good on a rare four-point play by Sloan, who was fouled by forward Casey Crawford while hitting a 3-pointer from the left corner with 3:51 remaining. Sloan converted the free throw to make it 59-56.

Colorado had open looks from beyond the 3-point arc on its next three possessions but missed.

"The biggest part is (a lack of) mental toughness," said sophomore guard Cory Higgins, who did his part with a game-high 27 points.

Colorado also got good performances freshman point guard Nate Tomlinson (seven assists) and fellow rookie Toby Veal. Veal drew early playing

Advertisement

Office Liquidators is Now Offering Office Supplies

Office Liquidators has been Colorado's **Low Price Leader** for Office Furniture **for 23 years** and will now do the same with **Office Supplies!**

\$20 off
initial order of \$60
enter code PC2060

Still locally owned with the same **great service.**

OFFICE LIQUIDATORS
Profit From Our Experience

ORDER ONLINE
www.OfficeLiquidators.com

303-759-3375 11111W. 6th Ave/LAKEWOOD
Between Kipling & Simms

Hours: M-F 8:30 - 6:00, Sat 10-5, Sun 12-5

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

time when CU's lone "senior night" honoree, Jermyl Jackson-Wilson, got into foul trouble. The 6-foot-7 leaper responded with a career-best 10 points.

Colorado "is a year away from being good," Turgeon said.

TEXAS A&M (22-8, 8-7 BIG 12)

Davis 3-4 3-7 9, Carter 6-11 2-3 18, Elonu 1-3 0-0 2, Roland 2-6 8-8 12, Sloan 6-12 1-2 14, Harris 0-0 0-0 0, Loubeau 0-0 0-0 0, Holmes 4-8 4-5 16, Walkup 0-2 1-2 1. **Totals 22-46 19-27 72.**

COLORADO (9-20, 1-14)

Jackson-Wilson 1-3 0-0 2, Dufault 1-4 0-2 2, Tomlinson 2-2 0-0 4, Higgins 10-18 5-8 27, Thorne II 1-5 0-0 2, Coney 0-0 0-0 0, Veal 5-7 0-1 10, Knutson 1-5 0-0 3, Crawford 5-11 3-4 16. **Totals 26-55 8-15 66. Colorado 32-24.**
3-point goals — Texas A&M 9-21 (Holmes 4-7, Carter 4-8, Sloan 1-3, Roland 0-1, Walkup 0-2), Colorado 6-17 (Crawford 3-8, Higgins 2-4, Knutson 1-4, Thorne II 0-1). Fouled out — Veal. Rebounds — Texas A&M 37 (Davis, Elonu 9), Colorado 27 (Higgins 6). Assists — Texas A&M 13 (Sloan 5), Colorado 17 (Tomlinson 7). Total fouls — Texas A&M 17, Colorado 22. A — 4,973.

Halftime —

Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or
tkensler@denverpost.com

Advertisement

Office Liquidators is Now Offering Office Supplies

Office Liquidators has been Colorado's **Low Price Leader** for Office Furniture **for 23 years** and will now do the same with **Office Supplies!**



\$20 off
initial order of \$60
enter code PC2060

Still locally owned with the same **great service.**

OFFICE LIQUIDATORS

Profit From Our Experience

ORDER ONLINE
www.OfficeLiquidators.com

303-759-3375 11111W. 6th Ave/LAKEWOOD
 Between Kipling & Simms

Hours: M-F 8:30 - 6:00, Sat 10-5, Sun 12-5

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

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

Longmont, Colorado
Thursday, March 19, 2009

Publish Date: 3/5/2009

Buffaloes dealt yet another defeat

By Patrick Ridgell

Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — The future can't get here soon enough for the Colorado men's basketball team. The present just hurts too darn much.

It concluded the home portion of a miserable season Wednesday with another loss, 72-66 to Texas A&M, in yet another game that left the Buffs (9-20, 1-14 Big 12) cringing because they had a chance.

They led at halftime for the first time in a Big 12 game this year, and by 54-46 with 5 minutes, 51 seconds to play. That's when A&M coach Mark Turgeon inserted a small lineup that immediately paid off with a 16-2 run, leaving the Aggies (22-8, 8-7) in control. They hit 8-of-10 free throws over the final 44 seconds to hold CU off, and avoid a loss that could have crushed their NCAA Tournament hopes.

The NCAA Tournament remains a dream for CU, which has sunk to depths the program had never reached. Wednesday's loss gives them a 10-game losing streak, their longest since 1985-86. They've clinched their third straight 20-loss season, a program first, and clinched last place in the Big 12 for the third year in a row.

The Buffs close the regular season Saturday at Kansas State. The Big 12 Tournament starts next Wednesday in Oklahoma City.

Things are bleak, but at least the head coach didn't wonder aloud after this latest defeat whether his team has cashed it in. That happened last week after Oklahoma State came to Boulder and won by 21. Wednesday was different.

"I challenged them," Bzdelik said. "I think they were feeling sorry for themselves a little bit. You can't do that. No one else feels sorry for you. This is a big guy's league.

"I know we're on the right track. I know this was how we have to do it because we're not going to compromise what this school stands for ... and so on so forth. So we just have to stay the course."

The coach reiterated how his players must get stronger, eat better, take better care of themselves, all things he's previously discussed. He said Keegan Hornbuckle, one of the three recruits CU signed in November, attended the game and afterward was in the locker room where the coach "chewed" on him, too.

"Did you lift today?" Bzdelik said he asked Hornbuckle, a 6-foot-6 forward from Los Angeles who chose CU over Arizona and Arizona State.

Bzdelik added he can't watch college basketball on television these days because everyone is talking about March Madness. He wants to be a part of it. Instead, he'll spend March recruiting.

TEXAS A&M 72, COLORADO 66

TEXAS A&M (22-8)

Davis 3-4 3-7 9, Carter 6-11 2-3 18, Elonu 1-3 0-0 2, Roland 2-6 8-8 12, Sloan 6-12 1-2 14, Harris 0-0 0-0 0, Loubeau 0-0 0-0 0, Holmes 4-8 4-5 16, Walkup 0-2 1-2 1. Totals 22-46 19-27 72.<

COLORADO (9-20)

Jackson-Wilson 1-3 0-0 2, Dufault 1-4 0-2 2, Tomlinson 2-2 0-0 4, Higgins 10-18 5-8 27, Thorne II 1-5 0-0 2, Coney 0-0 0-0 0, Veal 5-7 0-1 10, Knutson 1-5 0-0 3, Crawford 5-11 3-4 16. Totals 26-55 8-15 66.<

Halftime—Colorado 32-24. 3-Point Goals—Texas A&M 9-21 (Holmes 4-7, Carter 4-8, Sloan 1-3, Roland 0-1, Walkup 0-2), Colorado 6-17 (Crawford 3-8, Higgins 2-4, Knutson 1-4, Thorne II 0-1). Fouled Out—Veal. Rebounds—Texas A&M 37 (Davis, Elonu 9), Colorado 27 (Higgins 6). Assists—Texas A&M 13 (Sloan 5), Colorado 17 (Tomlinson 7). Total Fouls—Texas A&M 17, Colorado 22. A—4,973.

“Bracketology for me is like proctology,” he said.

Wednesday also marked senior night, and lone senior Jermyl Jackson-Wilson gave a short speech in which he thanked all the usual suspects. Wednesday was otherwise forgettable for Jackson-Wilson, a starter who played only seven minutes, scoring two points, grabbing one rebound and committing five turnovers. Jackson-Wilson couldn't explain what went wrong for him.

“I had the most turnovers on the team,” he said. “Nobody else had more than one.”

The Buffs could explain Texas A&M's last run, though. Guard Cory Higgins said they didn't find the Aggies' shooters in transition of half-court sets, and by speeding up the game, A&M caught CU off guard. These are problems CU can pinpoint, but not yet solve.

After Jackson-Wilson's speech, Bzdelik thanked the crowd for their attendance during such a “tough year.” He promised improvement, something others say they expect as well.

“We had one common goal: to send this man (Jackson-Wilson) out with a victory, and get some satisfaction out of the season,” Higgins said. “That's a big disappointment that we weren't able to do that.”

“Like coach said, better days are on the way. We can only go up from here, obviously.”

Eight of CU's 14 Big 12 losses have come by an average of 5.2 points.

“That team is a year from being good,” Texas A&M coach Mark Turgeon said. “They will win these close games next year.”

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

[Print page](#)[Close window](#)Longmont, Colorado
Thursday, March 19, 2009

Publish Date: 3/5/2009

Jackson-Wilson plays final home game

*By Patrick Ridgell
Longmont Times-Call*

BOULDER — Jermyl Jackson-Wilson hopes the impact he left on the program will be more memorable than his final home game at Colorado.

Jackson, a starter in 26 games this year, played only seven minutes during Wednesday's 72-66 loss to Texas A&M. He scored two points, grabbed one rebound and committed five turnovers in a performance he wants to forget.

Jackson-Wilson's career numbers include 520 points, more than 100 assists and rebounds and 75 blocked shots. He has maintained hope during CU's 10-game losing streak, pointing to Georgia's ability to come from nowhere and win the Southeastern Conference Tournament last year. He can also do a pretty good impression of his coach, Jeff Bzdelik.

Jackson-Wilson, CU's only senior, shed his normal smile during his speech to talk about his brother Jamar, who lost an eye at the age of 12 when it was hit by a pop bottle rocket on the 4th of July. Jermyl was 10. He told fans who hung around the Coors Events Center after the loss about Jamar's plight, then elaborated in the post-game with reporters.

"He yelled out that his career was over; he wanted to be a college basketball player," Jackson-Wilson said. "He tried to do it for a little bit, but it wasn't the same for him. He couldn't do things he did before.

"I hear that in my head often, and think about that, think about how good my brother could have been. I try to do as well as I think he could have been."

Jackson-Wilson, like Richard Roby and Marcus Hall last year, and several other Buffs in recent seasons, hopes the impact he made on the program is seen in years to come.

"I know everything may not pay off for you individually, but is working hard this year, myself working hard this year, might pay off for the University of Colorado later, and my teammates later," he said. "Just like my dad works hard and he knows he has kids so he works hard for us, I work hard for next generations.

"I know I didn't get to reap the benefits of the hard work right away, but maybe I'll reap the benefits after my college career ends, and maybe they'll reap it next year."

Said Bzdelik: "It wasn't one of his better games. But one game shouldn't reflect the positive impact he had on this basketball program throughout his career."

Jackson-Wilson has completed a degree in ethnic studies, and is completing a second in sociology.

TOMLINSON RETURNS: Starting point guard Nate Tomlinson returned Wednesday after missing CU's past two games with a concussion. He had a season-best seven assists and one turnover in 34 minutes, plus four points.

Bzdelik said Tomlinson was cleared to play Monday and practiced Monday and Tuesday.

TIP-INS: Forward Toby Veal had a career high with 10 points in 14 minutes. He also fouled out. ... CU outscored

Texas A&M 24-4 in points off turnovers in the first half when the Aggies committed 16. They had only three after the break, and outscored the Buffs 48-34 in the second half. ... Cory Higgins led CU in scoring (27 points) and rebounds (six) for the 10th time this season. ... Casey Crawford scored 16 points, and is averaging 11.6 over his past three games.

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