



BOULDER – The University of Colorado men’s basketball team met the local media Wednesday afternoon as head coach Ricardo Patton and the 2006-07 Buffaloes answered questions about the upcoming season.

Also today, Coach Patton announced his resignation when his contract expires, July 1, 2007.

The following are quotes from Coach Patton and reaction from his players.

The first exhibition game is Nov. 2 against Concordia College (Montreal, Quebec, Canada {Basketball Travelers}). The Buffs will take on Regis University on Nov. 7 in their second exhibition game before officially tipping-off the season opener Nov. 10 against the University of Denver, 8:30 p.m. in a game that will be broadcast on Fox Sports Net Rocky Mountain.

Colorado Head Coach Ricardo Patton

When he arrived at the decision to resign at the end of the season

“It’s something that I have thought about for a while now, particularly when our players have to continually answer the question about my status here. When I hear players talking about playing to save my job, that should not be their focus and should not be the reason that they are here. The reason that they are here is to get a great education from what I think is a great academic institution, and to focus on basketball and their development as young men.”

Whether or not waiting to the end of the season was a fair assessment

“I think there is a body of work that speaks for itself.”

Whether the committed players have been notified

“They were notified this morning right after I spoke with my team this morning.”

On if their commitments will hold

“One of the unique things that we were able to do this year that I am really excited about, because each year you want to grow and develop and get better at what you do, and most people around the country consider me to be a very solid recruiter. This was a challenging season to be recruiting guys that had other options, not knowing what [my] status would be. We were able to get commitments from guys that had other opportunities, or other options, based on us being completely honest with them and candid. We talked about that they had to select a university that in my mind is second to none academically. Their decision needed to be based on that. Their decision needed to be based on coming to Boulder, Colorado. Their decision needed to be based on playing in one of the best conferences in the country, the Big 12. But their decision could not be made in the traditional way, in who they would play for. And I think with that honesty, those players still made verbal commitments to come to the University of Colorado. I don’t think those guys have wavered one bit, to my knowledge.”

On if he was trying to be talked out of his decision

“Not necessarily talk me out of it. I am a thinker. I tried to look at all angles and think about the consequences of the decisions that you make. But at some point we all have to understand who we are. I know exactly who I am as a person. And for me it’s about, first of all, creating an atmosphere with our team that is conducive to them learning, and being here everyday and getting better on the basketball court. And not having to deal with the distraction of my contract.”

On what the first priority of a Division I basketball coach should be

"I think it starts certainly with honesty, it starts with teaching the right values. Who I would want my sons to play for is someone who is going to be honest with them. We have a philosophy in our program that states 'Friends tell friends the truth.' I think if you care about someone you tell them the truth."

On winning

"Winning is certainly the bottom line. Most coaches know that, most coaches accept that. That's a given. But there are other things that ought to be involved in coaching basketball. I am very excited that as a coaching staff, we have done more than just worrying about the bottom line."

On whether he explored the option of stepping down immediately

"No. We don't teach our guys to quit. This is not quitting. This is just knowing when it is time to move on. We talk to our guys about life everyday. I think there is certainly a life lesson in this moment."

Whether things are in place here to compete for a Big 12 Championship

"There are several things that aren't in place here. But I've never used that as an excuse. I believe that when you come from little means you know how to work with little means."

On his tenure as coach

"I've had a great time coaching here, I've met some wonderful people. My sons both grew up here, this is what they consider home. I will always cherish those relationships. I thank the University of Colorado for the opportunity of being a head coach for the first time. I've cut my teeth in one of the toughest conferences in the country and I think we have won our fair share of games in the conference."

On any possible negative impact from his decision now

"I think this announcement gives everyone a fair amount of time to evaluate and digest what is happening today. I think it is a fair time for the university to see what direction they want to go in. I think it is a fair time for the players, because they will need some time to digest this day. And I think doing it before the season starts, as opposed to waiting until you start playing games, I think that would have been a worse case scenario."

On any risk on losing some older player

"No. Not at all. People like honesty. Kids like honesty. Most of these players came under the cloud of the uncertainty of my status here. We still convinced them to come. We still convinced them to honor their commitment, and that is what we teach our young men, is to be honorable men."

On team closeness

"This team is already a closer knit group than our last year's team that had spent three and four years together. This is a different group of young men, just in terms of their level of maturity."



Colorado Players

G/F Richard Roby

ON WHAT FACTOR PATTON'S DECISION WILL HAVE – “We have to digest this pretty quick. We have to move on and put it behind us and move forward. Coach made his decision, but we still have a season to play, and that is what the bottom line is.”

ON THE TEAM'S REACTION – “I think we were all surprised, shocked, and confused. Because I guess a lot of guys didn't really use [Patton's contract status] as motivation. I know especially for the freshmen, they say the reason that they came here was for Coach. It is kind of hurtful when your coach leaves, but it is a part of life. You have a lot of relationships; sometimes they don't last, sometimes they do. But, you have to move on.”

ON THE CONTRACT SITUATION BEING A DISTRACTION – “It was a constant just being in the back of your mind. If you win this game, how is it going to affect him and affect his job? If we lose, how is it going to affect his job? I think that is the main reason why he decided to do this now. He didn't want it to distract us throughout the year. So now we have a week and a half to put it behind us.”

ON IF IT WAS A DISTRACTION LAST SEASON – “I didn't think so last year because we had so many seniors, so they weren't too concerned with it because they were leaving too. But, this year because there are a lot of freshmen coming in, they want to have that same coach because that was the reason they came here.”

ON BEING A LEADER - “It's all part of being a leader; you have to get through everything together. I'm only one person, but we're a team, so we have to help each other out. We just have to be there for each other, that is the main focus right now.”

G Calvin Bay

ON PATTON LEAVING – “I was surprised. Coach was the reason that I came here. Sometimes you just have to move on and I'm sure that we'll keep a relationship off of the court.”

ON IMPACT – “We have to focus on playing for our teammates.”

ON TEAMMATES – “We've become a family already. It's going to be a good year. We've gotten really close. Because we're so close, we've really helped each other settle in. Because there are so many of us so new to it, we've been able to help each other along, which has been helpful. The older guys have also helped out tremendously.”

C Marc Van Burck

ON COMING TO CU – “I mainly came for (Ricardo) Patton, but the allure of playing for this University of Colorado and being in Boulder was also a huge factor.”

ON LEAVING – “The big risk in transferring is sitting out a year and you don't want to lose that time. It's easier to just stay where you are.”

ON IMPACT – “I think it will probably motivate us to be better. It's a matter of just playing hard as always and playing basketball.”

F Jeremy Williams

ON PATTON LEAVING – “I feel like he is doing what he has to do. It's obviously been on his mind for awhile and now there's nothing that we can do. We just have to respect his decision.”

ON LEAVING – “I’m not focused on whether or not I would go. I am focused on the season. Being ranked so low we already have a lot on our back and that’s the main focus right now.”

ON OUTLOOK OF TEAM – “We’ve very mature and while we know so much about the game already, there’s a lot that we have to learn. It will be a good season.”

G Xavier Silas

ON PATTON LEAVING – “We don’t have control over that. The only thing that we have control over is the basketball court. I called my Dad this morning and he told me that some things are out of our control and that the important thing is improving what we can control.”

ON LEAVING – “I’m just here to play. It’s going to be fun.”

ON TEAMMATE’S LEAVING – “Everybody is here to play for this University. You come knowing that it’s the school that you play for. (Ricardo) Patton was a big part, but it’s still going to be a good experience.”

ON IMPACT – “We already have enough to think about. Being ranked 12th in the Big 12 is enough to be on our minds and to keep us playing.”