

Statement by Ricardo Patton

Head Coach, University of Colorado Men's Basketball

Today, I am announcing that this is my last year as head coach of the University of Colorado men's basketball team. I will neither seek nor accept an extension of my contract, which runs until July 1, 2007.

We have a large, outstanding freshman class and a talented team this year. Our players need to focus on adjusting to the rigor of academics at CU and to the level of competition in the Big 12 without being distracted by speculation regarding my contract.

My staff and I will continue to work diligently to improve the program we began 11 years ago. Along with the recruits for next year, CU is clearly at the peak of talent in the men's basketball program. Whoever succeeds me will be fortunate in that sense. As I have said, with this talent, CU should be able to contend for the Big 12 championship within the next few years.

My decision allows our players, recruits, coaches, and the University to have as much time as possible to consider their futures and the best course for each of them to take. I believe treating all of these people with this consideration is a critical priority.

It has always been my goal to create a winning program carried out with character, integrity, and complete honesty. I am proud to say that we have achieved that.

In my 10 years as head coach we have:

- Had a winning record nine years;
- Made six post-season appearances;
- Made our first NCAA appearance in 27 years;
- Had three of CU's four 20-win seasons;
- Had 177 wins, ranking second all-time at CU

I would like to thank the University of Colorado and especially Bill Marolt who hired me, and former athletic director Dick Tharp, for the support I received. I have developed a number of special relationships here in Boulder and will always cherish the time my family and I have spent here.

(I have included a Q&A sheet to address some questions I anticipated you might have. I would be happy to answer any other questions.)

Q&A:

Why now?

We need to remove the distraction from this year's team and allow our staff, the University, and the players and recruits the greatest amount of time possible to decide their futures. Our focus this season must be on our student-athletes and not on me.

Will you seek another coaching job?

Yes. Hopefully, an opportunity will arise where my approach to basketball – one that values building character, teaching discipline, and producing solid citizens – will be a good fit.

Have you talked to any other schools or teams?

No. I informed our team and the University of my decision this morning.

This season's outlook:

My peers, the Big 12 coaches, chose us to finish last. These men know more about our situation, our talent, our facilities, and support than anyone else. Given what we have, they believe we will be 12th. Last year, they picked us to finish 9th, and we were 5th. In fact, I believe we have outperformed their expectations every year.

I think that indicates that we have done more than the most knowledgeable people believe we could do. And certainly, our expectation is to do that again this year.

What impact will this have on recruits?

The coaching staff and I have been in a very challenging position with the uncertainty surrounding my contract extension. We have been completely honest and up-front with all our recruits about the coaching situation.

Head Coach Ricardo Patton: 1996-2006

1996-97: In his first full season as head coach, Patton took the Buffs to the NCAA Tournament for the first time in 27 years. The last NCAA Tournament appearance was under Coach Sox Walseth in 1968-69.

1996-97: Eight-game winning streak was the most since 1961-62, when the Buffs won 12 in a row.

In the first four years of his career, Patton led the Buffs to the post-season three times: NCAA (1996-97) and NIT (1998-99 and 1999-2000).

2000-01: The Buffs recorded four 100+ point games, including two in a row (12/3/00 vs. Texas Arlington, 119-75, and 12/6/00 at St. Mary's, 105-61)
This was the most 100+ point games since the Buffs recorded five in 1990-91.

2002-03: Patton led the Buffs to victories over four ranked opponents in one season, the most ever in school history - No. 6 Kansas (60-59), No. 3 Texas (93-80), No. 22 Missouri (89-68), No. 20/18 Oklahoma State (68-56).

2004-05: Patton led the Buffs to victories over Texas both times they faced, including in the Big 12 Tournament (81-69).

2005-06: The Buffs recorded the best start in career history (10-1) including a nine-game winning streak from Nov. 26-Jan. 3. It was the best start to a season since the 1978-79 campaign (also 10-1).

Patton has taken the Buffs into the Big 12 schedule with a winning record all 10 of his seasons.

The Buffs have won their season opener every year since 1996-97.

The Buffs have recorded winning records in the Big 12 schedule in three of the last four years: 2002-03 (9-7), 2003-04 (10-6), 2005-06 (9-7).

Patton has completed seven of the last eight seasons with a .500 or better mark.

The Buffs have attained a national ranking twice. They were ranked No. 25 (*USA Today*) in February 2006 and during the 1996-97 season.

The Buffs have had two NCAA Tournament appearances: 2002-03 and 1996-97.

The Buffs have had four NIT appearances: 2005-06, 2003-04, 1999-2000, and 1998-99.

Patton has had three 20-win seasons: 20-1 (2005-06), 20-12 (2002-03), 22-10 (1996-97)
This represents three of the school's four 20-win seasons.

Patton owns six of CU's eleven 18+ winning seasons.

The Buffs have had a home record of 122-39 (.758).

Patton has had 177 career wins, ranking him second all-time at CU

10 Years Before Coach Patton

1984-85 through 1994-95 Record: 121-192 (.387)

Conference Record: 33-121 (.214)

Big 8 Conference Record: 2-11 (.154)

NIT Record: 4-2 (.667)

Two winning seasons in this span: 1990-91 (19-14) and 1994-95 (15-13)

1984-85: Randy Downs only third player in CU history to reach 1,000 points as a junior

1985-86: Only team in Big 8 history to go winless in league play
Buffs ended season with a seven-home-game losing skid and a nine-game-road-losing streak
Matt Bullard was named to UPI's all-freshman team (led Buffs in scoring averaging 12.7)

1986-87: Feb. 14th win against Iowa State was first CU Big 8 win in 26 straight games

1987-88: CU won its 500th game (Feb. 13th)

1988-89: Shaun Vandiver named Big 8 Conference Newcomer of the Year; led Big 8 in rebounding (averaging 10.5 per game)

1989-90: First eighth-seeded team to make it to the Big 8 championship game
Shaun Vandiver became third tournament MVP to come from a losing team
Shaun Vandiver and Steve Wise finished as Big 8's No. 1 and No. 2 scorers, respectively (first time two Buffs had done that)

1990-91: CU ended a 22-year post-season drought placing third in the NIT Tourney.
The Buffs finished the season with their best record in 21 seasons (19-14).

1991-92: Coach Joe Harrington recorded his 200th career victory
The Buffs won at Iowa State, snapping a 56-game league regular-season road-losing streak

1992-93: Fourth straight season the Buffs finished with a .500 winning percentage at home

1994-95: The Buffs receive only their second bid to the NIT Tournament in the last 25 years