

**General**

"Welcome to another media day, it's year number five for our staff, and being here at the University of Colorado we are obviously very excited this time of year. I love our team, we have a chance to be pretty special, but I know where we are today, and where we're going to be in February or March is hopefully two totally different types of teams. We have to continue to improve and get better, and we have a lot of room for improvement, but this team has a very high ceiling and I like it, I love our work ethic."

On Tweaks To The Offense

"Not wholesale changes, our philosophy on offense is no different than it's always been, and that is we want to attack the basket, we want to be in attack mode, play inside-out, and that can be through penetration from our guards, it can also be from posting up our bigs. We have some pretty good low-post scorers on this team. We're always going to play inside-out, we're always going to be in attack mode. Really the tweaks we have tried to make is to be a little bit more unpredictable in some of our ball screens, and to get the ball to some of our guys like [Jr., F] Josh Scott and [RS.-So., F] Wesley Gordon, and [Jr., F] Xavier Johnson, [So., F] Dustin Thomas, [Fr., F] Tory Miller who is now an additional big for us. But, to get them the ball kind of facing the basket – 10 to 12 feet – where it is harder to be double-teamed, and they can be playmakers from that eight-to-12 feet on in. Rather than be traditionally, catching the ball with your back to the basket, where it's predictable and ball screens are coming at predictable spots on the floor, we are trying to be more unpredictable in terms of what we are doing with our ball screens. I spent a lot of time this offseason with two coaches – one guy named Steve Donahue, who is the old coach at Boston College who I think is a terrific offensive mind. He spent a weekend out here in the spring and another weekend this fall with our staff, really talking offensive concepts with our staff. And then George Karl, out of Denver, I spent some time with him picking his brain. Some of our transition offensive ideas, I spent some time with coach Karl trying to pick his brain on playing fast, playing at high-pace, a high-possession game, half-court stuff is some of the things we did with coach Donahue. I've always said this, we expect our players in the offseason to get better, I think it's imperative as coaches that we make an effort to get better in the offseason and we tried to do that offensively this year, and we'll see if that will help or not."

On Whether Inside-Out Passing Has Improved Since Last Season

"We've spent a lot of time on passing the ball. One of the weaknesses on our team last year was our assist numbers, our assist-to-turnovers ratio, taking care of the basketball. We like to play the game, to me the way it's supposed to be played, where five guys are sharing the ball, five guys are threats to score every time you have the ball, they are playing unselfishly, the ball is moving. I think anybody that has watched basketball over the last 12 months, always talks about the San Antonio Spurs and how fun they were to watch in the NBA Finals and playoffs last year, and really throughout the whole season and the way they moved the ball and shared the ball. So, passing, and catching and finishing, is really something we've spent a lot of time on this fall."

On Improving Three-Point Shooting

"That's an off-season project for every player in our program. We've got some guys that are better shooters in our program than their numbers indicate in the way they shot the ball last year. As a coach, I don't have a lot of control over that. We have access to our players over the summer time, which is great, but it's two hours a week, and there is not a coach in the world that can make a player a better shooter in the off-season two hours a week, it's going to take two hours a day. It's my job, and it's our job as a staff, to make sure we are getting the right shots. The ball movement, and the spacing, and some of the concepts we've worked on, I think will help us get more stand-still threes other than threes coming off down screens or double stagger threes. Hopefully, our dribble penetration and kicking it out to guys will lead to shots that are much easier to make, rather than coming off a screen and squaring and shooting all in one motion. In the past we've done more motion, so hopefully this will help us."

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On NCAA Tournament Expectations

"There's two things when it comes to post-season tournaments and NCAA tournaments we have to be aware of, and it's our job on a day-to-day basis to remind our players of. Number one: past performance is in no way shape or form indicative of future opportunities. This is a new year, this is a brand new year for this team. The fact that we've been to four-straight post-seasons, and three-straight NCAA tournaments, in no way guarantees this year's team of that opportunity at the end of the year. You earn that opportunity for what you do throughout the season. That starts on November 14th (in the season-opener against Drexel). The one challenge we have is there is not one player in our locker room who was at my house four years ago when we didn't get in, and so our coaches understand that pit at the bottom of your stomach and that feeling of disappointment and disgust; our players don't understand it, our players, all they know is the NCAA tournament right now, the ones that are in our program. So, we have to understand that it's not a given that we are going to get there. It's hard to get there. There are a lot of good teams every year that don't get there. Those of you that have followed our program since we've (Boyle's coaching staff) been here, can argue that our first year's team was our most talented team and our best team since we've been here. It was our best offensive team, without a question, if you look at the numbers. Field goal percentage, fifth in the country, and free throw percentage, points per game I think we averaged around 80 points a game that year with Alec [Burks] and Cory [Higgins] and Levi [Knutson] and that crew. So, our best team at Colorado, arguably, didn't make the tournament and the three behind them did; but they did, because they defended, they rebounded, and we took care of business in November and December. That's what I want our players to understand, November 14th against Drexel is just as important as February 14th against whoever Pac-12 team we're playing. The opportunities that are there in November and December, we got to make sure that we capitalize on and we don't let those opportunities slip through our fingers, because at the end of the year those are the ones that come back and bite you. That's the challenge, to get out team mentally, physically, emotionally ready to play all 30 games that are on our schedule, and then hopefully if we do our job there then the postseason takes care of itself."

On Which Players Have Improved The Most In Perimeter Shooting

"A couple things about our team right now, [Fr. G] George King and I have visited and he is going to redshirt this year, and with that being said, he has probably shown as good as improvement from the perimeter shooting the ball. Redshirting, there are a lot of things that go into it, it's not just the basketball part of it. Much like Wesley's [Gordon] decision to do it freshman year, a lot of it has to do with trading a year where maybe your minutes might be 10-15 minutes a game, and trading that with your fifth year where I would expect George to be a starter and playing 30 minutes a game type thing. He is going to redshirt, and that's assuming that we're healthy and everybody is ready to go. Right now, we're dinged up a little bit, but we'll be fine by November 14th. So, George King is one guy that has shot the ball consistently. I see [Sr., G] Askia [Booker] shoot it in practice every day, again, his numbers last year 27 percent from three weren't good, but he's a good shooter and he's a guy who, when he's open he can make it. [Rs. Jr., G] Josh Fortune – again a guy who is sitting out this year – is a terrific shooter, those of you who have been at practice have seen what he can do. But again, [So., G] Jaron Hopkins made some big shots for us last year, [Jr., G] Xavier Talton is a very capable three-point shooter. [So., G] Tre'Shaun Fletcher, hasn't shown it in practice yet, but when he gets his feet set I think he's a capable three-point shooter. [Jr., G] Xavier Johnson has improved his three-point shooting. When he gets his feet set and he takes good shots, I expect good things. I think everybody is capable enough to knock down an open three, so I have confidence in all of our guys to do that."

On What He Does To Help G Askia Booker Become More Consistent / Efficient

"Watch film, talk to him, hopefully maturity kicks in and he doesn't fight the game. That's the biggest thing with 'Ski' is make good decisions and don't fight the game, when you're open shoot it, when you're not open pass it; make simple basketball plays. We're going to keep trying, that's all I can say, and 'Ski' wants to play well, he wants to improve. I think sometimes maturity, hopefully being a senior, makes a difference. There's something about being a senior that's special, and it's your last go-around. The thing I want 'Ski' to understand is that he doesn't need to do it all by himself, he needs his teammates, and just to make simple basketball plays. If he does that he'll be fine, if he continues to fight the game and that gets in his head then we'll have more of the same, but it's time to understand and I think he does and 'Ski's' mindset is good right now and he's ready for a good senior year."

On If This Year's Team Is The Most Talented From Top To Bottom

"We've got talent, there's no doubt, we have athleticism. I think that team (in 2010-11), offensively had some skill guys. I couldn't get that team to guard, I couldn't get them to guard. This year's team, we'll guard, we'll guard. We may not be great on November 14th, but you are going to see us get better and better as the year goes on, or you are going to see me with less hair and of the stuff that is left will be more grey. Defense and rebounding is what our team is about, it is what our team will always be about as long as I'm the head coach here. We've spent some time in the off-season trying to get better offensively, but I'm a numbers guy. If we can be in the top-3 in the league (Pac-12 Conference) in field goal percentage defense and rebounding margin, and if we can get our offense to go from 43 percent field goal percentage team to a 46 or 47 percent, we'll be fine, we'll win plenty of games, we'll have a lot of success."

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On Whether He Has A Starting Five Defined Yet

"If we had to start a game tomorrow, we would probably start [G] Askia [Booker] and [G] Xavier Talton, [F] Xavier Johnson, [F] Wesley Gordon, and [F] Josh Scott. That's fluid, that's one of those things, I think the bench is going to be the determining factor in how this team does this year. Guys like Jaron Hopkins and Dustin Thomas, Tre'Shaun Fletcher, and Tory Miller and Dom Collier the new guys coming in, they are the X-factors. I think I kind of have a feel for what we are going to get out of those other guys, but the X-factor comes off the bench and that starting five is not locked in stone and it could change. Our practices are very, very competitive. I can tell you this, that starting five is not head and shoulders above anybody else. I think we've got probably seven starters right now, but you can only put five on the floor, so I'll put five on the floor."

On Difficulties Involved Around Non-Conference Scheduling That Comes With Success

"You know it's funny, scheduling is . . . recruiting is the most important thing, scheduling is like 1a, recruiting is hard, scheduling is just as hard, it's really, really hard. You think people lie in recruiting, they lie in scheduling more. Hard to get people to come to Boulder, again the Auburn game at 11 o'clock at night is not my most ideal scenario, but it presented itself and we took the opportunity to sign up for that game. It gives you an indication of how hard it is. A lot of people look at our non-conference schedule this year and say, 'Well jeeze, there's no Oklahoma State, there's no Baylor, there's no Kansas.' But, if you look at this year's non-conference schedule and last year's, and you took the previous year's RPI's – which is all we have to go with, because I know what every team in our non-conference schedule's RPI was last year, I don't know what it is going to be this year, that's yet to be determined – and if you make the assumption that when we go to Hawai'i (for the Diamond Head Classic) and we are fortunate enough to beat DePaul, and we're fortunate enough to play George Washington in the semi-finals and play Wichita State in the finals, are RPI from our non-conference this year is actually two points stronger than it was from our RPI last year. So, it's actually stronger, if you make those two assumptions about the Hawai'i teams, it's a stronger non-conference schedule than it was from last year. It doesn't look like it, because you don't have the marquee names, but Drexel is a bunch of tough Philadelphia kids that are well coached and are going to play hard a week from Friday when we open up. Bruce Pearl (head coach of Auburn) has eight presses, he's got two of them in right now, they are going to play a totally different style and Wyoming is at Wyoming and is a game that really, really concerns mean. There are not a lot of patsies on our schedule, every game is a losable game, and we've got to approach it like that. Not, that we are afraid to lose, but we better be ready to hook it up."

On His Defensive Philosophy

"I think the biggest thing is, in why we don't press, is because I hate giving up layups and I hate giving up open threes. I want to be rock solid defensively. If they are scoring on us, I want it to be a jump shot over our hand. By pressing, you're going to give up some open threes and you're going to give up some layups, that's just what pressing teams do and I can't get myself as a coach to get over it. I've thought about it, I've played around with it, but I can't. You are who you are, and that's just hard for me. It's just the way I've been wired; I think it goes back to playing for Larry Brown (at Kansas) and just the defensive philosophy of don't give up anything easy. But, we'll try to get something easy on our end, we still want to pressure in the half court, we're just not going to do it full court."

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