Stronger Buff lineup to try physical approach

★ — Jan. 23 in Lincoln
★ — Feb. 13 at Boulder

The Colorado Buffaloes have adopted a "let's get physical" approach to the upcoming season.

The Buffaloes posted a 16-13 record last year based mainly on the play of multi-talented guard Jay Humphries. Humphries has since moved his show into NBA arenas with the Pheonix Suns, leaving Coach Tom Apke and the Buffs with a new offensive game plan.

"You can never replace a graduating senior, especially one with Jay's talent. What you have to do is let your team take on a different shape and personality," Apke said. "Last year we depended on Jay's outside game a lot, this year we're hoping to develop a stronger inside game."

Six-ten center Randy Downs will lead the new inside game. Downs recorded some impressive statistics as a sophomore, scoring 15.1 points per game, while grabbing 5.3 rebounds and shooting a school record 58.2 percent from the field.

Apke thinks Downs will blossom into one of the conference's premier players in the 1984-85 season.

"We'd like to get Randy the ball more often," Apke said. "If we can get him 15-18 shots a game, with his touch, he could be one of the Big Eight's top scorers.

Joining Downs on the CU front line will be senior forward Alex Stivrins. Stivrins, a second-team All-Big Eight performer last year, led the team in rebounds, with 9.12 per game. The 6-7 native of Lincoln (Lincoln East High School) also scored 12.1 points per game.

Apke said Stivrins could follow Humphries into the NBA.

"Alex has a legitimate chance to have a pro career," he said.

The Buffaloes other forward spot will be filled by freshmen Torin Williams, Mike Flory or Scott Wilke. The trio will vie for the spot until 6-8 sophomore Dan Yowell becomes reeligible for play in 1985.

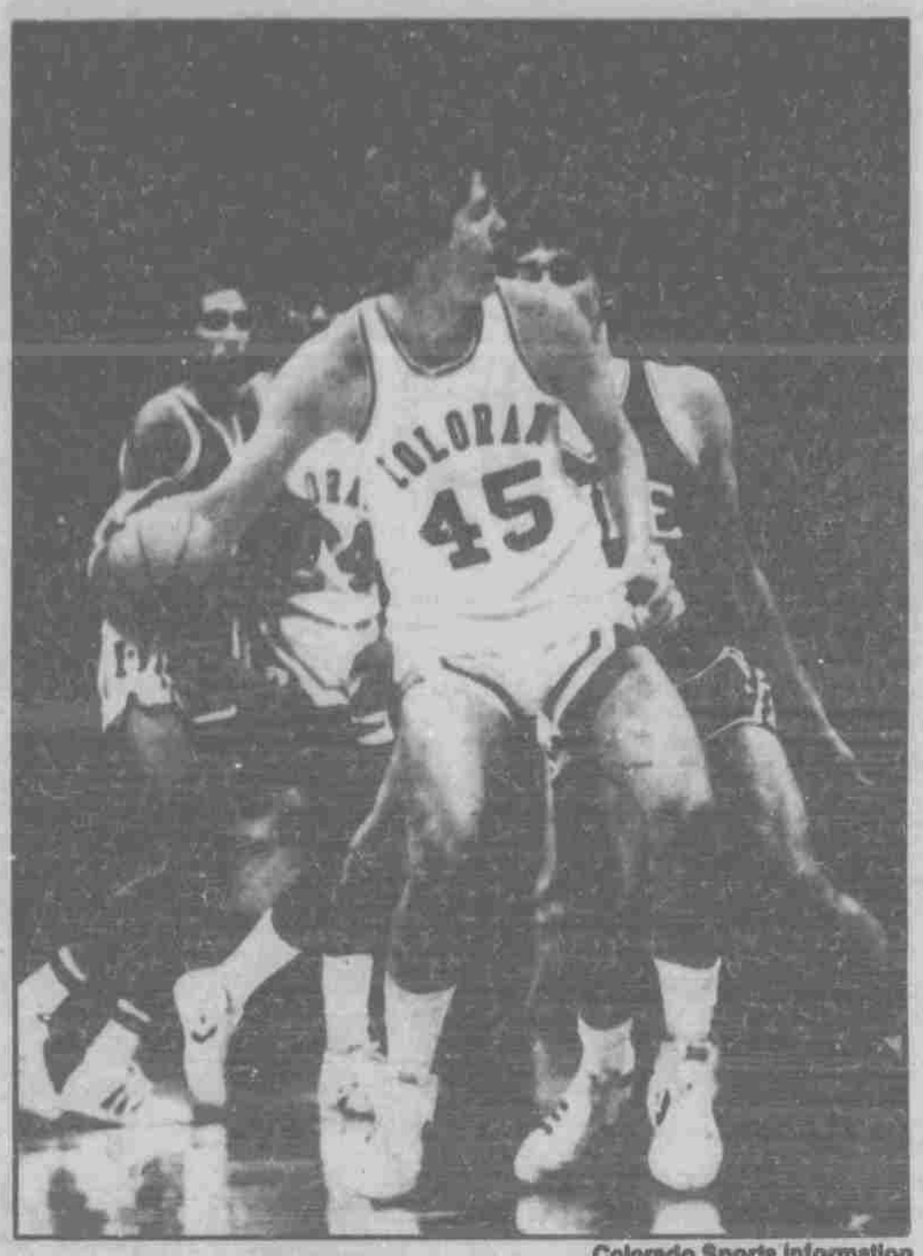
Six-one sophomore Mike Reid will try to quarterback the Buffaloes from the point guard position. Reid, used largely as a backup to Humphries last year, averaged 8.8 points per game and finished the season with 87 assists and 44 steals.

Tony Pruitt, who started with Humphries last year, is the other guard. Pruitt averaged 6.5 points per game.

Freshmen redshirt Mike Lee will also play a big role in the Buffaloes push for an upper division finish in the Big Eight.

Most national publications have predicted the Buffaloes sixth or seventh in the conference, but Apke thinks CU could place in the top four.

"I think we have a chance to be better than a year ago (CU's 6-8 record tied for fourth in the Big Eight). We're ready to move up the ladder," he said. "The program here at Colorado is on the upswing."



Colorado Sports Information

Colorado center Randy Downs expects to lead the Buffaloes to the first division this year.

Colorado Sports Information

Colorado forward Alex Stivrins (top) and Buffalo guard Mike Reid.

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