

No 'Patsies'

CU Wins 69-60, Averages Losses

KANSAS CITY, Dec. 31.—It's oft been said there is no such thing as "a cinch."

That point was more evident than ever to coaches, scribes and just plain fans who sat in on the four days of the Big Seven pre-season tournament concluded here Thursday night.

That was the general consensus. Bebe Lee, the Colorado tutor, wasn't about to argue the point.

"There certainly isn't any team you could call a 'patsy' this year," he opined. "I'd venture to say the conference champion may even win it with three losses."

This observation came after Lee's Buffaloes had staged a fine comeback to down a strong California team, 69-60, preceding the Thursday night championship contest.

COFFMAN STARS

That victory, achieved on the strength of a great defensive performance and a second half rally sparked by Mel Coffman, accomplished several things for the Coloradans. It netted them the tournament consolation 'title' and gained some measure of revenge for two earlier lickings administered by the west coast Bears on the latter's home court.

It was primarily Colorado's well-executed defense that kept the Buffs within shooting range of the Bears in the first half. Certainly it wasn't their ability to score.

Colorado went into a self-administered point drouth in that first half, netting only two baskets in the first 16 minutes 27 seconds—including a mammoth period of 11:27 between that pair of counters.

Only a reasonable average at the free throw line and the aforementioned defense which limited the Bears to a minimum of shot attempts made the second half rally possible and successful.

BEARS STAY TOUGH

The Buffs trailed only four at 25-29 at the half, despite their miserable shooting.

Colorado managed to chisel away at that four-point deficit through the early going of the second half and four times tied the count. After knotting it up for the fourth time at 41-all, Tommy Harrold hit a layup for Colorado's first lead with 12:14 left to play.

Coffman found the range for two long-distance casts immediately following that and canned another after a free throw by Bob Jeangerard to get the Buffs out of the woods at 51-41 with 10:19 left.

That sealed the verdict although the Bears didn't exactly lay down and play dead, keeping the pressure on until the finish.

Satisfying aspect of the triumph was the spirit displayed in effecting the comeback and the relief work of the reserves. Standout in this respect was George Hannah, understudy to Burdette (Burdy) Haldorson, who finished out after the latter picked up his fourth personal with still 18:40 left in the final half.

Hannah collected nine points and seven all-important rebounds in his stint.

The win gave Colorado fifth place in the tournament with a 2-and-1 record. The other win was over Nebraska and the loss was the 73-71 overtime thriller to Oklahoma in the opening round.—G. F.

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