



UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO MEN'S BASKETBALL

CU hoops legend Burdie Haldorson honored on court at Sigma Nu Fraternity

Two-time Olympian still prominent in Buffs' record book 60-plus years later

By **Pat Rooney**

BuffZone.com Writer **POSTED:** 09/09/2017 11:01:59 AM MDT



CU hoops legend Burdie Haldorson honored on court at Sigma Nu. (Pat Rooney/BuffZone.com)

Burdie Haldorson has plenty of fond memories of the property on Pleasant Street he called home during his time at the University of Colorado.

Some of those stories aren't fit to print. As for the others, well, it was a long time ago.

"Most of them I can't remember," Haldorson joked. "I know we had a good time."

In between those good times in the 1950s, Haldorson also put together a historic basketball career for the Buffaloes. On Saturday he was back in town at his old fraternity, Sigma Nu, which renamed and dedicated its basketball court in Haldorson's honor.

The fraternity is celebrating its 115th anniversary of its Boulder chapter, and Saturday morning's festivities drew CU athletic director Rick George and men's basketball coach Tad Boyle.

"It's kind of a humbling thing to look over and see something named after you," Haldorson said. "Humbling is the only word. It was a different game then, different rules. We played with more of a finesse game. Today it's a physical game. But my memories here...once a Buff always a Buff. And once a Sigma Nu, always a Sigma Nu." Even more than 60 years after he last hit the Balch Fieldhouse court for the Buffs, Haldorson's name inarguably is one of the first that comes to mind in any discussion of the best CU basketball player ever. And time has done little to diminish his stature in the CU record book. His 1,125 points remains 25th all-time, and Haldorson

still is one of the most prolific rebounders in the program's history. His single-season rebounding mark of 346 established in the 1954-55 season wasn't broken until Andre Roberson grabbed 401 rebounds in 2011-12. (Roberson pushed Haldorson to No. 3 on the single-season list with 347 in 2012-13).

Haldorson's career rebounding total of 711 also remains ninth all-time. Given Haldorson played fewer games per season than Roberson, Haldorson's season average of 13.8 rebounds per game in 1954-55 still is the top mark in CU history, as is his 31 rebounds in a game against Oklahoma on Dec. 29, 1952.

Haldorson led the Buffs to a pair of NCAA Tournament appearances, including a run to the 1955 Final Four. CU lost to the Bill Russell-led San Francisco in the semifinals before topping Iowa two days later in the third-place game. A year later Haldorson and Russell were teammates on the 1956 gold medal-winning Olympic team, and Haldorson won another gold medal at the 1960 games. That 1960 team, which also included Oscar Robertson, was inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame in 2010.

"(Russell) was the greatest player in that era for sure," Haldorson said. "It was tough going against him, because you could do certain things back then that you can't do now. You could almost goaltend. But it was great playing against him, and then with him."

While Haldorson officially was immortalized at his college home — and on a court that was a lawn in his day — he remains a fixture at CU basketball games, routinely making the drive from his home in Colorado Springs to watch the Buffs. Count the CU legend among those eager to see what a talented group of 2017 freshmen bring to the mix this fall.

"Hopefully they've got themselves a point guard," said Haldorson, referring to freshman McKinley Wright. "If he does, I think he's got the other kids."