

Troy Coverdale shares memories from time as Northern Colorado play-by-play announcer

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Some people work their entire lives and never get to do what their kid-self was interested in. That's not the case for one longtime Greeley radio broadcaster, who, despite a bittersweet ending, is grateful he was given the chance almost 18 years ago to continue doing what he loves.

Troy Coverdale, who had been the KFKA Radio news and sports director, announced last week the station laid him off due to the coronavirus pandemic's financial impact. His career in Greeley lasted the better part of 17 years and was almost as old as some of the UNC athletes he covered.

“It's an odd feeling to start the day without digging into headlines, one that mirrors the oddity of not going into an office since March,” Coverdale wrote in an announcement posted to his Twitter account. “I've known for over a month that this day was coming. That fact doesn't make it any less strange, disappointing or sad.”

Coverdale made stops in Kansas and Nebraska (<https://troycoverdale.com/my-professional-accomplishments/>), covering news and sports on the radio for about eight years. His fascination with sports radio came when he was a kid and followed him to Kansas State, where he graduated in 1993 with a broadcast journalism degree.

The Kansas native began calling UNC games in early 2003, when the Bears were still a Division II school. Coverdale was there when the university made the switch to Division I, through numerous coaches, two athletic directors and hundreds of players.

“We will miss Troy as the Voice of the Bears, as he was a true advocate for UNC and our Athletics Department, coaches and student-athletes,” said Darren Dunn, UNC Athletic Director, in a statement

(https://twitter.com/UNC_Bears/status/1300894653173043200) after Coverdale’s announcement. “He was a big part of the UNC family over his near two decades of work, calling some of the most memorable moments in UNC Athletics history. We wish Troy the best in his future endeavors.”

One memory that sticks out to Coverdale is from the 2010-11 men’s basketball season. The Bears went 22-11 overall and 13-3 in conference play (<https://uncbears.com/sports/mens-basketball/roster/2010-11>), earning a March Madness appearance.

“It’s funny to watch a Clippers game on national TV, because I know (former Bears forward and Greeley West graduate) Neal Kingman is cringing because of Kawhi Leonard,” Coverdale told the Greeley Tribune on Thursday. “Neal had the duty of having to guard Kawhi as the Bears took on San Diego State in the NCAA Tournament.”

Leonard, now-NBA All Star and Los Angeles Clippers forward, finished the game with 21 points and 10 rebounds (<https://goaztecs.com/sports/mens-basketball/roster/kawhi-leonard/565>). The Indiana Pacers drafted Leonard, a sophomore, only a few months later.

“That, of course, has to rank as one of the best. But then it’s the game before — that pushed them into the NCAA Tournament — the win over Montana at Bank of Colorado Arena,” Coverdale said. “That’s always going to rank as one of the

best in school history. They were able to get past the Grizz, get to the tournament and be able to celebrate it on their own floor, in front of their own fans.”

Other memories include a men’s basketball win at his alma mater

(https://uncbears.com/news/2013/11/9/11_9_2013_902.aspx?path=mten) in 2013, when the Bears took down the reigning Big 12 champion, and the football team’s win at Texas State in 2006

(<https://uncbears.com/sports/football/schedule/2006-07>) after the backup punter stabbed UNC’s starter

(<https://www.greeleytribune.com/2006/09/13/football-stabbing-incident-gets-stranger-and-stranger/>).

“The team had a couple bad ball games to open the season, and you come home and have an incident that could have easily torn apart the team

(<https://www.espn.com/college-football/news/story?id=2967292>),” Coverdale said. “Instead they go on the road and do just enough to be able to get past the Texas State program.”

KFKA informed Coverdale of the impending layoff about one month prior. It was “tremendously disappointing,” he said, especially due to the circumstances. Coverdale didn’t have a normal sendoff or a chance to really say goodbye.

Coverdale and his wife, an employee at the university, are weighing their options but expect to move back to Kansas to be closer to their families.

“I want to say thank you. It’s been a tremendous honor being the Voice of the Bears. I had a tremendous time doing it, and I’m going to miss it greatly,” Coverdale said. “I am absolutely going to miss being around the people, the community. It has been a tremendous 18 years of doing this job ... I really appreciate everyone who supported me along the way and all the kindness and friendship that people have shared with me over the time.”

A new but familiar voice

UNC Athletics and KFKA announced Thursday (<https://uncbears.com/news/2020/9/10/football-jason-alvine-named-the-new-voice-of-the-bears.aspx>), shortly after Coverdale spoke with the Greeley Tribune, the new Voice of the Bears will be Jason Alvine.

Alvine graduated from UNC in 2002. He will take over play-by-play responsibilities for football and men's basketball contests as part of the university's partnership with KFKA.

His first appearance as the Voice of the Bears will take place at 6 p.m. Tuesday for "Inside the Bears Den," a weekly show with current and former UNC athletes, coaches and staff.

Alvine previously served Montana State as a play-by-play announcer and Director of Operations for the women's basketball program, while spending three seasons on the call for the football team.

The UNC grad began his radio career in 2009, spending six years covering Bears women's basketball, volleyball and baseball. Other stops include high school play-by-play in Longmont and a spot at ESPN 870 in Fort Collins.

"It is a great honor and privilege to return to my alma mater to be the next Voice for the University of Northern Colorado football and men's basketball," Alvine said in a release. "It has been a dream of mine since I landed on campus as the women's basketball play-by-play announcer over a decade ago. I know I have large shoes to fill in the booth and that isn't lost on me. I look forward to this opportunity and a new era in Bears football and men's basketball."

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