

Colorado's Top 150 Sports Moments



TOP 150 SPORTS MOMENTS

The 150 significant moments in Colorado's sports history will be announced weekly leading up to the state's sesquicentennial (150th) birthday on August 1, the date Colorado was admitted to the Union as the 38th state in 1876. A committee with over 275 years of involvement in Centennial State sports is selecting the moments we will count down at a rate of five per week, then daily for the top 10 by the end of July.



Colorado. David Plati, the Colorado Sports Hall of Fame historian, has identified more than 1,930 of these moments, all listed chronologically by date to indicate their importance at the time.

The Denver Gazette has partnered with the CSHOF to publicize Colorado's top 150 sports moments. Plati and Denver Broncos icon Jim Saccomano will unveil the list weekly on the CSHOF podcast at coloradosports.org/podcast/.



141 - July 3, 1982. Denver entered the national record books again, as the Bears' annual Fireworks Night drew a minor-league record 65,666 fans - as announced at the time. The Denver fire marshal told team officials the crowd had to be capped at that number, but the true attendance was 73,155 as confirmed years later by business manager **Bobby Burris** (not to mention by looking at an aerial photo of the Mile High Stadium from that night - in no way were there 10,000 empty seats).

Omaha spoiled things with a 7-4 win in a strange game, outhitting the Bears 17-5, with the contest scoreless through five and then each team scoring in their remaining four frames. In fact, Omaha's Bill Kelly had a no-hitter entering the sixth and had it broken up with a triple by Denver native and Abraham Lincoln High School grad **Nick Capra**.

142 - August 5, 1967. The Denver Broncos became the first AFL team to defeat an NFL team, downing the Detroit Lions, 13-10, at DU Stadium in what some called "The Little Super Bowl." The Lions' Alex Karras stated prior to the game that there was no way Denver would win, and if it did, he'd walk back to Detroit. Did he? Of course not. Two weeks later, the Broncos defeated Minnesota 14-3 at DU Stadium. It was the first year the two leagues played preseason games ahead of the 1970 AFL-NFL merger; of the 15 games that year, the AFL won three, two by the Broncos.



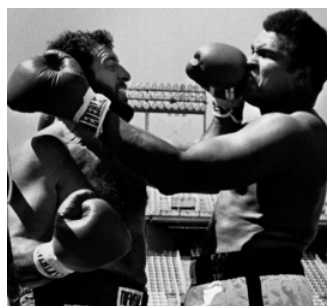
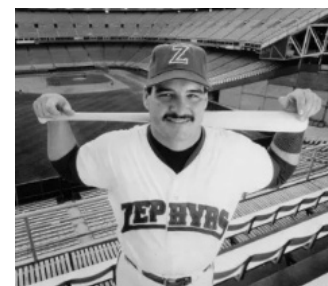
143 - January 5, 1982. Colorado State senior guard Kathy Lightfoot scored 45 points in a 118-54 win over Southern Colorado in Fort Collins, to date the most points in a single game by a Division I player in the state. Lightfoot had 21 field goals and made 3-of-4 from the free-throw line. The state's collegiate best for women, across all divisions, is a 51-point effort by the late Carroll Lillie of Southern Colorado (now CSU Pueblo), in an 82-80 overtime loss to St. Mary's of the Plains on December 3, 1979.

144 - September 4, 2004. At 12:30 p.m. MDT, the **Altitude Sports & Entertainment Network** went on the air, a property of Kroenke Sports Enterprises (KSE). Over \$10 million was spent on building a studio, installing production equipment, hiring personnel, and marketing the channel. The first program? A 30-minute special on the making of the network; there were 850,000 to one million subscribers at its launch. The first game was supposed to be the Colorado Avalanche's season opener at home (on Oct. 1), against San Jose, but the NHL lockout on Sept. 16 cancelled the season.



Colorado's Top 150 Sports Moments

145 - June 2, 1987. The Denver Zephyrs' **Joey Meyer** hit what many have documented as the second-longest home run in all baseball history - 582 feet - in the Zephyrs' 14-7 win over the Buffalo Bisons. Meyer's shot landed in the upper deck in left field of Mile High Stadium's massive east stands. Meyer hit three homers that night, driving in seven runs; the longer blast came on a 2-2 pitch from Mike Murphy in the bottom of the seventh inning. On September 10, 1960, in Detroit, Mickey Mantle hit a homer estimated at 643 feet that coined the phrase, "tape-measure home run" in the Yankees' 5-1 win over the Tigers, universally considered the longest home run ever hit.



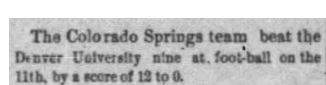
146 - July 14, 1979. It was only an exhibition, as former heavyweight boxing champion **Muhammad Ali** fought an eight-round match against Denver Broncos defensive lineman **Lyle Alzado**. Around 20,000 fans attended the event at Mile High Stadium, which wasn't officially scored but went on all eight rounds; most, if not all, thought Ali won easily. About 600 miles to the East that same night, Jamie Easterly of the Denver Bears pitched a perfect game in the Bears' 10-0 win over the Iowa Oaks in Des Moines. That was the last of seven no-hitters in Denver's minor league history that spanned over 100 years.

147 - September 13, 2000. In high school boys' tennis, Wheat Ridge defeated **Cherry Creek**, 5-2, ending the Bruins' remarkable dual-match winning streak at 316, the longest in the nation. The streak ended when **Paul Tinetti** ripped a forehand winner down the line to give him and partner **Brian Fisher** a 7-6 (7-2), 6-2 victory at No. 2 doubles. In 1991, it was Wheat Ridge that ended Cherry Creek's run of 19 straight national record state championships. The streak, which began in 1972 during Richard Nixon's first term as president, was and remains the second-longest in the country, behind only the Brandon, Fla., wrestling team, which won 459 consecutive dual meets from 1973 to 2008.



148 - August 26, 1974. The first championship by any Denver professional team (other than minor league baseball) was claimed by the Denver Racquets. They won the inaugural World Team Tennis league title. The Racquets defeated the top-seeded Philadelphia Freedoms, two games to zero in the best-of-three finals. Denver won the Pacific Section with a 30-14 record and beat the San Francisco Golden Gators and the Minnesota Buckskins to reach the finals. The teams were composed of half men and half women; Philadelphia was led by Billie Jean King, the league MVP; Australian **Tony Roche** (pictured right) was Denver's player-coach; and the team also had the playoffs MVP, **Andrew Pattison** (pictured left).

149 - April 12, 1965. **Bob Martin** hosted the first sports talk show in the state (and possibly the nation) on this April Friday, when he aired "Sports Line," interviewed Bronco head coach Mac Speedie, and took public calls. It aired for one hour (6-7 p.m.) on KTLN Radio (1280 AM). Speedie was named interim head coach the previous October when Jack Faulkner was fired, and the interim tag was removed in an announcement on December 12.



150 - April 11, 1885. In the first intercollegiate football game played west of the Mississippi River, Colorado College defeated the University of Denver Ministers, 12-0.

Early newspaper accounts never listed any stats or even most of the scoring plays, instead focusing on who played in the game and who was the stoutest. Both institutions had been around for a while, DU since 1864 and CC since 1874, as the first intercollegiate football game took place in 1869 (Rutgers 6, Princeton 4). The game methodically spread west.

Colorado's Top 150 Sports Moments / Denver Gazette

141 Denver Bears set minor-league attendance record



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July 3, 1962

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record 65,666 fans, as announced at the time. The Denver fire marshal told team officials the crowd had to be capped at that number; in actuality, the true attendance was 73,155, as confirmed years later by business manager Bobby Burris. (Not to mention by looking at an aerial photo of the Mile High Stadium from that night. In no way was there 10,000 empty seats.) Omaha spoiled things with a 17-4 win a strange game, one hitting the Bears 17-5, with a scoreless contest through five innings and each team scoring in their remaining four frames. In fact, Omaha's Bill Kelly had a no-hitter entering the sixth and had it broken up with a triple by Denver native and Abraham Lincoln High School grad Nick Cupra.

—DAVE PLATI, COLORADO SPORTS HALL OF FAME HISTORIAN

D2 | THE DENVER GAZETTE | SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 2026

142 SESQUICENTENNIAL COUNTDOWN

Denver Broncos become the first AFL team to beat an NFL team



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No. 142: Aug. 5, 1967

The Broncos became the first AFL team to defeat an NFL team, downing the Detroit Lions, 13-10, at DU Stadium in what some called "The Little Super Bowl." The Lions' Alex Karras stated prior to the game there was no

way Denver would win, and if it did, he'd walk back to Detroit. Did he? Of course not. And two weeks later, the Broncos beat Minnesota, 14-3, also at DU Stadium. It was the first year the two leagues began playing in the pre-season ahead of the 1970 AFL-NFL merger. Of the 13 preseason games, the Detroit Lions, 13-10, at DU Stadium in what some called "The Little Super Bowl." The Lions' Alex Karras stated prior to the game there was no

— Dave Plati, Colorado Sports Hall of Fame historian

D2 | THE DENVER GAZETTE | FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 2026

143 CSU's Lightfoot scores most points by a Colorado Division I player



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Jan. 5, 1982

Colorado State senior guard Kathy Lightfoot scored 45 points in a 118-54 win over Southern Colorado at Fort Collins — to date the most points in a single

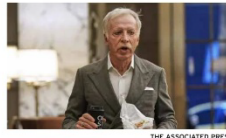
game by a Division I player in the state. Lightfoot made 21 field goals and was 3 of 4 from the free-throw line. The state's college best for women encompassing all divisions is a 51-point effort by the late Carroll Little of Southern Colorado (now CSU Pueblo) in an 82-80 overtime loss to St. Mary's of the Plains on Dec. 3, 1979.

— DAVE PLATI, COLORADO SPORTS HALL OF FAME HISTORIAN

D2 | THE DENVER GAZETTE | THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 2026

144 TOP 150 COLORADO SPORTS MOMENTS

Altitude Sports Network launches — with NHL in lockout



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Los Angeles Rams owner Stanley Kroenke arrives for NFL owners meetings in New York on Oct. 22.

D2 | THE DENVER GAZETTE | WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2026

145 TOP 150 COLORADO SPORTS MOMENTS

Zephyrs' Meyer blasts 582-foot home run at Mile High Stadium



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— Dave Plati, Colorado Sports Hall of Fame historian

D2 | THE DENVER GAZETTE | TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2026

146 Muhammad Ali, Lyle Alzado battle in boxing exhibition at Mile High



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July 14, 1979

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attended the event at Mile High Stadium, which wasn't officially opened but went all right rounds; most, if not all, thought Ali won easily. About 600 miles to the east that same night, Jamie Eastery of the Denver Bears pitched a perfect game in the Bears' 10-0 win over the Iowa Oaks in Des Moines. That was the last of seven no-hitters in Denver's minor league history that spanned over 100 years.

D2 | THE DENVER GAZETTE | SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 2026

147 Wheat Ridge boys tennis snaps Cherry Creek's record streak



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— Dave Plati, Colorado Sports Hall of Fame historian

D2 | THE DENVER GAZETTE | FRIDAY, JANUARY 9, 2026

148 Denver Racquets win state's first pro championship



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Philadelphia Freedoms, 2-0, in the best-of-three finals. Denver had won the Pacific Section with a 30-4 record and defeated the San Francisco Golden Gators and the Minnesota Buckskins to reach the finals. The team were coed.

Aug. 26, 1974

The first championship by a Denver professional team, excluding minor league baseball, was claimed by the Denver Racquets, who won the inaugural World Team Tennis league title. The Racquets defeated the top-seeded

Philadelphia Freedoms, 2-0, in the best-of-three finals. Denver had won the Pacific Section with a 30-4 record and defeated the San Francisco Golden Gators and the Minnesota Buckskins to reach the finals. The team were coed. Philadelphia was led by Billie Jean King, the league MVP. Australian Boy Roche was Denver's player-coach. The team also had the playoffs MVP in Andrew Pattison.

— Dave Plati, Colorado Sports Hall of Fame historian

D2 | THE DENVER GAZETTE | THURSDAY, JANUARY 8, 2026

149 SESQUICENTENNIAL SPECIAL

Bob Martin hosts the state's first sports talk show



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Today's top moment in Colorado sports history:

No. 149

April 12, 1965
Bob Martin hosted the first sports talk show in the state — and possibly the nation — when he hosted "Sports Line" and interviewed Broncos head coach Mac Speedie and took calls from the public. It aired for one hour

(6:27 p.m.) on KTLN-Radio (1280 AM). Speedie had been named interim head coach the previous October when Jack Faulkner was fired, with the interim tag removed with an announcement Dec. 12, 1965. Speedie played pro ball for the Cleveland Browns (1946-52), Saskatchewan Roughriders (1953-54) and BC Lions (1955) before coaching the Houston Oilers (1960-61) and Broncos (1964-66).

— Dave Plati, Colorado Sports Hall of Fame historian

D2 | THE DENVER GAZETTE | WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2026

150 Colorado College football defeats University of Denver Ministers, 12-0



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Today's top moment in Colorado sports history:

No. 150

April 11, 1885
In the first intercollegiate football game played west of the Mississippi River, Colorado College defeated the

University of Denver Ministers, 12-0. Newspaper accounts early on never listed any stats or even most of the scoring plays, opting to mostly write about who played in the game and who was the star. Both institutions had been around for a while — DU since 1864 and CC since 1874, with the first intercollegiate football game taking place in 1869 (Rutgers 6, Princeton 4). The game methodically spread west.

— Dave Plati, Colorado Sports Hall of Fame historian

D2 | THE DENVER GAZETTE | TUESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2026

Colorado's Top 150 Sports Moments

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 140 - To be announced | 100 - To be announced | 60 - To be announced | 20 - To be announced |
| 139 - To be announced | 99 - To be announced | 59 - To be announced | 19 - To be announced |
| 138 - To be announced | 98 - To be announced | 58 - To be announced | 18 - To be announced |
| 137 - To be announced | 97 - To be announced | 57 - To be announced | 17 - To be announced |
| 136 - To be announced | 96 - To be announced | 56 - To be announced | 16 - To be announced |
| 135 - To be announced | 95 - To be announced | 55 - To be announced | 15 - To be announced |
| 134 - To be announced | 94 - To be announced | 54 - To be announced | 14 - To be announced |
| 133 - To be announced | 93 - To be announced | 53 - To be announced | 13 - To be announced |
| 132 - To be announced | 92 - To be announced | 52 - To be announced | 12 - To be announced |
| 131 - To be announced | 91 - To be announced | 51 - To be announced | 11 - To be announced |
| 130 - To be announced | 90 - To be announced | 50 - To be announced | 10 - To be announced |
| 129 - To be announced | 89 - To be announced | 49 - To be announced | 9 - To be announced |
| 128 - To be announced | 88 - To be announced | 48 - To be announced | 8 - To be announced |
| 127 - To be announced | 87 - To be announced | 47 - To be announced | 7 - To be announced |
| 126 - To be announced | 86 - To be announced | 46 - To be announced | 6 - To be announced |
| 125 - To be announced | 85 - To be announced | 45 - To be announced | 5 - To be announced |
| 124 - To be announced | 84 - To be announced | 44 - To be announced | 4 - To be announced |
| 123 - To be announced | 83 - To be announced | 43 - To be announced | 3 - To be announced |
| 122 - To be announced | 82 - To be announced | 42 - To be announced | 2 - To be announced |
| 121 - To be announced | 81 - To be announced | 41 - To be announced | 1 - To be announced |
| 120 - To be announced | 80 - To be announced | 40 - To be announced | |
| 119 - To be announced | 79 - To be announced | 39 - To be announced | |
| 118 - To be announced | 78 - To be announced | 38 - To be announced | |
| 117 - To be announced | 77 - To be announced | 37 - To be announced | |
| 116 - To be announced | 76 - To be announced | 36 - To be announced | |
| 115 - To be announced | 75 - To be announced | 35 - To be announced | |
| 114 - To be announced | 74 - To be announced | 34 - To be announced | |
| 113 - To be announced | 73 - To be announced | 33 - To be announced | |
| 112 - To be announced | 72 - To be announced | 32 - To be announced | |
| 111 - To be announced | 71 - To be announced | 31 - To be announced | |
| 110 - To be announced | 70 - To be announced | 30 - To be announced | |
| 109 - To be announced | 69 - To be announced | 29 - To be announced | |
| 108 - To be announced | 68 - To be announced | 28 - To be announced | |
| 107 - To be announced | 67 - To be announced | 27 - To be announced | |
| 106 - To be announced | 66 - To be announced | 26 - To be announced | |
| 105 - To be announced | 65 - To be announced | 25 - To be announced | |
| 104 - To be announced | 64 - To be announced | 24 - To be announced | |
| 103 - To be announced | 63 - To be announced | 23 - To be announced | |
| 102 - To be announced | 62 - To be announced | 22 - To be announced | |
| 101 - To be announced | 61 - To be announced | 21 - To be announced | |