

# CU women set to face freshman phenom

## MacFarlane has inside scoop on Baylor's Griner

**By Joshua Linden**stein Camera Sports Writer  
Boulder Daily Camera

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At least one Colorado women's basketball player won't be shocked and awed the first time Brittney Griner steps on the court tonight when the Buffaloes travel to face No. 15 Baylor.

The 6-foot-8 Griner made a name for herself in recent years with her dunking prowess and as the top recruit in the country -- so much so that Baylor garnered a top-10 preseason ranking largely because of her talents. And the freshman phenom hasn't disappointed at the college level.

But CU freshman center Melissa MacFarlane squared off against Griner two summers ago in a club tournament. And while Griner's team won, it should be at least a little comforting for the Buffs to know that one of their own has gone head-to-head with Baylor's Wonder Woman and believes she can be contained.

"She goes to her right shoulder, shoots it off the backboard," MacFarlane said this week in assessing Griner's many talents. "She likes to shoot the 12-foot jumpshot. She's just got such a long wingspan that it's kind of hard.

"Brittney Griner's a huge force in the middle. But I think we can get it done."

The key, MacFarlane and CU coach Kathy McConnell-Miller both said, is getting physical with the slender center.

Griner's numbers this season have certainly read at times like a basketball superhero's.

The Houston product with the 88-inch wingspan is fourth in the Big 12 Conference in scoring at 19.1 points per game. She's fifth in rebounding at 8.5 per game. She's already broken the league's single-season blocks mark with 122 -- an average of 5.8 per game. She leads Baylor in 14 statistical categories. She has numerous double-doubles as well as a 34-point, 13-rebound, 11-block triple-double against Oral Roberts. And, oh yeah, she's dunked four times so far this season, the most recent coming on Wednesday night at Kansas State.

And yet, the Bears are 3-4 in conference play, an indication that the freshman isn't dominating everyone she faces just yet.

"Teams have been successful being a little physical with her," McConnell-Miller said.

McConnell-Miller said the teams that have done well against Griner have done so by pushing her off the block and making her shoot over the top of them instead of trying to deny her and letting her catch lobs close to the basket.

"I think we have to do what other teams have had to do," the coach said. "You've got to make it tough for her to make shots."

A big key to that tonight, McConnell-Miller said, will be throwing as much size at Griner as possible. And that's a good thing for the Buffs' own imposing freshman.

The 6-foot-7 MacFarlane has played sparingly this season, appearing in just 11 games and averaging 3.4 minutes in those contests.

Unlike Griner, whose game was college-ready when she stepped on campus in Waco, MacFarlane said she knew entering this season that she wouldn't be playing a lot.

"I'm looking at this year to get better and learn the system and then my next three years hopefully play a lot more," said the Omaha, Neb., native, whose father David played at Nebraska from 1979-81.

Junior Courtney Dunn has gotten most of the minutes at center this season and will get the start tonight as usual for the Buffs. But McConnell-Miller said she expects more reinforcements for Dunn than usual, coming in the form of MacFarlane and sophomore Julie Seabrook.

Seabrook has already seen her minutes increase lately. But McConnell-Miller said MacFarlane has been making strides in her conditioning and offensive abilities inside.

"I do have confidence in her and I've just got to put her out there and let her go," McConnell-Miller said. "I think she's improved considerably over the past month, not only her work ethic but her desire to be on the floor. She's showing that she really wants to be out there."

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## CU women's preview vs. Baylor

Camera staff  
Boulder Daily Camera

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**TODAY:** The Buffs (12-8, 2-5 Big 12) travel to face No. 15 Baylor (16-5, 3-4) in a 6:30 p.m. game at the Ferrell Center.

**BROADCAST: Television:** None. **Radio:** KKZN (760 AM) with Mike Rice (play-by-play) and Carol Callan (color).

**STORYLINES:** CU has lost three straight and five of its last six. ... The Buffs are coming off of a six-day break since a loss at Nebraska on Jan. 30. ... Baylor is led by 6-foot-8 freshman phenom Brittney Griner. ... Former Legacy High star Melissa Jones averages 11.3 points per game for the Bears but has missed five of their last seven games with a stress reaction in her right leg.

**KEY STAT:** CU has lost 18 in a row against Big 12 South Division opponents on the road. The Buffs' last road win against a South team came Jan. 7, 2004 at Baylor.

**COACHES:** Kathy McConnell-Miller is 64-79 in her fifth year at CU and 155-167 overall. Kim Mulkey is 253-71 in her 10th season at Baylor and overall.

### PROBABLE STARTERS:

**Colorado --** G Chucky Jeffery, 5-10, Fr., 10.2 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 3.4 apg; G Alyssa Fressle, 5-10, So., 6.4 ppg, 2.6 rpg, 2.5 apg; F Brittany Spears, 6-1, Jr., 17.7 ppg, 8.7 rpg, 2.5 spg; F Meagan Malcolm-Peck, 6-2, Fr., 6.7 ppg, 4.6 rpg; C Courtney Dunn, 6-4, Sr., 6.6 ppg, 4.9 rpg.

**Baylor --** G Kelli Griffin, 5-8, Jr., 7.7 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 4.5 apg; G Terran Condrey, 5-7, So., 3.2 ppg, 2.4 rpg; G Shanay Washington, 6-1, Fr., 7.5 ppg, 3.2 rpg; F Morghan Medlock, 6-1, Sr., 10.0 ppg, 7.3 rpg; C Brittney Griner, 6-8, Fr., 19.1 ppg, 8.5 rpg.

**SERIES:** Baylor leads 9-8, including 5-2 in Waco. The Bears have won five in a row over the Buffs.

**UP NEXT:** The Buffs host No. 17 Texas at 7 p.m. Wednesday.

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