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A higher competitive edge

Women's basketball and volleyball teams excited for new practice facility

By Zack Shapiro on March 12, 2010

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It's rare that a university athletic program makes three athletic teams practice and play on a single parquet court. Right now the University of Colorado makes both of its basketball teams and its volleyball team do just that.

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Later this month, CU will take the first steps to remedy what volleyball head coach Liz Kritza and women's basketball head coach Kathy McConnell-Miller call a scheduling nightmare.

"The practice facility will free up our athletes' schedules and allow them to progress towards their degrees," Kritza said.

The new building will include two courts that could be used for basketball or volleyball practice, and a volleyball coaches' office and locker room. In addition, the 42,817-square-foot addition to CU's athletic facilities will have a new women's basketball locker room and an improved equipment room.

The project is estimated to cost between \$10 million to \$12 million.

Brought about by a clause in men's basketball head coach Jeff Bzdelik's contract, CU is required to break ground on a practice facility before the start of Bzdelik's fourth year.

Kritza said the practice facility is huge for the volleyball program, especially because they are occasionally forced to practice in Carlson Gymnasium when Coors Events Center is scheduled for other practices or events.

"We all want to train our team at the highest level," Kritza said. "We're rebuilding. We're a young team. We need a good consistent block of court time [in order to get better]."

The women's basketball team feels the same way.

Freshman guard Chucky Jeffery didn't know about the practice facility when she came to CU, but is excited for the new accommodations.

"It's definitely good for the program," Jeffery said.

McConnell-Miller sees the upcoming facilities as conducive to a higher-caliber training environment.

If completed in the scheduled timeline, the three teams will be able to practice in the spring 2011.

“We’re recruiting against the top of the top for high level players,” Kritza said, “[The practice facility] will make us all more competitive.

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