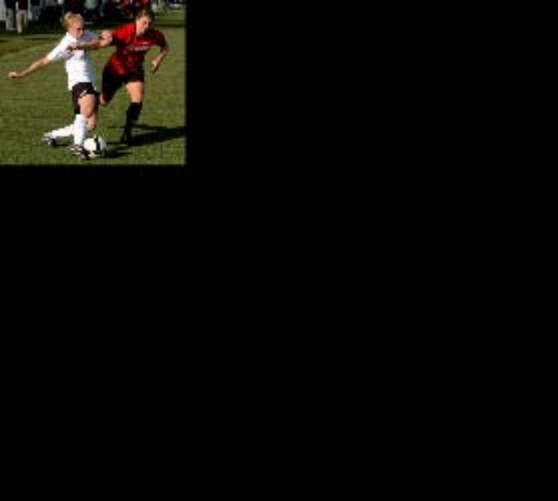


Marshall delivers yet again for Hempen's Buffs

CU tops Texas Tech in regular-season finale at Prentup Field

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

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When the snow finally stopped falling and the grounds crew began the seemingly endless search for green grass, Colorado soccer coach Bill Hempen went out to Prentup Field to check on the situation.

And soon after, Nikki Marshall -- the greatest player in the program's history -- showed up unsolicited with hot chocolate for everyone.

Yes, the Buffs' star is as good a person as she is a player.

"I can't look at her," an emotional Hempen said as he tried to get through his "Senior Day" speech on Friday evening at Prentup Field. "Nik, this is it. We love you."

Marshall executed the script for her final home game at CU to perfection.

No. 17 notched her 18th game-winning goal to lead the Buffs to a much-needed 2-0 victory over Texas Tech in the soggy regular-season finale.

"That's unheard of. That's the equivalent of Kobe Bryant saying, 'Give me the ball, I want to take the last shot,'" Hempen said. "When it really means something, she has taken the shot and scored the goal. I wish she could score 50, but we'll take the ones that she gets, and that was a pretty meaningful goal for her and for us as a team."

Not surprisingly, the humble Marshall gave all of the credit on her final goal at Prentup Field to freshman Erin Bricker, who assisted on the decisive play in the 53rd minute.

"That goal was all Erin, really. She played a perfect ball," Marshall said. "I couldn't have asked for a better ball. She waited until two defenders were on her and then fed it right through. I got lucky on that one because I barely nicked it."

Bricker added an insurance goal five minutes later on an assist from Kate Russell, who helped the Buffs seize control of the game when the coaching staff moved her from center midfielder to outside midfielder.

"Erin was kind of doing it and nothing was really happening out of it," Hempen said. "Once we got Kate out there and started feeding her the ball, things changed for us. It made us dangerous."

Senior goalkeeper Kara Linder only had to make two saves to record her sixth shutout of the season.

"I didn't even think about it, but that's really cool to go out on a good note like that," Linder said. "I couldn't ask for anything more for a better class to go out with."

Marshall, Linder, Ally Goodman, Kelly Menachof, Mary White and Tobie Rippey were all honored during a ceremony after the match attended by athletic director Mike Bohn and a number of other administrators.

"That was tough," Marshall said of the tearful goodbye. "I was strong all day until Bill started talking."

Marshall's 42 goals and 93 points are CU records. Katie Griffin (32 goals from 2003-06) and Fran Munnelly (84 points from 2002-05) are

second on those lists.

If the seniors hope to continue the journey into the NCAA Tournament, the Buffs (9-9-0, 6-4-0) will likely have to win the Big 12 Tournament next week in San Antonio.

Third-seeded CU will begin tournament play on Wednesday against No. 6-seed Texas. The Longhorns beat the Buffs 1-0 in double overtime in Austin on Oct. 25.

"This particular group of seniors have been to two Big 12 finals. So they've been there and they know it's a battle of attrition," Hempen said. "Putting three games together in five days, if you're fortunate enough to survive and advance, they certainly have been through the ringer on that one."

The Buffs lost 1-0 to Missouri in last year's final and on penalty kicks against Texas in the 2006 final. Marshall plans to write a different script this time.

"We always reach the final and we choke. That in itself is motivation for me," Marshall said. "The past three years I've been so close, and I'm so sick of being so close. This year is going to be big for us."

To be continued.

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Marshall adds to her CU record collection

October 30, 2009 | 8:00 pm No comments
By George Tanner

The University of Colorado soccer team sent its seniors out on good note Friday afternoon at Prentup Field with a 2-0 victory over Texas Tech in CU's final regular-season game.

Colorado finishes the regular season 9-9, 6-4-0 in the Big 12, while the Red Raiders fall to 8-8-3 overall and 3-4-3 in conference.

Senior Nikki Marshall notched the 18th winning goal of her college career. After a scoreless first half, she wasted little time in putting the Buffs on the scoreboard. Freshman Erin Bricker sent a pass to Marshall at the top of the box and Marshall got around the defender and placed her shot in the upper left corner of the goal for a 1-0 CU lead in the 53rd minute.

The goal gives Marshall 42 career goals, 93 points and 18 game-winners, adding to all three of the CU career records that she holds.

The Buffs struck again five minutes later; this time Bricker would find the back of the net. Bricker took a pass from sophomore Kate Russell, took one touch around the Tech defense and placed her shot inside the left goal post.

"The best move we made today was putting Kate Russell in at outside-midfielder," CU coach Bill Hempen said. "Kate opened up our game a lot. And as soon as she switched positions, we were getting excellent opportunities on crosses, through-balls and corners. She really helped us establish our offense in the second half."

The shutout was CU's fifth this season at home. Texas Tech outshot the Buffs 21-16, but senior goalkeeper Kara Linder recorded her sixth shutout of the year.

Colorado, which finished the regular season 6-1 in Boulder, will travel to San Antonio for the first round of the Big 12 championships on Wednesday.

WOMEN

Metro State 2, Adams State 0: The No. 4 Roadrunners held a 36-2 advantage in shot attempts in their the 16th consecutive win. Metro State received all the scoring it would need just 94 seconds into the match: Freshman defender Hayley Renko scored her first career goal after the Grizzlies could not fully clear a corner kick. Ashley Nemmers then scored her seventh goal of the season with just 2:30 left in the first half as Metro improved to 18-1 overall and to 15-0 in Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference play. The Grizzlies finished their season with a 6-12-2 overall mark, just one win shy of the school record. Adams State finished 4-10-2 in RMAC play as senior Ashley Sales and redshirt junior Ashley Grover, who has decided to forgo her final season of eligibility while graduating early, played for the final time in a Grizzly uniform. Grizzlies sophomore goalkeeper Kirsten Dorsey made nine saves, and teammate Amber Drumm blocked a shot on a Becca Mays breakaway. Nemmers, who scored a header goal off a nice Aleah DeGeneres pass, led the Roadrunners with 11 shots, and Mays had 10. Metro goalkeeper Becca Maloney recorded her ninth shutout of the season. The

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A final victory in 2009 at Prentup Field

Senior Day celebrated as Buffs triumph over Red Raiders

By Esteban L. Hernandez on October 31, 2009

Piles of snow surrounded Prentup Field like a frozen moat while the Colorado Buffaloes soccer team closed regular-season competition with some familiar sights: a Kara Linder shutout, a Nikki Marshall goal and a victory.

Coming off two road losses last weekend, Colorado (9-9, 6-4 Big 12



Senior forward Nikki Marshall dribbles the ball past Texas Tech defense during Friday's game at Prentup Field. The Buffs beat the Red Raiders 2-0. (CU Independent/Lee Pruitt)

Conference) edged Texas Tech (8-8-3, 3-4-3) 2-0 on Friday in Boulder during CU's Senior Day celebration.

A heavily stalemated first half ended with both sides giving off equal attacks and defensive pressure as the Red Raiders racked up 11 shots and the Buffs notched 10.

Marshall opened the scoring in the 53rd minute after a scoreless first half. After a rebounded shot gave her another opportunity, she shot the ball and buried it in the upper left corner.

"It feels great," Marshall said of the win. "We had a rough few games and I think this is huge for us, especially for the seniors, to leave here on a 2-0 win. It's huge."

The goal was Marshall's eighth of the season and the 42nd of her career.

Five minutes later, freshman forward Erin Bricker ended the Red Raiders hopes for an equalizer, scoring inside the goal area off of a Kate Russell pass in the 58th minute to seal the victory for CU.

The shutout was the goalkeeper Linder's sixth of the season, and she said she didn't consider a shutout coming into the game.

"I really didn't think about that, but to go out on a good note is definitely awesome," Linder said. "It's always my goal, but I was kind of looking more towards the win. But to get the shutout too, it's awesome."

Linder and Marshall were two of seven seniors who were honored as part of the Senior Day celebration.

Midfielders Ally Goodman, Tobie Rippey and Mary White, forward Kelly Menachof and defender Kelly Ross were all presented with a bouquet of flowers after the game. All seven had their numbers chalked onto Prentup Field as part of the celebration.

Head coach Bill Hempen, who delivered an emotional speech addressing the seniors after the match, said the game will give the team confidence heading into the Big 12 tournament next week.

“We survived,” Hempen said. “Some of what was going on at about the middle of the first half when they hit the post, and all that scrambling that was going on. We’ve been giving up goals in [those] situations, and we didn’t. I think the girls kind of stood back and went ‘OK, we’re OK now.’”

Although their seeding has yet to be determined, the Buffaloes will begin the first round of the tournament on Wednesday in San Antonio.

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Leaving Prentup the palace

Emotional Senior Day for seven Buffs

By Richard Londer on October 31, 2009

Seven women made sure everyone knew Prentup Field was their own as passionate play and a little bit of snow molded an emotional Senior Day for the women's soccer team.

For seniors Nikki Marshall, Ally Goodman, Kara Linder, Kelly Menachof, Tobie Rippy, Kelly Ross and Mary White, they would go out on top in their final home game on Friday at Prentup Field as the Colorado Buffaloes shutout Texas Tech 2-0.

Marshall finished her final home game as Colorado's leader in points, goals and game-winning goals.

Struggling to hold back the tears, head coach Bill Hempen choked up as it came time to honor Marshall and her accomplishments following the game.

"She has shown everyone that she was the best player to ever play at the University of Colorado," Hempen said during the ceremony.

That may very well be true. In the opinion of 2006 World Cup analyst and National Soccer Hall of Fame member Marcelo Balboa, Marshall has what it takes to play on the professional level as well.

"There's no doubt about it," Balboa said. "She has the right attitude, and you're looking at a player that will get drafted and make an impact wherever she goes."

Speaking to the crowd after the game, Hempen spoke of Marshall bringing the grounds crew hot chocolate after clearing off the snow on Prentup. It's not exactly the type of star athlete many are used to.

"Sometimes you have them as players and don't appreciate what else they bring to the program," Hempen said. "But we've appreciated what they have brought both on and off the field."

Marshall said she had to try hard not to focus on the emotions this game would stir up as she gave the fans at Prentup one last cheer doing what she does best: finding the back of the net in the 53rd minute.

"I knew it would take an emotional toll on me, so I just tried to put it in the back of my mind and focus on the win today," Marshall said.



On Oct. 10, 2008, CU forward Nikki Marshall dodges Texas' Erica Campanelli. Marshall was honored Friday for Senior Day. (CU Independent/William Drumm)

Scoring off her own rebound, Marshall notched the first goal of the match giving Colorado a lead Texas Tech could not catch up to.

If the resume of stars for Colorado ended with Marshall, that would suffice. But Marshall is only the peak of the mountain when it comes to this senior team's accomplishments.

Goalkeeper Kara Linder will walk away holding the No. 6 spot in school history for all-time saves, the No. 7 spot for save percentage, and the No. 3 spots for shutouts and wins.

Ending her final game in a shutout, Linder said she could not have asked for anything more.

"I didn't even think about it and it's always my goal," Linder said. "But to go out on a shutout is just awesome."

Winning isn't everything, but for these seniors it is. The departing class has led the Buffs to three previous 10-plus win seasons in their tenure.

Impressive, right? Maybe not as much as when you add on the next credential.

These talented seven seniors hold a 47-28-12 record and have led the Buffs to three NCAA tournament berths.

With a little luck during the Big 12 tournament beginning Wednesday in San Antonio, these experienced women could successfully lead CU to four NCAA berths in four years.

As much as this group would like to sit and reminisce over the past four years at Prentup, now is not the time. With the upcoming Big 12 tournament, confidence is key for Colorado, who finished 6-4 in conference play.

"We needed a win and we've been struggling lately," Marshall said. "I think today gave us the confidence we need going into the Big 12 tournament."

There is no denying the road ahead for the Buffs and this senior class will be challenging. But in taking one moment to look back on the road traveled, one word sums it up for Marshall.

"Phenomenal," she said.

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