

- [News](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Opinion](#)
- [Subscribe](#)

## The ball is in CU's court

Tennis team begins season on home courts in tourney

*By David Starcer on September 25, 2009*

The Colorado Buffaloes tennis team will get the 2009 campaign underway with a perk most teams won't have: Home court advantage.

CU will host the Colorado Invitational from Friday through Sunday at the South Campus Courts located off of Table Mesa Drive in Boulder. The Buffs will compete with the likes of in-state rival Colorado State, Air Force, Arkansas and Louisiana-Lafayette.

"Last year we were a little inexperienced, but the girls have a year under the belt and are ready to improve," said CU head coach Nicole Kenneally, who is in her 11th year with the program.

Despite having four freshmen last year, Kenneally's squad started 5-0 before finishing 7-4 in Big 12 Conference play last year. While conference play doesn't begin until spring 2010, she said she's pleased with the training her girls have put in during the offseason to prep for non-conference play, which has a little different look this year.

"We got moved from the Central Region to the Mountain Region," Kenneally said. "We'll be playing a lot of teams from the WAC [Western Athletic Conference] and Mountain West [Conference], like New Mexico and Boise State."

The move Kenneally was referring to was the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's decision to realign from eight regions to 12 in August. The 2009 ITA Mountain Regional will be played in Las Vegas in mid-October.

The team has three returning seniors, a first in Kenneally's tenure. Monica Milewski, Camila Belassi, and Melisa Esposito have combined for 181 wins in singles matches and lead a deep team that's full of optimism.

"A good start to the season is going to be very important," said junior Abbie Probert. "If we can build some momentum and establish ourselves early, we can carry that on [the rest of the season]."

Probert applauded the team's chemistry and thinks the work they put in over the offseason will pay dividends sooner rather than later.

"Everyone is very supportive of one another, both on and off the court," Probert said. "We've been working really hard and if we keep it up, the results will come."



Senior Melisa Esposito competes on Mar. 11, 2008. Esposito is one of three seniors returning this season. (CU Independent file/Jason Suder)

In April, the Buffaloes lost in the quarterfinals to Nebraska in the Big 12 Tennis Championships. While this season's tourney isn't until April 2010, it's clear everything the team does from now until then will be a stepping stone towards Austin, Texas.

"[The Big 12 tournament] is the main goal," Kenneally said. "Ultimately, winning a conference title and making nationals is what we're here to compete for."

*Contact CU Independent Staff Writer David Starcer at [David.starcer@colorado.edu](mailto:David.starcer@colorado.edu).*

### Share and Enjoy:



*Posted in [Sports](#)*

---

Copyright © 2009 CU Independent