

WNBA likely to put in call for Spears

By Joshua Lindenstein Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

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If Brittany Spears had her way, there would be basketball practice every day.

That's why Colorado coaches made their star player take a full week off after the Buffaloes' season-ending loss to Southern Cal two weeks ago. They know that starting Monday Spears might not get another break for a few years.

With the WNBA draft looming, Spears' prospects for getting picked are looking good. Make it with a team, and hoops could become a year-round affair if Spears were to then go to Europe to play in between WNBA seasons as many professional players do.

"It feels weird not to go to practice and stuff," Spears said of life since her CU career ended in an interview with the Camera this week.

The 6-foot-1 small forward got back into working out on the court this week to start preparing for WNBA tryouts, which begin May 15.

The three-round draft begins at 1 p.m. Monday. There are 12 teams in the league, meaning only 36 players get selected.

Both Spears and Linda Lappe have heard enough from league insiders that they are confident Spears will hear her name called.

[Draftsite.com](#)'s mock draft currently has the San Antonio Silver Stars taking Spears in the third round with the 30th overall pick, one spot ahead of former Legacy High and Baylor standout guard Melissa Jones. But Lappe said she's gotten indications that Spears could even go as early as the late first round.

"I think it's fairly certain that she'll get drafted at least by the second round," Lappe said. "Everybody knows about her. Everybody's seen her numerous times. I know there are teams out there right now that think she has a realistic shot to make the team."

While Spears might not have gotten much national notoriety the past four years because CU struggled for much of her time on campus, the Buffs' all-time leading scorer's ability to put the ball in the hoop didn't get past WNBA scouts.

Playing in the Big 12 Conference, arguably the nation's toughest, meant Spears was playing in front of those important eyes for most of her career.

Spears finished with 2,185 career points, and was at her best down the stretch this season as she led the Buffs to the WNIT quarterfinals.

"I really wasn't paying attention," Spears said of her draft prospects. "I was just trying to focus on the season."

Spears' quick release and ability to shoot from the outside, Lappe said, could be her most valuable asset to a pro squad. Spears knows, though, that she'll need to continue to work on things like her ball handling, footwork and defense.

If Spears is drafted, she'll have just enough time to finish the spring semester before heading to tryouts. She'll have a few credit hours left to finish for her degree, something she and Lappe have made a priority to work in around her future endeavors on the court.

Spears said she plans to hire an agent right after the draft next week, something that will come into play right now mostly as it relates to landing with a team in Europe. WNBA players are slated to make between \$36,000 and \$104,000 in the upcoming season, with rookies slotted in at the lower end of that range depending upon their draft position.

Three previous Buffs have been drafted by the WNBA. Isabelle Fijalkowski was taken in the 1997 elite draft in the league's first season, while Raegan Scott was selected in the league's amateur draft that same season. Mandy Nightingale was selected in 2002 but did not play in the league.

No Buff has played in the WNBA since Tera Bjorklund signed on with the Charlotte Sting following her senior year in 2004.

Lappe said the idea of Spears getting drafted is a nice lift for everyone involved with the program, from teammates to the coaching staff.

"It's something we can really sell in recruiting," Lappe said. "We're trying to recruit players ... that are good enough to have a chance to play in the WNBA. And they have to know that playing in Colorado will help them get there and they can reach all of their goals and dreams by coming here. They don't have to go to other schools to do that."

Of course, Lappe and everyone else know that, most importantly, getting drafted would be a fitting reward for Spears, who leaves CU as one of the school's all-time greats.

"It's really exciting," Spears said. "I always wanted to play in the WNBA. I always thought it was realistic in the back of my head."

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Pointer leaves Lappe`s coaching staff

Colorado assistant to return to Texas club program

By Joshua Lindenstein Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

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In good times and bad, the coaching carousel never stops spinning.

First-year Colorado women`s basketball coach Linda Lappe announced the resignation of assistant Johnna Pointer in a news release on Friday night.

Pointer, who joined the CU staff in May shortly after Lappe`s hiring, cited family and professional reasons for her decision, including the ability to be able to spend more time with 13-year-old daughter Steffi.

The Shallowater, Texas, native and former All-Southwest Conference Texas Longhorn will return to Amarillo, where she will get involved once again with the Hoop 10 girls club basketball program she founded there. Pointer spent six years running the club before joining CU, but had to sell it prior to joining the Buffs` staff to comply with NCAA rules.

"Colorado is an amazing institution," said Pointer, who also has had stints as head coach at Wayland Baptist University and Frank Phillips College. "I couldn`t have asked for more out of the opportunity, but it`s a decision I had to make as a parent and with the investment made into the Hoop 10 program.

"I leave with only positive thoughts and am very proud to have been part of the ground work that this staff and team has laid down for the future of the program."

At CU, Pointer helped guide the Buffs to an 18-16 record and WNIT quarterfinal appearance this past season, working primarily with the guards, in addition to her recruiting, scouting and academic liaison duties.

"Our players and staff are sad to see her go as she was a great ambassador for Colorado basketball," Lappe said. "We will continue to follow her career and wish her the best of luck with her club team."

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APRIL 9, 2011, 2:28 PM

CU adds team format to its summer camp menu

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

BOULDER — One of the first things current Colorado men's basketball coach Tad Boyle did five years ago when beginning his first college head-coaching job at Northern Colorado was to set in place plans for a summer team camp.

He's at it again.

For the first time in years, CU will host a boys team camp. It's scheduled for June 3-5 for grades 9 through 12.

Previous Colorado coaches had various summer camps, but not in a team format.

CU coach Linda Lappe also has scheduled a team camp: June 24-26, for girls in grades 9 through 12.

"We've got a new practice facility going up, and we want the coaches around the state and their players to play in it," Boyle told me. "Being the flagship university of the state, we want to have a team camp. We want to get young men on our campus. And not so much for recruiting, but we want to expose our basketball program and facilities and staff.

"It allows you to get kids on campus, it allows you to show your facilities, it allows you to build relationships with coaches. It's important to have one."

Boyle said during his last summer at UNC (2009), his program hosted more than 100 teams. His first team camp had about 25.

"I don't know how big it will be our first year (at CU)," he said. "I think quality is more important than quantity."

Boyle and Lappe have the usual smorgasbord of camps, in addition to the team camps.

For males, Boyle has an individual camp (June 13-16) and an shooting camp (June 17) for boys ages 9-17. The June 3 elite camp is for boys entering grades 9 through 12 this fall.

For females, Lappe has Little Dribblers (June 6-9, ages 5-9), individual (June 20-23, ages 9-14), elite (June 18-19, ages 14-18) and shooting (June 24, ages 8-18), in addition to the team camp.

For information on Boyle's camps, contact Marge Marcy at marge.marcy@colorado.edu or 303-492-6877.

For information on Lappe's camps, contact Dan Doerflein at 720-315-4258.

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