

Lappe's CU Buffs aim to protect home floor

Bufs coach embraces Nebraska rivalry

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

Posted: 02/05/2011 06:51:26 PM MST

As a former Colorado basketball player, Linda Lappe easily remembers how amped she and her teammates got whenever the Nebraska Cornhuskers came to town.

So it's no surprise that the Buffaloes' first-year head coach is a little torn about losing NU as a league foe next season, even if public buzz surrounding the rivalry has generally centered on football.

The CU and NU women's hoops teams meet at the Coors Events Center (2 p.m., FSN) one final time today as conference rivals. The Buffs make their last Big 12 trip to Lincoln on March 2 before they bolt for the Pac-12 and the Huskers head to the Big Ten.

Lappe said after practice Saturday that she'd like to make home-and-home non-conference series with the Huskers regular affairs, though she said such wouldn't likely happen next season.

The coach said she has lots of fond memories of her battles with the Huskers, not the least of which was the Buffs' win her freshman year. An admittedly better NU squad had thumped CU 90-49 in Lincoln just three weeks earlier when the Buffs rose up for 17-point triumph on their home court. The victory was No. 15 in what eventually became a 21-game win streak over the Huskers in Boulder before NU turned the tables recently.

"We were inexperienced," Lappe said. "But at the same time we wanted to protect our home against Nebraska and we knew about the streak. We knew that you didn't let Nebraska come in here and go away with an easy win."

A win over the Huskers (12-9, 2-5) today could be just what the Buffs (11-10, 2-6) need to break out of their current funk.

In fact, both teams could be looking at the game as a nice slump-buster. On paper, they're almost mirror images.

Both have a couple of nice conference wins despite their inexperience. But both have also had some ugly losses. CU has lost three in a row, while NU enters having dropped three of four.

Both average roughly 56 points per game in Big 12 play. But both also allow roughly 67.

And the starting lineups couldn't be much closer player-for-player in terms of height.

"It would be sweet for us to get a win against them," said CU point guard Chucky Jeffery, who will play today after being suspended for Wednesday's loss at Kansas for academic reasons. "That would be big for us."

The Buffs should get a big boost today simply by returning to the Coors Events Center, where they are 11-3 this season. The Buffs are coming off of a two-game road trip that saw them stumble in the second half against Texas and then get routed by Kansas after a wild day of travel through a nasty blizzard.

After today's game, the Buffs get five days off before hosting Texas Tech next weekend.

"It's good to be back," CU forward and leading scorer Brittany Spears said. "You're always comfortable playing at home."

The Huskers have dealt with inclement weather on two straight road trips now after traveling to Boulder on Saturday. But they enter riding the hot hand of freshman forward Jordan Hooper, who scored 31 points on Wednesday as NU's rally at Missouri fell just short.

Colorado also saw a freshman notch a career-high on Wednesday when guard Brittany Wilson scored 22.

"It's just going to be a matter of who plays harder," Lappe said of all the similarities, "who does all the little things."

Close Window

Send To Printer

Sports > Huskers Hq**Huskers to battle Buffs in Boulder Sunday**[Print Page](#)**COLLEGE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL****By Independent Wire Services**

Published: Friday, February 4, 2011 8:27 PM CST

Nebraska closes a two-game Big 12 North road swing when the Huskers take on Colorado on Sunday in Boulder. Tip-off between the Huskers (12-9, 2-5 Big 12) and Buffs (11-10, 2-6 Big 12) at the Coors Events Center is set for 3 p.m. (central).

The game will be televised live nationally on Super Bowl Sunday by Fox Sports Net (Time Warner Channel 37 in Lincoln, Cox Cable Channel 47 in Omaha) with Brent Stover and Brenda VanLengen on the call. The game can also be seen in Nebraska on DirecTV Channel 652 and DISH Network Channel 445.

Matt Coatney and Jeff Griesch will call the action on the Husker Sports Network, including WOW 105.3 FM-KLNC in Lincoln, 93.3 FM-KTWI in Omaha and 880 AM-KRVN in Lexington. The game is also available to the entire 25-station Husker Sports Network along with free audio on Huskers.com.

Both the Huskers and Buffaloes are coming off road losses at Big 12 North Division foes on Wednesday night. Nebraska dropped a 76-69 decision at Missouri despite a career-high 31 points and a school-record-tying seven three-pointers from freshman Jordan Hooper.

Colorado lost an 81-58 decision at Kansas despite a career-high 22 points from freshman Brittany Wilson.

Hooper ignited a huge Husker rally from a 17-point halftime deficit to take a one-point lead with four minutes left. The 6-2 forward from Alliance, Neb, scored 28 of her career-high 31 points in the second half. She opened the half by hitting three straight threes. She hit six of her seven after halftime. Her fifth three of the half came on a 25-footer from the top of the key to give NU a 60-59 lead. She also scored Nebraska's final seven points.

Hooper's seven threes gave her the NU freshman record with 47. She broke Anna DeForge's previous rookie record of 46 (1994-95). DeForge was a two-time WNBA All-Star. Hooper's 47 threes trail only OU's Aaryn Ellenberg among Big 12 freshmen. Hooper ranks third in the Big 12 with a team-leading 15.3 points per game, while adding a Big 12 freshmen-best 6.9 rebounds per game.

Hooper expects many family and friends to travel to Colorado to support the Huskers. Alliance is approximately 250 miles and a four-hour drive away from Boulder, and at least two bus loads of community members will be making the journey to CU. Alliance is more than 350 miles and a six-hour drive from Lincoln.

Scouting The Colorado Buffaloes

Colorado comes into Sunday's game with an 11-10 overall record, including a 2-6 Big 12 mark after dropping an 81-53 decision at Kansas on Wednesday in Lawrence.

The Buffaloes, under first-year head coach Linda Lappe, are led by senior Brittany Spears. The 6-1 forward is the Big 12's active scoring leader with more than 1,900 points. Spears enters the Nebraska game averaging 17.7 points and 8.1 rebounds per game. In Big 12 play, Spears has stepped up her production to

18.3 points and 8.8 rebounds per game. Spears is joined by fellow seniors Chelsea Dale (5.0 ppg, 1.7 rpg) and Britney Blythe (3.3 ppg, 1.6 rpg) in CU's starting five, along with junior Julie Seabrook (6.0 ppg, 6.0 rpg).

In addition to that experienced foursome, sophomore Chucky Jeffery has added potent scoring and rebounding to the Buffs' lineup with 14.6 points and a team-leading 8.6 rebounds per game. Jeffery, who has been slowed by a concussion in league play, did not play at Kansas on Wednesday because of an academic issue. She is expected to return to CU's lineup on Sunday against the Huskers.

Colorado has utilized a nine-player rotation throughout the season, with sophomore Meagan Malcolm-Peck averaging 6.8 points and 4.6 rebounds. Freshmen Brittany Wilson (8.7 ppg, 3.8 rpg), Ashley Wilson (2.5 ppg, 1.8 rpg) and Rachel Hargis (2.3 ppg, 2.7 rpg) complete the Buffs' playing rotation.

For the season, Colorado has averaged 62.3 points while surrendering just 59.6 points per contest. CU has hit 40.4 percent of its shots from the field, including 32.6 percent from three-point range. The Buffs have struggled a lot at the line, hitting just 59.8 percent of their attempts. CU has been solid on the boards with a plus-4.9 team rebounding margin, but the Buffs have averaged nearly 20 turnovers per game.

In Big 12 play, CU has managed just 56.2 points per game, while shooting just 38.5 percent from field. The Buffs have struggled at times at the free throw line, hitting just 52.3 percent (58-111) from the line. Spears is 20-for-26 at the line in league play, leaving the rest of the Buffs a combined 44.7 percent (38-85). Opponents have outscored CU by an average of six points a game at the line in Big 12 play.

Colorado leads the all-time series with Nebraska, 39-28, but the Huskers have controlled the series in recent years. Last season, NU notched an 80-64 win in Boulder on Jan. 30, 2010, before running to an 89-73 victory in Lincoln on Feb. 20. The Huskers have won three straight in the series, dating back to a 75-73 loss at CU on Jan. 31, 2009. That setback snapped NU's seven-game winning streak in the series.

Overall, Nebraska has won 10 of the last 11 games against the Buffs, the most successful stretch in school history. Over the last 14 games, NU is 11-3, with all three losses by one possession, including a pair of two-point losses at the Coors Events Center. Eight of NU's 11 victories have been by double digits.

When: 3 p.m. CST Sunday

Where: Coors Event Center, Boulder, Colo.

TV: Fox Sports Net

Radio: KRGI (1430 AM, 93.3 FM)

NEBRASKA (12-9, 2-5)

F Jordan Hooper 6-2 Fr. 15.3

C Catheryn Redmon 6-3 Sr. 10.1

G Katya Leick 6-1 So. 5.7

G Kaitlyn Burke 5-7 Jr. 6.5

G Lindsey Moore 5-9 So. 12.1

COLORADO (11-10, 2-6)

F Julie Seabrook 6-3 Jr. 6.0

F Brittany Spears 6-1 Sr. 17.7

G Britney Blythe 5-9 Sr. 3.3

G Brittany Wilson 5-8 Fr. 8.7

G Chelsea Dale 6-1 Sr. 5.0

Copyright © 2011 - The Independent

[x] Close Window