



Meagan Malcolm-Peck recorded a double-double with 11 points and 10 rebounds.
Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



01/04/2011 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

Bufs Wobble Past Fighting Sioux, Eye Big 12

BOULDER - Ready or not, Big 12 Conference play begins this weekend for the Colorado women's basketball team. And in a 67-56 win Tuesday night against North Dakota, CU flirted with both ends of a scary spectrum - ready at times, appearing not even close at others.

No matter; the preview is over.

The Buffaloes play Saturday at No. 16 Texas A&M, taking a 9-4 non-conference record into their final Big 12 season. The Fighting Sioux, the preseason pick to win the Great West Conference, lost for the 10th time in 11 games and fell to 2-11.

But the Bufs struggled against a struggling team far too often to please first-year coach Linda Lappe.

"Bottom line, a win's a win," she said. "We're happy to start off 2011 in the right way . . . but we obviously didn't play very well; we didn't play nearly as well as we're going to have to from here on out to compete in the Big 12."

BUFFALO EXTRAS



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Not surprisingly, her players agreed.

"We're all disappointed in the way we played," said sophomore Meagan Malcolm-Peck. "I don't think we came in and executed or had as much intensity and focus as we needed . . . we played lackadaisical I think."

Lappe said she and her staff noticed a lack of sharpness and focus at Tuesday morning's shoot-around, but she declined to pin that on the last non-conference opponent with Big 12 play looming.

"You can't expect to turn on the switch and not be lackadaisical," Lappe said. "We've got to come into every game with an extreme amount of focus and determination. It's something that from here on out we can't have. And we can't have 27 turnovers again for the entire year."

That number tied a season-high (CU had the same total against Evansville, but won 55-53) and came at a time when Lappe thought the number of errors might be on the way down. After committing 24 and 22 in a pair of losses in the Women of Troy Tournament, the Buffs kept their turnover total to 15 in last week's 75-52 rout of Colgate.

But in their second consecutive game at the Coors Events Center, the dubious number climbed again.

"A win is a win," said freshman guard Brittany Wilson, who made her first start. "But 27 turnovers - we can't have that. As a team, we have to pick it up and play 40 minutes."

Replacing sophomore Meagan Malcolm-Peck in the lineup, Wilson contributed 15 points, including a career-best four three-pointers. One was a 30-footer to close the first half. She also made a career-high four steals.

Wilson's practice effort over the past "three or four weeks" earned her the start, Lappe said. But Lappe also was pleased with Malcolm-Peck coming off the bench to record her second career double-double (11 points, 10 rebounds). She scored all of her points and collected seven of her boards in the second half.

"Meagan did a great job coming off the bench," Lappe said. "She let the game come to her and didn't let not starting affect her."

Malcolm-Peck called not starting no big worry: "It doesn't matter; I just do whatever I can do."

CU finally put away North Dakota with a 15-0 run midway through the second half. Senior Brittany Spears and Malcolm-Peck accounted for 13 of those 15 points, with Spears hitting a pair of three-pointers and Malcom-Peck knocking down one trey and adding another pair of baskets.

Spears (21) and Malcolm-Peck (11) were two of four Buffs in double-figures. The others were Brittany Wilson (15) and sophomore Chucky Jeffery (11). Spears reached 20 points for the seventh time this season and 36th time in her career.

The Buffs led 41-26 at the half, but it took a 30-foot buzzer-beater by Brittany Wilson to account for that 15-point margin. Otherwise, CU's first-half finish wasn't of the variety that would leave Lappe particularly happy.

Her team had its first-half highlights:

- It never trailed and went ahead by as many 18 on another Brittany Wilson trey at the 8:10 mark.
- It held the Fighting Sioux to six points for almost 7 minutes and allowed baskets on back-to-back possessions only once for almost 9 minutes.
- It limited the visitors to 35.7 percent shooting from the field in the first 20 minutes and forced a dozen turnovers.

But there was also a bundle of Buffs blunders - not what Lappe wanted in the way of a final Big 12 tune-up:

- They committed one more first-half turnover (13) than the Fighting Sioux and finished with 27 - one more than North Dakota.
- They allowed their 18-point lead to dwindle to a dozen on the next-to-last possession of the half and were

threatening to cut it to 10, maybe 9, before a turnover and Brittany Wilson's long trey.

- They had six steals - but the Fighting Sioux had eight. CU finished with 11, North Dakota 18.

Can you say better ball security for the Buffs? Lappe could, and she also could say pass the ball with more authority: "Our passes are very, very soft. We don't have any zip . . . we telegraph, we get tunnel vision . . . Sometimes we get tentative; we just have to be confident in our passing."

The second half opened with a CU turnover and a three-pointer by Mallory Youngblut, cutting the Buffs' advantage to 12 (41-29). Youngblut, a senior co-captain who finished with 19, then scored her team's next five points as North Dakota closed to within 44-34.

Shortly thereafter, CU launched its 15-0 run and North Dakota temporarily was on the ropes. But fight remained in the Fighting Sioux; they pulled to 67-56 on another trey by Youngblut in the final 1:10 - cutting what had been a 25-point deficit to 11.

"I thought we battled back, we kept working the whole game," North Dakota Coach Gene Roebuck said. "We came back after being down by 25, came back and made a game of it, made them work. That is basically what we wanted to accomplish, the fact that we played 40 minutes of hard basketball."

By their admission, the Buffs didn't. When it was done, they had scored four points - a free throw by Jeffery and Brittany Wilson's final trey - in the last 10:40.

Ready or not, it's on to College Station, Texas.

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SHOW MENU



Shake-up sparks CU to victory

Wilson excels in first career start as Buffs roll

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

Posted: 01/04/2011 09:16:47 PM MST



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Colorado freshman guard Brittany Wilson played like someone deserving of her first college start on Tuesday night at the Coors Events Center.

The player she replaced fared pretty well, too.

Wilson scored 15 points and Meagan Malcolm-Peck added a double-double to help fuel a 67-56 Buffaloes triumph over the North Dakota Fighting Sioux that at points was better for CU and at points was worse than the final score indicated.

Wilson -- a 5-foot-8 Long Beach, Calif., product -- scored 12 of her points in the first half as she helped stake the Buffs to 10-2 and 30-12 leads early. She added four rebounds and career bests in steals (4) and 3-pointers (4). And she hit nothing but net on a running 30-footer at the halftime buzzer.

"I've been working hard, so for it to finally pay off feels really good," Wilson said of starting.

The win sends the Buffs into Big 12 Conference play on Saturday at Texas A&M on a winning note. Colorado improved to 9-4 overall and 9-1 at home.

But 27 CU turnovers and the feeling that the Buffs should have beaten the 2-11 Sioux by much more tempered the victory.

Colorado led by as many as 18 in the first half and as many as 25 in the second. While the game never really felt in doubt, the over-matched Sioux refused to go away and outscored the Buffs 30-26 in the second half. CU hit just one field goal and scored just four points in the final 10 minutes, 40 seconds of the game.

"We came out kind of lackadaisical I think," Malcolm-Peck said. "If we play like that, we're not going to get any wins in the Big 12. So we all know we have to step it up and make improvements."

Malcolm-Peck and Wilson -- and of course forward Brittany Spears, who led CU with 21 points and nine rebounds -- were certainly the bright spots for the Buffs.

Malcolm-Peck played just six minutes in the first half off the bench, recording three rebounds. But she erupted in the second half to finish with 11 points and 10 rebounds for her second career double-double.

"I do whatever I can to help my team," Malcolm-Peck said. "Brit's been playing awesome and I think that's awesome that she gets that opportunity (to start)."

Malcolm-Peck's timing for her outburst couldn't have been better.

North Dakota had just cut CU's lead down to 46-36 with 16 minutes to play. But Malcolm-Peck scored seven points during a 15-0 run that put the Buffs up 61-36 with 11:18 to go.

CU coach Linda Lappe -- who had started the same lineup the first 12 games of the season -- said she made the change

Tuesday because of the way Wilson had been performing the last three or four weeks in games and practice and because of the offensive spark she brings.

But the coach was equally impressed with the way Malcolm-Peck handled the move.

"She was just really solid tonight and did a great job and didn't let not starting affect her," said Lappe, who said she wasn't sure if the switch would stick. "I think that shows a lot of maturity and I'm really proud of her."

Wilson's 30-footer was the highlight of the night and brought the announced crowd of 1,033 to its feet.

With 4 seconds to go, she took the inbound pass in the backcourt, raced up the center of the court and arced a perfect shot with a defender close by her side.

Wilson said the Buffs rehearse the situation in practice, but that it usually ends with a shot from half-court.

"I looked at the time and I know my speed, and so I knew that if I took that extra dribble and had my feet under it that it was going to be good," she said.

Colorado dominated the game at times and out-rebounded the Sioux 43-31. But the Buffs also shot just 8 of 28 from 3-point land, and the turnovers tied a season high as several lazy passes turned into Sioux points at the other end.

Mallory Youngblut scored 19 points and grabbed five rebounds to lead North Dakota, a former Division-II power transitioning to D-I.

Lappe said she noticed a lack of focus from her team during Tuesday's morning shootaround. But the team could never shake it.

"You can't expect to just turn on a switch at some point and not be focused and not be lackadaisical and all those things," Lappe said. "It's something that from here on out we can't have."

Colorado 67, North Dakota 56 NORTH DAKOTA (56)

MIN FG 3PT FT Rb PF TP

Youngblut 38 7-13 3-4 2-2 5 1 19

Lof 32 0-2 0-0 0-0 5 4 0

Lauck 30 2-11 0-4 2-2 4 1 6

Wall 17 2-5 0-0 3-3 3 4 7

Cna. Mthrsd 27 2-3 0-0 2-2 1 2 6

Cni. Mthrsd 13 4-6 1-2 2-4 1 0 11

Smart 7 1-1 0-0 0-0 0 0 2

Rothfusz 1 0-0 0-0 0-0 0 0 0

Buck 19 1-5 0-3 0-0 5 0 2

Houdek 16 1-8 0-0 1-2 2 5 3

Totals 200 20-54 4-13 12-15 31 17 56

Assists (11): Youngblut 4, Lauck 2, [C.nay](#) Mothershed 2, Lof, Cnise Mothershed, Houdek.

Steals (18): Lof 4, Youngblut 3, Lauck 3, [C.nay](#) Mothershed 2, Smart 2, Buck 2, Wall, [C.nise](#) Mothershed.

Turnovers (26): [C.nay](#) Mothershed 7, Youngblut 5, Lof 3, Lauck 2, Wall 2, [C.nise](#) Mothershed 2, Buck 2, Smart, Rothfusz, Houdek.

Blocked shots (4): Youngblut, [C.nay](#) Mothershed, Buck, Houdek.

COLORADO (67)

MIN FG 3PT FT Rb PF TP

Seabrook 20 3-4 0-0 1-3 0 2 7

Spears 31 8-15 3-7 2-2 9 0 21

Blythe 17 0-4 0-4 0-0 0 2 0

B. Wilson 27 5-9 4-6 1-1 4 4 15

Jeffery 23 3-7 0-2 5-6 8 3 11

A. Wilson 18 1-4 0-1 0-0 1 1 2

MM-Peck 19 5-9 1-3 0-1 10 3 11

Dale 23 0-6 0-5 0-0 3 0 0

Hargis 22 0-1 0-0 0-1 6 2 0

Totals 200 25-59 8-28 9-14 43 17 67

Assists (13): Jeffery 4, Malcolm-Peck 3, Dale 2, Hargis 2, B. Wilson, A. Wilson.

Steals (11): B. Wilson 4, Spears 3, A. Wilson 2, Malcolm-Peck, Hargis.

Turnovers (27): Seabrook 6, Spears 5, Jeffery 5, B. Wilson 4, Dale 3, Hargis 2, Blythe.

Blocked shots (5): Malcolm-Peck 2, Seabrook, Spears, Hargis.

Halftime score: Colorado 41, North Dakota 26.

Technical fouls -- none.

Attendance -- 1,033.

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Spears leads Buffs

CU struggles, but gets past N. Dakota

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BOULDER — The University of Colorado women's basketball team wasn't as its best on Tuesday night.

Yet the Buffs still managed to finish their non-conference slate with a victory, 67-56 against North Dakota at the Coors Events Center.

Brittany Spears scored 21 points and pulled down nine rebounds, and Meagan Malcolm-Peck recorded a double-double as CU improved to 9-4 heading into Big 12 Conference play.

"The bottom line, a win is a win, and we're happy to start off 2011 in the right way," CU head coach Linda Lappe said. "We're excited to get the win. We obviously didn't play very well; we didn't play nearly as well as we are going to have to from here on out to compete in the Big 12. That's something that we need to go back to the drawing board and definitely work on."

CU committed 27 turnovers — 18 of those on North Dakota (2-11) steals — and struggled from 3-point range, going 8-for-28.

"I don't think that we came in and executed or had as much intensity and focus as we needed," Malcolm-Peck said. "I think we are all pretty disappointed with how we played all around. I think we definitely need to cut down on turnovers."

North Dakota got within 46-36 with 16 minutes to play in the game. From there, CU went on a 15-0 run to pull away.

Malcolm-Peck had seven points and Spears six in that run.

The Buffs needed that 25-point cushion, because North Dakota outscored them 20-6 in the final 11:09. CU was held scoreless in the final 4:31.

Malcolm-Peck had 11 points and 10 rebounds for her second double-double of the season. She also was taken out of the starting lineup for the first time this season, as freshman Brittany Wilson made her first start.

"I do whatever I can to help my team," Malcolm-Peck said. "Brittany has been playing awesome, so it's amazing that she gets that opportunity."

Wilson scored 15 points, hitting a season-best four 3-pointers.

Colorado 67, North Dakota 56

NORTH DAKOTA (2-11)

Youngblut 7-13 2-2 19, Lof 0-2 0-0 0, Lauck 2-11 2-2 6, Wall 2-5 3-3 7, Charnay Mothershed 2-3 2-2 6, Charnise Mothershed 4-5 2-4 11, Smart 1-1 0-0 2, Rothfusz 0-0 0-0 0, Buck 1-5 0-0 2, Houdek 1-8 1-2 3.
 Totals 20-54 12-15 56.

COLORADO (9-4)

Seabrook 3-4 1-3 7, Spears 8-15 2-2 21, Blythe 0-4 0-0 0, B. Wilson 5-9 1-1 15, Jeffery 3-7 5-6 11, Wilson 1-4 0-0 2, M. Malcolm-Peck 5-9 0-1 11, Dale 0-6 0-0 0, Hargis 0-1 0-1 0.
 Totals 25-59 9-14 67.

Halftime—Colorado 41-26. 3-Point Goals—North Dakota 4-13 (Youngblut 3-4, Charnise Mothershed 1-2, Lauck 0-4, Buck 0-3), Colorado 8-28 (B. Wilson 4-6, Spears 3-7, M. Malcolm-Peck 1-3, Dale 0-5, Blythe 0-4, Jeffery 0-2, A. Wilson 0-1). Fouled Out—Houdek. Rebounds—North Dakota 31 (Youngblut 5, Lof 5, Buck 5), Colorado 43 (M. Malcolm-Peck 10). Assists—North Dakota 11 (Youngblut 4), Colorado 13 (Jeffery 4). Total Fouls—North Dakota 17, Colorado 17. A—1,033.

Tonight's game

Western New Mexico (5-9) at Colorado men (10-4)

When/Where: 7 p.m. tonight, at the Coors Events Center in Boulder

TV/Radio: No TV/760-AM

The series: The teams have never faced each other.

Leading scorers: WNM — TJ Riley (14.6 points per game); CU — Alec Burks (19.0).

"It feels good; I have been working hard," she said of starting. "All that hard work paid off."

Chucky Jeffery added 11 points and eight rebounds for CU.

Mallory Youngblut led the Fighting Sioux with 19 points.

NOTES: CU had used the same starting five — Spears, Jeffery, Malcolm-Peck, Julie Seabrook and Britney Blythe — in all 12 games before Tuesday. ... The Buffs out-rebounded the Fighting Sioux 43-31. ... North Dakota made just 37 percent of its shots (20-of-54), while CU made 42.4 percent (25-of-59). ... Spears fell one rebound short of her 27th career double-double. ... CU opens Big 12 play on Saturday with a game at No. 7 Texas A&M.

Notes: CU is 8-0 at home this season. ... CU has won eight of its last nine, losing only to New Mexico in that stretch. ... Western New Mexico plays in the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference. CU is 69-26 all-time against RMAC teams. ... This is CU's final non-conference game. The Buffs host No. 11 Missouri in their Big 12 opener on Saturday.

Brian Howell