

# Lappe`s underclassmen key to run

## Buffaloes continue WNIT play Thursday at Wyoming

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

Posted: 03/22/2011 11:54:55 PM MDT

Meagan Malcolm-Peck made it clear: The Colorado Buffaloes were looking to feed senior forward Brittany Spears every chance they got as Spears poured in 33 points in a WNIT victory over Cal on Monday.

Watching Spears` season-best performance, one`s mind could easily have drifted to the what-will-this-team-do-when-Spears-is-gone dilemma.

Perhaps hidden beneath her 33-point, nine rebound, two assist, two steal, two block stat line, though, lied the collective answer.

Sophomores Chucky Jeffery and Malcolm-Peck and freshman Brittany Wilson all scored in double figures. Junior Julie Seabrook added six rebounds.

Spears and classmates Britney Blythe and Chelsea Dale will soon depart and no doubt be missed. But the Buffaloes feel the next wave of leaders is ready to grab the torch. And it`s a group that keeps gaining confidence with each victory this postseason.

"I think all of us are ready to step it up for sure," said Malcolm-Peck, who had 13 points, five rebounds and two assists against Cal.

CU coach Linda Lappe -- whose Buffs (17-15) play at Wyoming (24-8) at 7 p.m. Thursday -- said the dynamics of every team are different and that the offseason would be huge in how players` roles shake out. But she likes the way all six of her underclassmen who have played this season have developed.

Freshmen Brittany Wilson and Rachel Hargis have seen their roles increase more and more throughout the season as they`ve adjusted to the level of the college game.

Malcolm-Peck -- who Lappe said had never taken a charge in her life before this season -- has evolved dramatically into one of the team`s tougher players. Seabrook, already a captain, is respected by her peers on and off the court and is a member of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee.

And even Jeffery, who has filled up the stat sheet since Day 1, has cranked up her scoring, rebounding, assists and steals while also decreasing her turnovers.

The experience the group continues to get in the postseason simply adds every day to that development.

Even teams that don`t make the postseason are allowed to still have full practices if they wish until the NCAA tournament is over. But had the Buffs` season been finished after the Big 12 tournament, Lappe said it would be customary to take a week or two off before beginning postseason workouts. With spring break falling when it does, the Buffs probably would have had to take about three weeks off.

Since the Buffs are playing through spring break instead, they`ll get a week or so off whenever their season does finally end and then be right back into lifting weights and improving their skills. The perk for players is that there will also be fewer of those postseason workouts and more meaningful practices the longer they keep winning.

"The more games you can play, the more high-intensity practices you can have, the better you get," Lappe said.

Seabrook said everyone will have to pick up their scoring next season in Spears` absence, giving the Buffs a more well-rounded look offensively.

Leadership, too, will be somewhat of a group effort, not unlike this season when Spears is sort of the leader by example while Blythe is often the coach's voice on the floor.

As the only senior next year, Seabrook said she knows a lot will be expected of her in that department but is confident she won't be alone.

"I'm obviously going to need (someone) on the floor to help me out, and I can see that in Chucky and Meagan also," Seabrook said.

Of course, all of those things will work themselves out as the returning Buffs keep developing. And while the current seniors can help speed that process by racking up WNIT wins, the younger players' primary focus right now is helping Spears, Blythe and Dale extend their careers one game at a time.

"They all mean so much to us on the court and off the court," Malcolm-Peck said. "So I think right now it's just helping them keep playing and doing whatever we can for them."

[Close Window](#)[Send To Printer](#)

## Wyoming hosts Colorado in WNIT 3rd round game

BOB MOEN, Associated Press

Updated 06:31 p.m., Wednesday, March 23, 2011

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) — Wyoming gets another home game in the Women's National Invitation Tournament when the Cowgirls host Colorado, but other than the crowd, the Cowgirls won't have as much of a homecourt advantage as they normally enjoy.

The Cowgirls (24-8) host Colorado (17-15) in the third round of the WNIT at 7 p.m. Thursday in Laramie.

Boulder, Colo., is about 110 miles from Laramie.

"We're happy only to be traveling two hours," Colorado coach Linda Lappe said. "It's always nice when you have a road trip that's within driving range."

Besides the relatively short commute for the Buffaloes, Wyoming coach Joe Legerski said Wednesday that the Cowgirls lose another key home court advantage.

"Playing at Wyoming, the altitude becomes a situation that affects teams, and with Colorado it's not the same scenario," Legerski said.

The Arena-Auditorium on the UW campus sits at about 7,220 feet elevation, while Boulder is about 5,430 feet.

The two teams used to play regularly but haven't met since 2007.

Colorado is led by 6-foot-1 senior forward Brittany Spears, who is averaging 18.5 points and 8.2 rebounds a game.

Legerski said Spears presents a "very difficult matchup" for his team because of her ability to shoot and handle the ball.

Sophomore Chucky Jeffery, who comes off the bench most games, averages 13.5 points and 8.2 rebounds.

"I like to have firepower off the bench and I think she definitely gives us that," Lappe said.

Wyoming is led by 5-11 senior guard Aubrey Vandiver's 19.1 points and 9.2 rebounds a game, followed by 6-3 senior forward Hillary Carlson's 17 points and 7.1 rebounds.

Wyoming's motion offense isn't something Colorado has seen much of this season, Lappe said.

"They don't beat themselves," she said "They wait until you make a mistake, and when you make a mistake that's when they try to go in for the kill."

Legerski said the motion offense requires a team effort and he was pleased by the scoring balance in the win against Oklahoma State on Monday night.

"That's very important for us to get more people involved rather than just Aubrey and Hillary," he said.

|   |  |
|---|--|
|  <p>Building Strength<br/>from the Ground Up!</p> | <p><b>Personal Trainers:</b><br/>Bring Your Clients<br/>To Our State of The<br/>Art Facility</p> |
| <p><b>Opening in March</b><br/>New Sports Performance<br/>Center and Fitness Facility</p>   |  |
| <p><b>50% Off</b><br/>Your Fitness Evaluation</p>   |  |
| <p>Rick Stebbins Performance Therapy<br/>203-992-1220<br/>323 Railroad Ave, Greenwich, CT</p>                                       |  |

**Physical  
Therapy &  
Sports Medicine**

GETTING  
STEBBINS  
**OS  
PT**  
PHYSICAL  
THERAPY

**in Association  
with OSPT**  
all major  
insurances  
accepted

## Sports

### Buff's back in the Double-A

By **SCOTT NULPH** /  
[snulph@wyoSports.net](mailto:snulph@wyoSports.net)

Published:  
 Mar 23, 2011

Print Page

The University of Wyoming women's basketball team's Big 12 tour continues on Thursday, thanks to the Women's National Invitation Tournament.

And you also can thank the WNIT for renewing an old rivalry.

The Cowgirls (24-8) will host Colorado (17-15) at 7 p.m. Thursday in a third-round game at the Arena-Auditorium.

Starting with the 2006 WNIT, the Cowgirls have hosted Big 12 teams Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas State, Texas Tech and Oklahoma State. The only loss came to Nebraska in 2006.

UW and Colorado have played 44 times overall, with CU holding a 33-11 advantage.



The Cowgirls celebrate their victory Monday over Oklahoma State University at the Arena-Auditorium. The win extends the Cowgirls season and gives Aubrey Vandiver, second from left, a chance to break the Cowgirls single-season scoring record. Michael Smith/WyoSports photographer

The nonconference rivals — separated by 120 miles — had played regularly throughout the years, including 13 straight times from 1994 to 2007. But the series abruptly ended prior to the 2008-09 season.

Colorado, which will leave the Big 12 to play in the Pac-12 next season, won the last meeting between the teams, a 69-55 victory in Boulder, Colo., in 2007. That was under former coach Kathy McConnell-Miller.

CU is now led by first-year coach Linda Lappe, who played for CU and played in the UW-Colorado series.

Lappe sounded excited about the meeting following Colorado's 81-65 win over defending WNIT champion California Monday in Boulder.

Lappe called UW "a great women's basketball environment. Their fans are going to come out."

The winner of Thursday's game advances to a quarterfinal match against the winner of the BYU-USC game, which will be played tonight in Provo, Utah. The WNIT quarterfinals are set for March 26-28.

With so much recent Big 12 history, UW coach Joe Legerski said after Monday's 75-71 win over OSU that he has a good idea of the team CU will bring in to Laramie.

"They're from the Big 12," he said. "They'll be physical, they'll be competitive, probably have better quickness than we do. If you're still playing this time of year, you're a good basketball team and you're used to winning."

#### Scoring milestone

UW senior Aubrey Vandiver's 27 point, 10 rebound performance against Oklahoma State not only propelled the Cowgirls to a win, but it also moved the Mountain West Conference Player of the Year closer to a statistic milestone.

Vandiver has now scored 610 points this season, four shy of UW's all-time record of 614, set by Amy Burnett during the 1994-95 season.

And Vandiver also has 295 boards, No. 3 all-time.

She set the single-season record with 323 rebounds last season. Michelle Hoppes is No. 2 with 298.

Fellow senior Hillary Carlson has 545 points after scoring 19 on Monday. That's seven points short of passing Christine Fairless for No. 5 all-time.

#### Even split

The Sweet 16 is now set for the WNIT, and it includes an even mix of teams from the so-called power and mid-major conferences.

Eight mid-majors (UW, BYU, Illinois State, Duquesne, Oral Roberts, Eastern Michigan, Toledo and Charlotte) remain as do eight teams from the six power leagues (Colorado, USC, Arkansas, Syracuse, Alabama, Boston College and Virginia).

In an interesting twist, only two of the eight matchups pit the two divisions against each other. Duquesne plays at Illinois State in the only mid-major matchup while BC plays at Virginia.

#### Free throws

Monday's crowd of 5,372 ranked No. 7 all-time for UW women's basketball. The top five crowds are also WNIT games. By contrast, Colorado drew 920 fans for its second-round game against California and BYU had 786 for its game against Utah State. ... UW's win total of 24 is tied for third all-time along with the 2007-08 team. The 1978-79 team, coached by Cowgirls radio analyst Margie McDonald, won 25. The record belongs to the 2006-07 team that won the WNIT with 27 victories.