

# CU Buffs basketball teams get kids pumped for season

## Campus hosts inaugural Basketball Tip-Off Festival

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Kids filled the concourse at the Coors Events Center on Sunday, getting tips from University of Colorado basketball players on how to shoot, dunk and dribble.

About 300 people turned out for CU's first Basketball Tip-Off Festival on Sunday. Players from both the men's and women's teams led skills games for the children, posed for pictures and signed autographs.

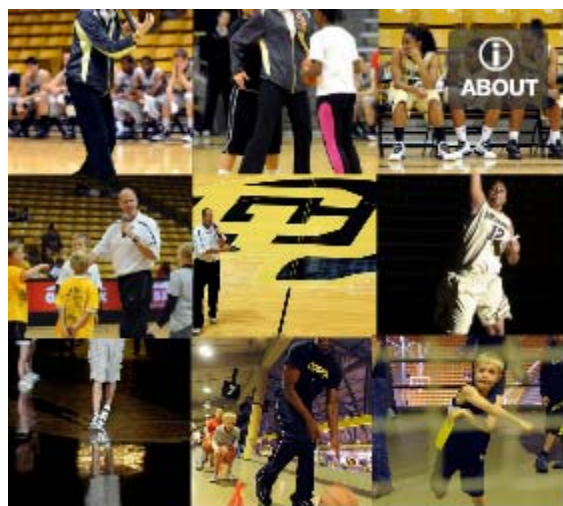
"It's just a good opportunity to give back to the kids and get more people to come to the games," said guard Ashley Wilson, a CU freshman on the women's team.

Organizers said the goal was a family-friendly way to get fans pumped for the new season. Along with T-shirts and autographs, everyone in attendance received a free ticket to Friday's double-header season opener, when the women's and men's teams both play.

"We wanted to get the kids out and get them to come back," said Kristen Sorensen, CU's athletics special events director.

Chip, the Buffs' mascot, put on an appearance on the court, while cheerleaders mingled. The CU band also played during the event.

After introducing CU's teams, men's coach Tad Boyle and women's coach Linda Lappe -- both new this season -- invited several children onto the court to try some moves.



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Then each player read three facts and asked audience members to guess which one was true. One of the men's players is the third 7-footer in CU history, for example, while a women's player wants to be a crime scene investigator.

"It's awesome to have all the fans come out and see all the support we're getting," said CU forward Meagan Malcolm-Peck.

Cooper Hinman, a 10-year-old from Erie, said basketball is his favorite sport. He also was one of the kids invited onto the court with the basketball coaches.

"Basketball is really fun -- and I'm really good at it," he said.

Brody Kuehl, 8, and sister Maddie, 7, said the highlight was meeting the players. Basketball fans with family CU season tickets, both said they also like to play.

"I like shooting and dribbling," Maddie said.

Malik Swift, a 12-year-old from Denver, said he wanted to learn more about CU basketball.

"I liked the shooting and the players and seeing the locker room," he said. "It's cool."

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