

# CU's Jeffery out to add consistency to her game

## Sophomore guard also working to improve defense, ball handling

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

Posted: 10/29/2010 11:47:51 PM MDT

Chucky Jeffery never let the hype get to her.

A highly-recruited guard out of Sierra High School in Colorado Springs, Jeffery faced sky-high expectations from the minute she first stepped on the floor for the Colorado women's basketball team as a freshman last year.

She met the buzz with the same bravado that made her one of the top prep players in the state, finishing among the top three in nearly every major statistical category for the Buffaloes. That doesn't mean there weren't still growing pains at times.

If there is one thing CU's new coaching staff is seeking for Jeffery to develop most this season, it's consistency. Head coach Linda Lappe mentions the word over and over when she talks about the type of player her young standout is and can be.

"Our point guards have to be the most consistent and just steadiest players that we have," Lappe said after practice Friday. "They can't be up and down. It doesn't matter what happens in the game."

The 5-foot-10 Jeffery -- who started 28 of 29 games she played in last season -- was third on the team in scoring at 9.3 points per game. She finished second in rebounds at 5.2 per game. And she was first in assists (3.3), second in steals (2.0) and third in both blocks and free-throw percentage.

But she knows there was room for improvement. Admittedly a little taken aback by the increased level of play when Big 12 competition rolled around last season, Jeffery had to get used to the intense defensive pressure she faced that sometimes led to forced shots and turnovers. Her 3.8 turnovers per game were also tops on the team.

Defense and improved ball handling have been Jeffery's biggest objectives in the offseason.

"We've got to take care of the ball and eliminate most of those turnovers that we had," Jeffery said.

Senior forward Brittany Spears, the team's leading scorer, said she's seen a lot of development between the player Jeffery was when she first joined the Buffs and the player she is now.

"She had a lot on her plate," Spears said. "She was a freshman point guard, so especially playing in the Big 12 that's a lot of pressure. It was a hard transition for her I think, but now she's getting it."

If the Buffs are to be successful this season and improve upon last year's 13-17 campaign, Jeffery's play will be crucial in keeping defenses honest and not allowing them to focus solely on Spears, who put up 17.7 points per game last year.

Sharpshooter Bianca Smith graduated after scoring 12.8 points per outing last season, and versatile guard Alyssa Fressle transferred to Boston College. And the Buffs will be inexperienced inside.

"I'm definitely ready to fill that spot and take some of the heat off of Spears so she gets a little leeway," said Jeffery, who will likely move between point guard and shooting guard duties as players such as senior Britney Blythe also see minutes at the point.

A slasher who is adept at getting to the hole as well as passing off to an open teammate or pulling up for the 15-foot jumper, Jeffery said coaches also have been pushing her to develop her outside shot. Three-point shooting might have been the only thing Jeffery wasn't among the team leaders in last season.

"I just wasn't used to it," she said. "But if I'm open I'll take it."

Lappe praises just about every aspect of Jeffery's game, saying she knows the game as well as anyone on the team and calling her a "dynamite defender." And while Spears is more of the quiet, lead-by-example type, Lappe is also hoping that with a year of maturity under her belt that the more animated Jeffery can also become the team's floor general.

And like everything else, Lappe is pushing for Jeffery to take on that role with consistency.

"When she does do it, it's a huge help to our team," Lappe said. "Her teammates listen, and our offense and our defense run a lot smoother. "The key is can we get her to do it all the time at a high level? That just takes time."

Close Window

Send To Printer