

Buff spikers hold off Jayhawks

Colorado gives up 2-0 lead, wins in five

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After Saturday night's match, several fans came up to second-year Colorado volleyball coach Liz Kritza and told her that a sweep would have been fine with them.

But it seems the Buffs prefer to give the paying customers their money's worth.

Fresh off a season-changing five-set victory over Kansas State, CU continued its key three-game homestand with a suspenseful 25-23, 25-23, 13-25, 22-25, 15-13 victory over Kansas at the Coors Events Center in front of 981 satisfied customers.

"What I like is this team has some heart and some fight in them," said Kritza, whose 2010 Buffs have already matched last year's Big 12 win total. "I like that we came out of a hole that was self-inflicted. ... (Kansas is) well coached and more experienced than us. And our players didn't back down."

The Buffs (5-5, 2-2) came out confident and broke a 23-23 tie in the first set with a kill by Rosie Steinhaus en route to the 1-0 lead.

CU led the second set 9-4, allowed KU to close to within 24-23, and seized a commanding 2-0 advantage entering the intermission on a kill by Kerra Schroeder.

"The first two games tonight it was like, 'Oh my goodness, we are playing out of our minds,'" freshman middle blocker Nikki Lindow said after a clutch 10-kill, five-block performance.

And then the Buffs lost their minds. Or at least their focus.

The Jayhawks (10-5, 1-3) dominated the third set from start to finish and pulled out the fourth set, which included eight lead changes and 17 ties.

KU also led 12-10 in the fifth set, and it looked like the young Buffs would have to learn another lesson from a gut-wrenching five-set collapse.

"At that point we just had to focus and let go a little bit," Schroeder said.

After a timeout and a deep breath, Schroeder started the decisive rally with a kill and gave the Buffs a 13-12 lead with an ace. Lindow buried the final kill of the match moments later.

"We keep swinging. We do not give up," Lindow said. "Now it's a fact of not being surprised that we can come back and beat them because we had done it against Kansas State. ..."

"The last kill felt amazing and the stress is gone now."

This is the first time CU has won back-to-back home games in Big 12 play since knocking Kansas and Texas A&M off consecutively in 2006.

The Aggies roll into Boulder next Wednesday.

"We`re going to come out with our heads held high and keep them held high the whole game," Lindow said. "The confidence is going to be there."

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