

Tough slate early preps Hempen`s Buffs for Big 12

Colorado looks to snap 2-game losing streak

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/08/2010 11:33:36 PM MDT

DENVER -- If the Buffs thought UNLV was tough, Bill Hempen has some news for them.

"The next team we play with four initials is UCLA," Colorado`s soccer coach said. "We`re either going to lose by eight or we`re going to compete."

Hempen believes this could be a very competitive CU team, and there is a list of reasons why.

Kym Lowry (two goals, three assists) has been involved in five of CU`s seven goals. Kate Russell is one of the best midfielders in the Big 12. Amy Barczuk and Kelly Butler should be all-conference honorees at the end of the season. The Buffs were dedicated to the offseason conditioning program and clearly have great chemistry on and off the pitch.

But after suffering two losses at the DU Invitational -- a last-minute heart-breaker to host Denver and a disappointing 4-2 loss to UNLV on Monday -- the Buffs clearly have some growing up to do.

CU freshman keeper Annie Brunner gave up two goals on three shots in the first half against the Rebels. And freshman forward Anne Stuller, a future scoring star, hasn`t found the back of the net yet.

"(UNLV) did a good job finishing, that`s the bottom line," Stuller said. "They finished their opportunities and we didn`t."

The good news: CU`s program is all about the end of the season, not the beginning. Per usual, Hempen has put together a daunting non-conference slate designed to prepare his team for the rigors of the Big 12.

The Buffs (2-2) return to action on Friday at Gonzaga. They will also play future Pac-12 foe Washington State in Spokane, Wash., on Sunday.

Purdue and UCLA will visit Boulder Sept. 17-19 for the CU Classic ahead of conference play.

"We have a tough weekend coming up and if we get two wins out at Gonzaga that will make a statement," Barczuk said. "We`re just going to have to pick it up, and I know we will. We`ll be fine."

UCLA (No. 9) was one of three Pac-10 teams ranked in the last national poll, along with No. 2 Stanford and No. 19 Cal. Washington State received votes.

"Bill does it for a reason, to get us prepared for the harder games in the Big 12," Barczuk said. "I think it`s the way to go. Instead of playing an easy non-conference schedule just to get your record better, we play tough teams that help our team get better.

"Maybe we don`t pull out the wins all the time, but we learn a lot as a team. I think we`ll progress a lot before conference play."

CU`s Big 12 schedule begins Sept. 24 at No. 7 Texas A&M.

Notable

The CU women`s golf team will compete at the Ptarmigan/Ram Fall Classic in Fort Collins beginning Monday. The men will participate in the State of Colorado Cup in Holyoke on Monday. ... Liz Kritza`s volleyball squad, which finished non-conference play 3-3, won`t return to the court until the Big 12 opener against Oklahoma on Sept. 15 at the Coors Events Center.

Close Window

Send To Printer

- [News](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Opinion](#)
- [Speak Out!](#)
- [Multimedia](#)

- [Subscribe](#)

Turn around in Washington

Women's soccer looks to change fortunes at Gonzaga Tournament

By Mark McNeillie on September 9, 2010

[Share](#)

At women's soccer practice this week at Prentup Field, there was an air of disappointment.

2

tweets

After a disappointing showing at the DU invitational, the Colorado women's soccer team set their sights on a chance to change their fortune at the Gonzaga University Tournament.

retweet

"I'd like to not lose," said CU women's soccer head coach Bill Hempen. "If we win one, great, if we win two, that would be fantastic."

After starting out their season 2-0, Colorado has slumped to 2-2 after losing to Denver University and UNLV.

The entire team recognizes that defensive struggles were the main reason they have been losing.

"We need to start talking and communicating with each other," said senior defender Kelly Ross. "One (player) goes one way, and one goes the other way. And when we defend like that we get scrambled."

The Buffs gave up six goals in two games in their most recent tournament.

Coach Hempen was the first to take blame for their defensive falter.

"In the second half, we played with three (defenders)," he said after the 4-2 UNLV defeat. "I probably won't do that again. Even though we gained a lot of pressure, we gave up a lot of counter-attacking opportunities for them."

The defensive miscues could also be blamed on the fact that senior Kelly Ross is the only upper-classman defender. Some of the younger CU players admit they are not quite comfortable yet with Hempen's defense yet.

"We haven't really gotten used to (CU defense) yet," said freshman midfielder Hayley Hughes. "Hopefully we'll figure it all out, and be as strong as we were in the beginning."

The Buffs will travel to Spokane, Wash. this weekend, where they look to get back to their winning ways.

"We need to be more aggressive," Ross said. "We need to go out there and hit somebody, and not get shoved off the ball."

The defense will be looking to Ross' experience to help them back to form.

"She can tell you where to go and help you out," Hughes said. "When you're doing bad, she tells you when you're wrong. But (it) helps get (us) motivated to win the next ball."

Traveling to this tournament means higher quality opposition, including soon-to-be Pac-10 opponent Washington State.

Hughes said, however, it is not the opposition they have to worry about.

"We all realize that we didn't play to our ability," she said. "As long as we get back to our potential, I think we can't be stopped."

The Gonzaga University Tournament starts Friday when the Buffs take on the host Gonzaga Bulldogs at 5 p.m. They will play Washington State at 11 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 12.

Contact CU Independent Staff Writer Mark McNeillie at Mark.mcneillie@colorado.edu.

Posted in [Front Page](#), [Sports](#) | Tagged [CU women's soccer](#), [Gonzaga](#), [Gonzaga University Tournament](#), [Pac-10](#), [Washington State](#)

Copyright © 2010 CU Independent