

Women's basketball: CU Buffs face monumental task vs. No. 2 Stanford Cardinal

Linda Lappe encouraged by Colorado's perseverance this season

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:02/22/2012 06:29:22 PM MST

CU women's basketball preview

THURSDAY: The Colorado Buffaloes (16-9, 5-9) visit No. 2-ranked Stanford Cardinal (24-1, 15-0) in an 8 p.m. game at Maples Pavilion in Stanford, Calif.

BROADCAST: Radio - KVCU 1190 AM, with Mike Rice doing play-by-play.

STORYLINES: CU is looking to snap a two-game losing streak. ... Stanford head coach Tara VanDerveer has 699 wins at Stanford. ... CU is 3-4 in conference road games this season. ... Stanford clinched its 12th straight conference title on Saturday at Oregon. ... CU freshman Lexy Kresl has averaged 9.2 points in her last six games, drilling 13 3-pointers in the process. ... Another freshman, Jasmine Sborov, has posted 7.0 points and 5.7 rebounds in 23.7 minutes per game the past three contests. ... Both teams rank among the top defenses in the conference. Stanford is third, allowing 55.5 points per game; CU is fourth, averaging 58.4. ... Stanford has had an average margin of victory of plus-22.8, by far the best in the Pac-12. ... Taylor Greenfield of the Cardinal leads the Pac-12 in 3-point field goal percentage (.389). ... Stanford point guard Toni Kokenis has a ratio of 2.71 assists to every turnover (95 assists, 35 turnovers). No other player in the conference is better than 1.68. ... Stanford is the only

There was a bit of a *Hoosiers* feel to this week as the Colorado women's basketball team prepared for its next game.

Thursday night, the Buffaloes (16-9, 5-9), 10th place in the Pac-12 Conference, visit Stanford (24-1, 15-0), first place in the conference and ranked No. 2 in the country.

Stanford has won 21 in a row since its only loss, at No. 3 Connecticut. The Cardinal have already clinched the Pac-12 title -- their 21st since 1985. They've won a school-record 76 straight games at home -- the longest active streak in the country. They've won 72 straight games against conference foes.

This is a daunting task unlike any other this CU group has faced, but the Buffs are taking a can-do attitude into Maples Pavilion.

"Everybody laces their shoes up the same way," CU junior guard Chucky Jeffery said.

Said head coach Linda Lappe: "You roll the ball out for reason. If the game was already decided, then you wouldn't play."

The Buffaloes, who are 3-8 in their past 11 games, including an 80-54 loss at home to Stanford on Jan. 14, are certainly aware of what's ahead of them. This is just the third time in school history the Buffs have faced one of the country's top two teams on the road, and the first time since visiting No. 1 Tennessee on Dec. 20, 1993 (CU was ranked No. 7 at the time and lost 86-82 in overtime). They also lost at No. 2 Louisiana Tech on Jan. 6, 1988.

As for Stanford, Chiney Ogwumike is averaging 15.9 points and 10.2 rebounds per game -- and she's not even the best player in her family. Her older sister, Nnemkadi Ogwumike, is a national player of the year candidate averaging 21.9 points and 10.7 rebounds. Stanford's point guard, Toni Kokenis, is an elite player posting 10.0 points and 3.8 assists per game.

As a team, the Cardinal lead the conference in scoring, field-goal percentage and free-throw percentage and rank among the top three in most defensive and rebounding categories.

"We're just going in with the mentality, that, yes we're going to have to play a very, very good game, we're going to have to be solid offensively and defensively," Lappe said. "But, I think we're ready for that. It'll be fun and we just want to get out there and compete hard.

"If you're not excited about that game, then you're not a competitor and you're in the wrong place."

team in the Pac-12 that has had better home attendance than CU. The Cardinal have averaged 4,358 fans per home contest (CU has averaged 2,857). ... Stanford is 455-82 all-time at Maples Pavilion.

KEY STAT: Chucky Jeffery, CU's top scorer, had a season-low two points in the first meeting with Stanford. "I'm just focusing on being aggressive, staying within myself and not doing too much," she said of Thursday's game.

COACHES: Linda Lappe is 34-25 in her second season at CU and 84-61 overall. Tara VanDerveer is 699-148 in her 26th season at Stanford and 850-199 overall.

PROBABLE STARTERS:

Colorado - G Chucky Jeffery, 5-10, Jr., 15.2 ppg, 7.0 rpg, 4.0 apg; G Brittany Wilson, 5-7, So., 8.9 ppg, 2.9 rpg, 2.1 apg; G/F Meagan Malcolm-Peck, 6-2, Jr., 4.2 ppg, 4.3 rpg; F Jen Reese, 6-2, Fr., 8.0 ppg, 6.3 rpg; F Julie Seabrook, 6-3, Sr., 7.6 ppg, 5.2 rpg. **Stanford** - G Toni Kokenis, 5-11, So., 10.0 ppg, 2.8 rpg, 3.8 apg; g Amber Orrange, 5-7, Fr., 3.0 ppg, 2.4 rpg, 2.8 apg; F Chiney Ogwumike, 6-3, So., 15.9 ppg, 10.2 rpg; F Nnemkadi Ogwumike, 6-2, Sr., 21.9 ppg, 10.7 rpg; F Joslyn Tinkle, 6-3, Jr., 8.2 ppg, 5.5 rpg.

SERIES: Stanford leads 6-4, including an 80-54 win in Boulder on Jan. 14. The Buffs are 0-4 on the road in the series.

UP NEXT: CU stays in the Bay Area to take on Cal on Saturday.

Lappe has been encouraged this week by the fact that her team has not been discouraged. CU has let several conference games slip from its grasp, most recently Saturday against Utah. Yet, the Buffs continue to show up every day eager to play.

"We're persistent," Lappe said. "We have high character players who don't give up easily. We could be dejected this week, but we're not and that's the sign of a team that knows how to persevere. I feel like we've persevered a lot this season. We've been down in games and come back and won, we had a great non-conference season and a lot of that was our perseverance."

No reason to stop that now, not with four regular season games, the Pac-12 tournament and, quite possibly, a postseason tournament to look forward to.

"We just need to continue to get better," Jeffery said. "That's one of the most important things."

Getting a win is the first goal, but even with a loss, the Buffs have an opportunity to come out of Thursday night as a better team.

"If we come out and we believe and we come out with that energy, that high focus, it'll be a great competition," Jeffery said. "If we walk away with a loss, we want to be, at the end of the day, able to say that we gave everything in that game."

CU women's basketball schedule

Nov. 6 - [CU 78, Regis 40, exhibition](#)

Nov. 11 - [CU 84, Northern Arizona 60](#)

Nov. 16 - [CU 71, Texas A&M 58](#)

Nov. 20 - [CU 72, CSU 53](#)

Nov. 25 - [CU 60, Valparaiso 32](#)

Nov. 26 - [CU 58, Wisconsin 48](#)

Nov. 30 - [CU 84, San Francisco 66](#)

Dec. 4 - [CU 68, Idaho 59](#)

Dec. 8 - [CU 71, Denver 36](#)

Dec. 17 - [CU 77, Weber State 59](#)

Dec. 20 - [CU 67, Texas-Pan American 49](#)

Dec. 21 - [CU 52, Creighton 49](#)

Dec. 31 - [CU 58, Utah 52](#)

Jan. 5 - [Washington 75, CU 67](#)

Jan. 7 - [CU 57, Washington State 56](#)

Jan. 12 - [California 68, CU 55](#)

Jan. 14 - [Stanford 80, CU 54](#)

Jan. 19 - [Arizona 64, CU 43](#)

Jan. 22 - [CU 56, Arizona 54](#)

Jan. 26 - [CU 69, USC 67](#)

Jan. 29 - [UCLA 62, CU 54](#)

Feb. 2 - [Oregon State 65, CU 45](#)

Feb. 4 - [Oregon 67, CU 62](#)

Feb. 9 - [CU 69, Arizona 59](#)

Feb. 11 - [Arizona State 60, CU 47](#)

Feb. 18 - [Utah 61, CU 56, OT](#)

Feb. 23 - CU at Stanford, 8 p.m.

Feb. 25 - CU at California, 3 p.m.

Mar. 1 - Oregon at CU, 6:30 p.m.

Mar. 3 - Oregon State at CU, 4 p.m.

Close Window

Send To Printer