

Lappe's second recruiting class ranked 20th in nation

Bufs secure two top-100 players, point guard

By Brian Howell Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

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Linda Lappe remembers when the Colorado women's basketball team was one of the best in the country, and she'd like to see the Buffs get there again.

They may have taken a big step in that direction Wednesday with a recruiting class that ranks 20th in the nation by [ESPN.com's HoopGurlz](#) and includes two players ranked in the top 100. Stanford, at No. 15, is the only Pac-12 school with a class rated higher than CU's.

Lauren Huggins (ranked No. 63, from Littleton's Heritage High School), Jamee Swan (ranked No. 38, from Tucson, Ariz.) and Kyleesha Weston (Kansas City, Mo.) will become Buffs next fall.

"I am happy that they really saw our vision and they saw where we're headed," said Lappe, who will open her second year as CU's head coach on Friday. "It's not necessarily where we've been, but it's where we're going."

In the past seven seasons, the Buffs have been in the rankings just once -- for a four-week stretch early in the 2007-08 season -- but were regulars in the rankings from the late 1980s through early 2000s.

"We're going to build on our old-time tradition, and I think that's the other part (the recruits) really liked," Lappe said. "It's not like we've never been good, we just haven't been good in the past few years. To be able to restore that tradition ... they wanted to be a part of that and wanted to really help get that back."

In that regard, the 6-foot-1 Huggins was a huge signee for the Buffs. The top-rated player in Colorado, she is considered the 11th-best small forward in the country. She scored 12 points and snagged about eight rebounds per game last season for the Eagles.

"I remember as I was growing up a lot of good players leaving the state to play," Huggins said in a press release. "For me to stay here, maybe it will inspire some others to do the same, and help bring it back to the way it used to be ... that Colorado way."

Lappe said Huggins was an essential piece to this class.

"We needed a Colorado kid that we knew could come here that was the best Colorado kid in her class and she could contribute right away," Lappe said. "If kids from the state of Colorado sign with us, they want to know that there is a chance to play and that their parents can see them play. If she has success here, I think other Colorado kids will follow."

"She was the key to this class because she helped us get the other two, quite frankly."

Swan is the top-ranked player in Arizona and the No. 8 forward in the country. A 6-foot-2 star from Marana High School, Swan averaged 19.6 points, 13.4 rebounds and 4.1 blocks as a junior and will be a good complement to current freshman Jen Reese, Lappe said, because both players can go inside-outside.

The 5-foot-7 Weston gives the Buffs a true point guard they have coveted. At Park Hill High School, she averaged 15.4

points, 4.5 rebounds, 4.5 steals and 2.5 assists as a junior.

"We finally got a true point guard," Lappe said. "That was the only position that we tried to get last year that we couldn't get."

Lappe said this class fits extremely well with last year's class and the entire team, in general.

"They all bring something completely different and they all complement each other really well and they all complement our team really well," Lappe said. "In recruiting, that's a huge part of what you're doing. You can't just recruit random players that don't really have a purpose and all three of our (recruits) have purpose and we can see them coming in and helping and contributing right away."

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Brian Howell: Buffs Blog

Exciting day for CU volleyball, women's basketball

Posted on [November 9, 2011](#) by [howell](#)

Today, the Colorado volleyball and women's basketball teams announced recruiting classes that include highly touted prep players.

The women's basketball team has a class that ranks 20th nationally by ESPN. It's highlighted by the top player in Colorado (Lauren Huggins of Heritage) and the top player in Arizona (Jamee Swan of Marana High School in Tucson), as well as a true point guard (Kyleesha Weston from Park Hill High in Kansas City, Mo.).

Coach Linda Lappe and the Buffs have yet to play a game in the Pac-12, but this class shows they can compete with their conference rivals in recruiting. To land the top player in Arizona was huge. Stanford, a perennial top team nationally, was the only Pac-12 team to land a better class (No. 15).

Liz Kritza's volleyball team has a long way to go to match their Pac-12 foes (CU has an 0-17 conference record), but took a good step in that direction today with a recruiting class that includes two highly respected preps (Alexis Austin of Houston, Texas, and Nicole Edelman from Fairview High in Boulder) and a stellar defensive specialists from Hawaii (Chelsey Keoho).

Time will tell if these recruiting classes pan out, but for now the staffs of both teams ought to be praised for a job well done.

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CU Buffs sign highly ranked class of basketball recruits

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 11/10/2011 01:00:00 AM MST

BOULDER — Call them the "Tad Five."

Second-year Colorado men's basketball coach Tad Boyle pulled off what some are calling a "historic" recruiting class for the program Wednesday, landing five athletically gifted players topped by two national top-100 prospects: 6-foot-9 Josh Scott of Lewis-Palmer High School near Colorado Springs and 6-6 Xavier Johnson of Mater Dei High School, a traditional hoops power in Orange County, Calif.

Scott is ranked No. 46 nationally by ESPN and No. 65 by [Rivals.com](#), making him perhaps the most highly regarded high school boys basketball player in this state since Chauncey Billups.

"When I go up there (to Boulder), I feel very welcomed; I feel kind

of like a star," Scott told the Colorado Springs Gazette on Wednesday. "I know that I'm probably going to be expected from a lot of people to perform at a high level, but I'm ready for it."

Johnson rates No. 83 by Rivals and No. 86 by ESPN. Colorado sports information director David Plati, who has followed Buffaloes recruiting since he arrived as a student more than three decades

ago, said he couldn't recall another class of CU men's basketball signees with two national top-100 players.

"I am proud of that," said Boyle, when told of the historic nature of the class. "Our coaches worked hard. Recruiting is like building relationships. I believe that Colorado can be special, that this is a special place.

"That is the attitude we have. It doesn't matter what living room we go into, doesn't matter who else is recruiting the kid, why wouldn't you want to come play basketball at Colorado?"

This Buffs class also is notable for including three in-state players. Scott is joined by 6-8 Wesley Gordon, a springy power forward from Colorado Springs Sierra and 6-1 point guard Xavier Talton, who led Sterling High School to the Class 4A state title championship last March at CU's Coors Events Center.

Colorado

also signed 6-7 Chris Jenkins, a versatile player from University of Detroit Jesuit High School whom Boyle considers, like Talton, to be underrated nationally but to have the skill set to become a terrific player.



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All Things CU Buffs blog



The Denver Post's sports reporters contribute analysis, notes and minutiae on this blog dedicated to CU athletics.

Boyle cautioned that the fivesome hasn't proven anything yet on the college level. But he hopes the class will help build a foundation for the program that will enable the Buffs to compete successfully in the Pac-12 Conference.

Frontcourt players are hard to get, and Boyle said he believes Scott and Gordon, who are friends, will give the Buffs an inside presence that the program can build around.

"Josh will be as good as he wants to be," Boyle said.

What makes Scott particularly effective in the paint is that he is ambidextrous, Boyle said.

"When you watch video, you think he's left-handed," Boyle said of Scott, a natural right-hander. "From 8 feet in, he can finish with his right or his left. That's huge. (Opponents) get thrown off."

Gordon "has tremendous size, tremendous skill, tremendous athleticism," Boyle said. "When you've got two big guys in your state and they're skilled, you've got to get them. Those guys were must-gets for us. We can't let get guys slip out of this state."

The bouncy Johnson, ranked the nation's 17th-best small forward by Rivals.com, also received offers from the likes of UCLA, Southern

California, Arizona State and LSU.

Video highlights of Johnson showed to a crowd of CU officials and boosters Wednesday featured a variety of reverse dunks and finger rolls. "He does things you can't coach," Boyle said.

The signing of Talton came as a surprise to some on Wednesday. Boyle said he had planned all along to sign the Sterling standout but asked Talton to remain mum about his recruiting situation so it would not affect Boyle's pursuit of other players. That included 6-4 point guard Tyrone Wallace of Bakersfield, Calif., who picked California over the Buffs on Monday.

"We would have signed six," Boyle said.

CU women sign three. Boyle wasn't the only Buffs coach to add a pair of top-100 prospects. Buffs women's coach Linda Lappe landed 6-foot-1 Lauren Huggins of Heritage

and 6-2 Jamee Swan of Marana (Ariz.) High School near Tucson. Swan is ranked the nation's 38th best player by ESPN. Huggins is No. 63.

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Lauren Huggins, Heritage High School during "The Show", the Colorado High School All-Star girls game at Pepsi Center Saturday afternoon. April 9th 2011. (Andy Cross, The Denver Post)

"Jamee gives us a post presence in this class," Lappe said. "She's very athletic, has a lot of passion, a lot of fire."

Lappe, who previously coached at Metro State, said she first saw Huggins play as a seventh-grader. "Lauren is one of the best shooters our staff saw all summer," the coach said.

CU also signed 5-7 point guard Kylesha Weston of Kansas City, Mo.

Footnote. Boyle said 6-7 freshman forward Damienne Cain is back as a member of the team but will not play in Friday's season opener against Fort Lewis or in an upcoming tournament in Puerto Rico. Cain, regarded as a national top-150 prospect out of Harvard Westlake High School in North Hollywood, Calif., announced on Sept. 11 that he had quit basketball to concentrate on academics. Cain asked to return to the team late last month.

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CU men's basketball signings

Wesley Gordon, 6-8, forward, Colorado Springs Sierra HS

Averaged almost 21 points as a junior last season after helping Sierra defeat Pueblo East in the Coors Events Center for the 4A state title. Rated the nation's 23rd-best power forward prospect by Scout.com.

Chris Jenkins, 6-7, forward, University of Detroit Jesuit HS

Averaged 17 points and almost eight rebounds per game last season as a junior and is known for his versatility. Shot 40 percent from 3-point range as a junior and 81 percent from the foul line.

Xavier Johnson, 6-6 forward, Mater Dei HS, Santa Ana, Calif.

National four-star, top-100 prospect, ranked No. 83 by Rivals.com and No. 86 by ESPN. Leaper who can fill a highlight reel with an assortment of reverse dunks and finger rolls.

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Josh Scott, 6-9, power forward, Lewis-Palmer HS

National, four-star blue-chipper ranked No. 46 nationally for all positions by [ESPN.com](#) and is No. 65 on [Rivals.com](#)'s list. Averaged 24 points and 10 rebounds last season as a junior then jumped up national rankings with a tremendous summer.

Xavier Talton, 6-1 point guard, Sterling HS

Named Class 4A player of the year last spring as a junior after leading Sterling to 27 victories and the state championship. Averaged 21.3 points in Sterling's final three playoff games and was named tournament MVP.

Tom Kensler, The Denver Post

Related news

CU women's basketball signings

Lauren Huggins, 6-foot-1 wing forward, Heritage HS

National top-100 player ranked No. 63 nationally by ESPN HoopGurlz, which also has her at No. 11 among small forwards. Rated the No. 1 senior girls basketball player in Colorado, Huggins averaged 12 points and almost eight rebounds as a junior.

Jamee Swan, 6-2 forward, Marana (Ariz.) High School

National top-100 blue-chipper, Swan is ranked No. 38 for all positions by ESPN's HoopGurlz. Ranked No. 8 among the nation's forward prospects by HoopGurlz, Swan averaged 19.6 points, 13.4 rebounds and 4.1 blocked shots as a junior.

Kyleesha Weston, 5-7 point guard, Park Hill HS, K.C., Mo.

Fills a need because last year's CU recruiting class did not have a point guard. As a junior, Weston averaged 15.4 points, 4.5 rebounds, 4.5 steals and 2.5 assists.

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NOVEMBER 10, 2011, 9:45 AM

Three CU women's hoops recruits include top-100 players

By **TOM KENSLE** |  2 Comments

The CU women's basketball team added three players to their roster for 2012. Here's a closer look:

LAUREN HUGGINS, 6-1 wing forward, Heritage HS

National top-100 player ranked No. 63 nationally by ESPN HoopGurlz, which also has her at No. 11 among small forwards. Rated the No. 1 senior girls basketball player in Colorado, Huggins averaged 12 points and almost eight rebounds as a junior. Guided Heritage to the Class 5A Sweet 16. CU coaches believe she is one of the nation's top jump shooters with range beyond the NBA 3-point line. CU coaches like the way she steps up her game against top competition.

JAMEE SWAN, 6-2 forward, Marana (Ariz.) High School (near Tucson)

National top-100 blue-chipper, Swan is ranked No. 38 for all positions by ESPN's HoopGurlz. The top-rated high school senior girls basketball player in Arizona, Swan has the strength to finish in the paint and is called a "dynamic rebounder" by CU coach Linda Lappe. Ranked No. 8 among the nation's forward prospects by HoopGurlz, Swan averaged 19.6 points, 13.4 rebounds and 4.1 blocked shots as a junior.

KYLEESHA WESTON, 5-7 point guard, Park Hill HS, Kansas City, Mo.

Fills a need because last year's CU recruiting class did not have a point guard. As a junior, Weston averaged 15.4 points, 4.5 rebounds, 4.5 steals and 2.5 assists. Athleticism enables her to play bigger than her listed height. CU coaches call her the "ultimate team player." Said she "was speechless" when seeing the CU campus for the first time on her recruiting visit.

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<http://blogs.denverpost.com/colleges/2011/11/10/three-cu-womens-hoops-recruits-include-top-100-players/22060/>

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