

Lappe's Buffs to focus on details

Colorado faces Regis in exhibition today

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Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 11/06/2011 12:19:23 AM MDT

The results don't start counting until Friday for the Colorado women's basketball team.

But to be clear, second-year coach Linda Lappe will be keeping score today when the Buffaloes host the Regis Rangers in a 2 p.m. exhibition game at the Coors Events Center. And not just in the points column, where CU is expected to easily triumph over its Division-II foe.

Too many turnovers, too many offensive rebounds allowed, too many opponents' shots in transition are the major things she disliked in a closed-door scrimmage against Northern Colorado over a week ago.

"Those are all things that we can control, and we don't have to be in midseason form to control those things," Lappe said after practice Saturday. "So those are the things we want to be good at (today) are the things that we should be at this point."

Today's game offers the first look at Lappe's second squad at the school where she once played.

Points of emphasis aside, Lappe said Buffs fans can expect to see a group of returning players who have improved in the offseason and a freshmen class that has the potential to contribute right away.

Players said there won't be too many surprises. Defense is still the main focus for the Buffs.

The biggest change might be that the offense won't run so much through one player as it did last season with CU all-time leading scorer Brittany Spears in the lineup. The Buffs' motion offense figures to coax scoring from a variety of players.

"It gives us a lot of different looks," said junior point guard Chucky Jeffery, the Buffs' top returning scorer. "We have a lot of different options out of our offense. I think that's good for the team we have. We've got a lot of drivers, a lot of shooters, post players. We're very dynamic."

Lappe said she'll start senior forward Julie Seabrook and juniors Jeffery and Meagan Malcolm-Peck -- all of whom started much of last season. Sophomores Rachel Hargis at center and Ashley Wilson will also take the floor for the opening tip.

At 6-foot-4, it seemed only a matter of time before Hargis would crack the lineup. Wilson -- whose twin Brittany started 21 games as a freshman -- is a bit more of a surprise after averaging just 11.9 minutes per game last season.

"Ashley is a hard worker," Lappe said. "That kid is tough. She hasn't had one bad practice yet. That's what coaching staffs like to see, and we like to reward those sorts of things."

While a victory is clearly the top objective, the players echoed their coach's sentiments about trying to use the game to improve on the details of their play.

"I think we just want to continue to get better and build what we've done so far in our preseason," Seabrook said.

Injury update

The Buffs will be without sophomore Brenna Malcolm-Peck and promising freshman Arielle Roberson today due to injuries.

Malcolm-Peck missed all of last season with a knee injury but is expected to return this season. She suffered a concussion recently, though, and has missed the last few practices.

Roberson is still dealing with a back injury that doctors and training staff are still trying to pinpoint. Lappe said Roberson would miss the first couple of games.

Stepping back

A trio of rules changes will take effect this season, most notably that the 3-point arc is moving back a foot -- from 19 feet, 9 inches to 20-9 -- to match the men's game.

"We're getting much more comfortable out there," Lappe said. "I think you'll see our foot on the line a few times. We're not consistently there yet. But it's become more ingrained in our players, the spacing to clear that new 3-point line."

Under the hoop, there is a new restricted arc, like in the NBA. Defensive players must be outside the arc to draw a charge.

The last rule tweak concerns officials putting the ball in play after the second horn of a timeout whether either or both teams are ready or not. Teams will get one warning.

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