

CU Buffs' Julie Seabrook confident she'll contribute

Bufs senior gained valuable experience with Team Canada

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Julie Seabrook stops short of saying she was in a rut during her freshman and sophomore seasons on the Colorado Buffaloes basketball team.

But she admits it was tough developing, and even focusing at times, as she mostly watched from the bench during games.

It's why the Buffs' forward said she spent much of her junior season getting her bearings on the court even though she started every game for a new coaching staff.

"I was still trying to learn the ropes a little bit," Seabrook said this week.

Now the lone senior on the team, Seabrook feels ready to be not only a leader for her team but a major offensive contributor as well after a successful summer stint with Team Canada at the World University Games in China.

The 6-foot-3 Seabrook, from North Vancouver, B.C., started five of six games for the Canadians as they took sixth in the 15-team field. She averaged just 4.2 points, but felt the experience was a major offensive boost nonetheless heading into this winter.

"I felt like I really contributed," Seabrook said. "It helped me for this year. I'm definitely going to be more of a scorer this year and offensive threat. That's one of the roles I want to step into."

Seabrook averaged 5.3 points and 5.4 rebounds last season for the Buffs, good for fifth and third on the team,

respectively. More of a power forward, Seabrook was needed by the Buffs to play post much of the time because of a nine-player roster that was light on interior players.

But she managed to expand her game late in the season last year, making plays during crunch-time in key road victories against Missouri and Nebraska and in the WNIT. She hit 11 of 27 3-pointers (40.7 percent) as first-year coach Linda Lappe and her staff freed her to roam the floor a bit more.

The style is one that Seabrook continued to build on with the Canadians, who ran a Princeton-style offense with all five players on the court cutting and handling the ball on the perimeter. Getting a better feel for when to drive and when to take the 15-footer from the elbow were among the aspects she felt she improved.

"Summer competition is tough to match," Lappe said. "She was playing against some really good players.

"As far as her own game I think she's feeling more confident. She knows we need her offensively this year."

With the graduation of Brittany Spears, it will take a team effort to make up for the scoring void left by CU's all-time leading scorer.

Seabrook plans to take part, but not just from the perimeter. The Buffs have added sophomore center Rachel Hargis and freshman forwards Jen Reese and Arielle Roberson the last two years. But they're still green inside.

And while Seabrook was a bit undersized as a post in the Big 12 Conference, she fits right in as the Buffs transition to the Pac-12 this season. She said she's added moves to her game in the post as well to try and become a player who can be effective inside or out.

"I think she's doing some really nice things on the block," Lappe said.

Seabrook acknowledges that the journey to becoming an impact player has taken longer than she expected it should have. But she's looking only forward now.

"I'm really excited to come into this year," she said. "Just that thought that you know you've put in all the hard work ... and you feel ready to play. I can't wait for the games to start."

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