

Lappe: CU Buffs ready for tougher slate

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

The Colorado women's basketball team will tackle one of its toughest non-league schedules in recent years this season.

A home date with potential top-10 Louisville and dates with regional rivals Colorado State, Denver and Wyoming highlight a schedule that should be appealing to fans and challenging to the Buffs.

The schedule, announced on Thursday, also includes non-conference home dates with Idaho, Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, Utah Valley, New Mexico and either Auburn or San Diego State (in the Omni Hotels Classic).

CU will travel to Missouri-Kansas City, Illinois and Denver for non-conference road games.

"We have our work cut out for us," CU head coach Linda Lappe said. "I think it's very appealing and I think there's a lot of teams that fans will want to come see us play against and see how we'll do.

"We'll get tested pretty early, so it's going to be good for our team, as well, to be able to get tested, figure out what we need to improve upon and figure out who we are as a team from the get-go."

Louisville could be a marquee matchup for the Buffs.

The Cardinals went 23-10 and advanced to the second round of the NCAA Tournament last season. Shortly after the 2011-12 season ended, ESPN.com ranked Louisville No. 11 in its early look at the 2012-13 season.

A year ago, the Buffs went 11-0 in non-conference play, but never came close to the top 25 rankings.

An 11-0 start this year would be much more impressive.

"We'll be a top-25 team if we're undefeated to start conference play, for sure," Lappe said. "It is much more difficult (than last year) and it is that way because I think our team is ready for that."

In addition to the more challenging non-conference schedule, the Buffs have a chance to get off to a great start in Pac-12 play.

Following three straight home games to end the non-conference slate, CU will play three straight Pac-12 games at home, against Stanford, California and Utah.

In fact, five of the first six Pac-12 games are at home, with the only trip being at Utah.

Some details of the Pac-12 schedule could still change when the Pac-12 Network broadcast schedule is announced in the fall, but it won't change the fact that CU has a good opportunity early in conference play.

One change in the Pac-12 schedule this year has most games being played on Fridays and Sundays. Last year, most were on Thursdays and Saturdays.

Overall, CU will have 17 home games and could face as many as 13 teams that played postseason hoops last season.

The Buffs have two BCS conference teams (Illinois and Louisville) on the non-conference schedule and could face a third (Auburn). CU played one BCS team in non-conference play a year ago.

Restructuring

Following the most successful year in program history, the Colorado women's golf team is trying to find out which

players can step up and lead the team after the departure of three of the Buffs' top golfers.

Seniors Emily Talley and Jess Wallace both graduated after leading CU to its first-ever NCAA championship appearance.

Then, sophomore Alex Stewart, who led the Buffs with a 73.54 stroke average, announced she is leaving the program. Stewart is likely to transfer closer to her family, which lives in Oklahoma.

Stewart, Talley and Wallace made up 60 percent of CU's NCAA qualifiers and all finished among the top four in stroke average on the team.

In addition to Stewart, Talley and Wallace, the Buffs lost several other players from last season. Jamie Befort, Taylor Doyle, Meaghan Kari and Cristina DeTomasi all graduated, while former Skyline High standout Gina Larson was dismissed from the team.

That's eight players in all that have departed from the 2011-12 squad.

So, who is left?

The Buffs return twin sisters Jenny and Kristin Coleman, who will be juniors. Both came on strong toward the end of the spring. In fact, Jenny finished third on the team with a 74.92 stroke average. (Kristin was fifth, at 77.04).

Senior Devin Dougherty has a handful of collegiate tournaments under her belt and will hope to contribute more this season. CU will also look for big things from true freshmen Megan Haase, Alexis Keating and Jamie Oleksiew.

Leaning on seniors

As CU soccer coach Danny Sanchez prepares for his first season with the Buffs, he is leaning on a particular group of players: his seniors.

"From Day 1, they've bought in and worked hard and developed good leadership qualities," he said.

Amy Barczuk, Erin Bricker, Quinn Krier, Shaye Marshall, Kayla Millar and Lauren Shaner are CU's seniors and they are determined to make this a good year.

"Senior leadership is huge and we're kind of starting to see that with our seniors," Marshall said.

Of course, leadership in the offseason is different from showing leadership during the season. Sanchez said that is when he'll learn the most about that group.

On sale

As of Thursday, tickets for CU's volleyball season are now on sale. Prices are as low as \$25 for the entire schedule of 15 home matches.

Visit CUBuffs.com or call 303-49-BUFFS for tickets.

CU women's basketball schedule

Fri., Nov. 2 -- WESTERN STATE (exhib.)

Sun., Nov. -- 11 IDAHO

Sun., Nov. -- 18 at Missouri-Kansas City

Fri., Nov. 23 -- TEXAS A&M-CORPUS CHRISTI#

Sat., Nov. 24 -- AUBURN OR SAN DIEGO STATE#

Wed., Nov. 28 -- WYOMING

Sat., Dec. 1 -- at Illinois

Wed., Dec. 5 -- COLORADO STATE

Tue., Dec. 11 -- at Denver

Fri., Dec. 14 -- LOUISVILLE

Sat., Dec. 22 -- UTAH VALLEY

Sat., Dec. 29 -- NEW MEXICO

Fri., Jan 4 -- STANFORD*

Sun., Jan. 6 -- CALIFORNIA*

Wed., Jan. 9 -- UTAH*

Sat., Jan. 12 -- at Utah*

Fri., Jan. 18 -- ARIZONA STATE*

Sun., Jan. 20 -- ARIZONA*

Fri., Jan. 25 -- at California*

Sun., Jan. 27 -- at Stanford*

Fri., Feb. 1 -- at UCLA*

Sun., Feb. 3 -- at USC*

Fri., Feb. 8 -- OREGON STATE*

Sun., Feb. 10 -- OREGON*

Fri., Feb. 15 -- at Arizona*

Sun., Feb. 17 -- at Arizona State*

Fri., Feb. 22 -- WASHINGTON STATE*

Sun., Feb. 24 -- WASHINGTON*

Fri., March 1 -- at Oregon*

Sun., March 3 -- at Oregon State*

March 7-10 -- Pac-12 Tournament (Seattle)

All game times TBA.

Omni Hotels Classic

* Pac-12 games.

Brian Howell: Buffs Blog

CU WBB schedule displays confidence

Posted on [August 3, 2012](#) by [howell](#)

Looking at the Colorado women's basketball schedule — which was released on Thursday — ought to tell fans one key thing about the Buffs: head coach Linda Lappe has confidence in this group.

The schedule is arguably the toughest non-league schedule CU will have faced in several years. Certainly it'll be the most challenging schedule in Lappe's three-year tenure.

So far, the Buffs are 20-4 in regular season, non-conference games under Lappe, including last year's 11-0 run. They've achieved that mark by beating the likes of Tennessee-Martin, Loyola Chicago, Texas State, Colgate, North Dakota, Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, Idaho, Weber State and Texas-Pan American. Nothing against those teams; but they don't exactly strike fear in opponents, they don't drive fans to the ticket booth, and they aren't the types of teams that a school like CU should use as barometers.

That said, every team needs those types of games on the schedule and this year's schedule includes some of those — in fact, Idaho and Texas A&M-Corpus Christi both come to Boulder — but it also includes several tougher tests that will get CU ready for the Pac-12 schedule.

"We didn't want to be shell-shocked when Stanford and Cal came in here (to open the conference schedule)," Lappe said.

They should be battle tested by then. Before Pac-12 play starts, the Buffs will have visiting Illinois, hosted rival Colorado State and will have potentially faced two NCAA Tournament teams from last year — among other challenges.

The most appealing game for fans — and probably the best barometer of the non-conference schedule — is a visit from Louisville on Dec. 14. The Cardinals reached the second round of the NCAA Tournament last year and are considered, by many people, a top-10 or top-15 team going into this season.

The Buffs could also face San Diego State, last year's Mountain West Conference champion and an NCAA Tournament team. I say "could" because both the Aztecs and Buffs would have to win first-round games in the Omni Classic for that matchup to happen.

Three other Mountain West teams — Colorado State, New Mexico and Wyoming — will visit Boulder and all three should give CU a good challenge.

Throw in road games at Missouri-Kansas City, Illinois and Denver (where the Buffs lost two years ago) and this will be no cakewalk.

"We really feel this year with Chucky (Jeffery) and Meagan (Malcolm-Peck) as seniors that we're ready to have a little bit tougher non-confernece schedule," Lappe said. "While we're still really, really young, but we at least have

some upperclassmen that understand what it takes to be successful and they've been in a lot of different high-pressure situations.

"I know our team is excited for the schedule. They've been working hard this summer and will work really hard in the fall to be ready for it."

This is not a schedule CU would have been ready for two years ago, or even last year.

"Especially when you take over a program, you're not going to have everything implemented by the end of the non-conference your first year," Lappe said.

She called building the schedule "a balancing act."

"You take a lot of things into account," she said. "You take into account the confidence level of your team. You take into account if you have a veteran group or young."

"We've already started to prepare next year's schedule, the 2013-14 schedule, and trying to piece that together and figure out how that's going to look with our team."

At least with this year's team, Lappe is confident they are ready for a step up in competition. That is evident by the slate of games Lappe put together.

A few notes about the schedule:

- CU is 1-2 against BCS conference teams in regular season, non-conference games under Lappe. That includes a loss against Illinois two years ago. This year, the Buffs have two (Illinois, Louisville) and possibly three (Auburn) games against BCS conference foes.
- The Buffs are 19-2 in their last 21 games against non-conference opponents. The only losses have come in the quarterfinals of the WNIT the past two years.
- If Louisville is ranked in the top 20 when it comes to Boulder, the Cardinals would be the first top-20 team to visit CU in a non-conference game since No. 16 Vanderbilt on Nov. 12, 2006. Only two top-25 teams have been to Boulder for non-conference games since then — No. 21 Wyoming on Dec. 5, 2007, and No. 23 Virginia on Jan. 2, 2010.
- The schedule features three teams that have never been to Boulder (Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, Louisville and Utah Valley) and three others that haven't been to Boulder since at least 1996 (Auburn, San Diego State and New Mexico).

The schedule:

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 Sun., Nov. 18 at Missouri-Kansas City
 Fri., Nov. 23 TEXAS A&M-CORPUS CHRISTI#
 Sat., Nov. 24 AUBURN OR SAN DIEGO STATE#
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Buffs look to keep inspiration going against Cal

Posted on [March 8, 2012](#) by [howell](#)

Before last Saturday, it had been a while since we saw the Colorado women's basketball put together an inspired performance.

On Wednesday, they did it again.

The easy question: Where has this been all year?