

Women's basketball: CU Buffs building résumé for Top 25 spot

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It's been nearly five years since the Colorado women's basketball team last appeared in the Top-25 national rankings.

Continue playing like they have been and the Buffaloes might end their drought.

On Wednesday night, the Buffs crushed Colorado State 72-46 to improve to 7-0. It's the Buffs' second straight 7-0 start.

The ultimate goal for the Buffs, and every other team in the country, is to get into the NCAA Tournament and compete for a national title. A spot in the Top 25 is a nice prize along the way, though, and the Buffs would love to be included.

Although not there yet, the Buffs are building a résumé that could get them into the rankings.

At 7-0, the Buffs are one of just 18 undefeated teams in Division I. Eight of those teams, including CU, are unranked.

As of Thursday, CU's RPI (Ratings Percentage Index) ranking -- which is used by the committee to help select NCAA Tournament teams -- was No. 34. Just 10 of the undefeated teams have an RPI higher than CU's.

The Buffs already have a win against a 2012 NCAA Tournament team, San Diego State. At the time, San Diego State was receiving Top 25 votes.

CU is 2-0 on the road, including a seven-point win against a team (Illinois) from one of the six major conferences.

What CU has done to this point is enough to earn consideration from Top 25 voters. Unfortunately for the Buffs, they've got plenty of competition.

Dayton, Texas and Florida State have all moved into the rankings with undefeated records, but got there on the strength of beating ranked teams. Dayton, in fact, has two Top 25 wins.

Kansas also jumped into the rankings with an unbeaten mark. The No. 17 Jayhawks don't have an impressive win this season, but they were a Sweet 16 team a year ago and began the year barely out of the Top 25.

No. 22 Iowa State has a résumé similar to CU's, but the Cyclones were an NCAA Tournament team a year ago.

One-loss teams such as No. 17 UCLA, No. 21 North Carolina and No. 23 Miami have all defeated a ranked team (and suffered their only losses against ranked opponents).

Plenty of other teams, such as No. 20 Ohio State, No. 25 Nebraska and unranked West Virginia, Texas A&M and South Carolina have recent success on a national level that keeps them in the Top 25 conversation.

For now, CU's biggest challenge is not getting into the Top 25, but getting noticed outside of Boulder.

Beating CSU in the manner they did was impressive, but not to anybody outside of the Centennial State. Tuesday's game at Denver won't help the Buffs much either (although a loss would be crushing).

Colorado's chance to make a splash nationally comes on Dec. 14. That night, No. 8 Louisville visits Coors Events Center. The Cardinals have everything CU wants -- name recognition, recent national success and big wins to their credit.

Beat Denver and Louisville next week and the Buffs will have everything they need to get themselves back into the rankings, where they were regular residents throughout the 1990s and early 2000s.

Making an impression

How good is CU point guard Chucky Jeffery? The senior had just four points against CSU, yet drew high praise from Rams coach Ryun Williams.

"She is a freaky athlete and do you think my posts can stop her? I mean they can't," he said. "Chucky Jeffery is a very special athlete."

Jeffery, a first-team All-Pac-12 choice last season, had 12 rebounds and four assists against the Rams. Jeffery is averaging 10.5 points, 7.8 rebounds and 3.8 assists per game.

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