

Team's approach stays same heading into easy part of schedule

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In theory, the Colorado women's basketball team has an easy schedule the rest of the way.

The 21st-ranked Buffaloes have already played five games against the top three teams in the Pac-12 -- No. 4 Stanford, No. 6 California and No. 17 UCLA.

Of the eight games remaining on the regular season schedule, just one -- Feb. 24 at home against fourth-place Washington -- is against a team that currently sits in the top half of the standings.

Don't expect the Buffs (16-5, 5-5 Pac-12) to sit back and relax, though, as they host 10th-place Oregon State (9-13, 3-7) tonight.

"These games coming up, we definitely have to key in on them because they are very important," freshman forward Arielle Roberson said. "We have to take advantage of the fact that we've played Stanford and Cal twice and since we learned a lot from there, we have to apply it to these games coming up."

Throughout the season, the Buffs have displayed great focus, regardless of the strength of their opponent. All five losses came against Stanford, Cal and UCLA. The UCLA loss on Feb. 1 was probably the only game of the season in which the Buffs didn't play well. They are 15-0 against unranked opponents.

"I do like our focus throughout the year and we know how important these two games are at home," head coach Linda Lappe said. "We only have four home games left, so we're going to come out and we're going to be ready."

Lappe said she's confident her team will continue to be focused, because they understand the danger each team in the Pac-12 presents.

"I think we really respect Oregon State and we respect all the teams in the conference," she said. "When you do that, I don't think you look past any team. We're not quite good enough to do that yet."

Oregon State is known for its solid play on defense, but Lappe also said the Beavers may have the best guard trio of any team CU faces this season. Ali Gibson, Alyssa Martin and Jamie Weisner are the Beavers' top three scorers.

"All of our guards are going to have to be ready to defend," Lappe said.

Breast cancer awareness

Friday's game is CU's annual "Pink Game," in which they will wear pink in their uniforms and shoes in honor of breast cancer awareness.

"It means a lot to us every year, but this year probably more so because (freshman guard) Kylesha Weston's mom was diagnosed with breast cancer in October," Lappe said. "It means a great deal to her and to our team and to our Buffalo family. We're happy that we can help raise awareness for the disease and hopefully at some point help find a cure."

Roberson said the game has special meaning to everybody on the team, and for all women in general.

"There are millions of people battling this disease," she said. "For everybody to be coming together, that's the beauty of it all. For us to have this game, I think that really means a lot. For the fans who are battling it or have battled it, I think that increases their support in us and we know they have our backs and we have theirs."

Notable

Freshman Lauren Huggins has resumed basketball activities and is running scout team plays for the Buffs. Huggins has not played since Dec. 5 because of stress fractures. ... Lappe said one of her goals for the final eight games of the regular season is to see her team "gain some consistency on the offensive end."

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CU women's hoops preview

TODAY: The No. 21 Colorado Buffaloes (16-5, 5-5 Pac-12) host the Oregon State Beavers (9-13, 3-7) in a 7 p.m. game at Coors Events Center in Boulder.

BROADCAST: TV -- Pac-12 Network, with Anne Marie Anderson on play-by-play and Rosalyn Gold-Onwude with color commentary. Radio -- KKZN AM-760, with Mike Rice on play-by-play and Carol Callan providing color commentary.

STORYLINES: CU snapped a three-game losing streak with a 65-49 win at Southern Cal on Sunday. ... This is the Buffs' first home game since Jan. 20. They went 1-3 on a four-game road trip. ... Oregon State has lost four in a row. ... CU is 11-2 on its home floor this season. Oregon State is 4-7 away from home. ... CU has the No. 2 scoring defense in the Pac-12 (allowing 53.8 points per game), while Oregon State ranks last in scoring offense (59.7 per game). ... Oregon State ranks first in the conference, and sixth in the country, with 6.1 blocks shots per game. The Beavers also rank second in the conference in field-goal percentage defense (34.0) and defensive rebounds (30.0). ... In Pac-12 play, both teams have struggled at the free throw line. CU is ninth in the conference at 67.8 percent and Oregon State is 11th at 64.8 percent. ... CU's Brittany Wilson has picked up her game on offense, averaging 11.0 points in the last three games.

KEY STAT: The Buffs are 15-1 when out-rebounding their opponents and 1-4 when they get out-rebounded. The Buffs rank second in the Pac-12 in rebounding margin (plus-9.4), while Oregon State is sixth (plus-2.5).

COACHES: Linda Lappe is 55-35 in her third season at CU and 105-71 overall. Scott Reuck is 38-47 in his third year at Oregon State and 326-135 for his career.

PROBABLE STARTERS: Colorado -- G Chucky Jeffery, 5-10, Sr. (13.3 ppg, 8.2 rpg, 4.2 apg, 2.5 spg); G Brittany Wilson, 5-7, Jr. (8.5 ppg, 2.6 rpg, 2.3 apg); G Lexy Kresl, 5-11, So. (6.1 ppg, 2.9 rpg); F Arielle Roberson, 6-1, Fr. (12.4 ppg, 5.5 rpg); C Rachel Hargis, 6-4, Jr. (4.9 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 1.1 bpg). Oregon State -- G Ali Gibson, 5-11, So. (9.4 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 2.2 apg); G Jamie Weisner, 5-10, Fr. (12.2 ppg, 5.6 rpg); G Alyssa Martin, 6-0, Jr. (8.1 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 2.3 apg); F ShaKiana Edwards-Teasley, 6-2, Sr. (1.8 ppg, 5.1 rpg); F Deven Hunter, 6-3, Fr. (4.9 ppg, 6.4 rpg).

SERIES: CU leads 3-1, including 3-0 in Boulder. The teams split their two meetings last season, with the Buffs winning 67-57 in Boulder on March 3.

UP NEXT: CU will host Oregon on Sunday at 1:30 p.m.