

Women's basketball: CU Buffs' Jamee Swan faces familiar foes in Arizona

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This weekend has been a bit of a reunion for Colorado freshman Jamee Swan.

During Friday's win against Arizona State, Swan went up against good friend and former club teammate Arnecia Hawkins of the Sun Devils.

On Sunday, Swan will see a whole lot of familiar faces when the No. 21 Buffaloes (14-2, 3-2 Pac-12) host Arizona (11-5, 3-2). The Wildcats are from Tucson, Ariz., where Swan played her high school ball during the previous four years.

"Throughout high school, I went to almost every (Arizona) home game," Swan said. "For the most part, I would say I know them. Hopefully I have an understanding of what they do."

The Buffs, as a whole, are hoping to gain a grasp of what the Wildcats will bring to the floor. This isn't the same Arizona team that finished last in the Pac-12 with a 3-15 conference record a year ago.

"I think they're much, much, much improved from a year ago and we're just going to have be ready on Sunday," CU head coach Linda Lappe said. "I think they're more versatile in how they're scoring, and they're probably playing much better defense this year."

CU expects Arizona to be similar to Arizona State. ASU is known for tough defense and likes to press. Facing ASU on Friday figures to have gotten the Buffs ready for the Wildcats.

"They've got a lot of quick guards, so we know they're going to try to press and speed us up, as well," CU senior point guard Chucky Jeffery said. "We've seen it, we played against it for a whole game (against ASU), and so I think we'll be prepared for that."

In the paint, the Buffs expect nothing less than what they've seen so far from Pac-12 foes. Everybody has featured tough, physical players in the paint.

"I think they're going to be physical, as well, and on defense they're going to be physical and tough, too," CU freshman Arielle Roberson said. "I think we have to continue to take care of the ball (in the paint)."

Without question, though, the Wildcats are led by guard Davellyn Whyte. She came into the weekend fourth in the Pac-12 in scoring (16.3 points per game) and second in assists (5.0). She had 23 points, 11 rebounds and six assists in Arizona's 62-58 win at Utah on Friday.

"She's a big factor," Jeffery said. "She's their leading scorer and she kind of does it all. We've got to try to take her out of the game early, get her frustrated a little bit because she's their leader and I think every team goes as their leader goes. If we can get under her shorts a little bit, then we can kind of get an upper hand on them."

The Buffs will look for any advantage they can get in order to win another Pac-12 game.

As for Swan, she's looking forward to seeing some familiar faces on the other side of the court.

"It might be a little different because I used to play with some of them," Swan said. "It'll be weird seeing them and not passing them the ball."

At least she hopes she doesn't pass them the ball.

"I'm smarter than that," she said with a smile.

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CU women's hoops preview

TODAY: The No. 21 Colorado Buffaloes (14-2, 3-2 Pac-12) host the Arizona Wildcats (11-5, 3-2) in a 2 p.m. game at Coors Events Center in Boulder.

BROADCAST: Radio -- KKZN AM-760, with Mike Rice on play-by-play and Carol Callan providing color commentary. Internet -- Pac-12.com.

STORYLINES: CU is riding a three-game win streak in Pac-12 play, including Friday's 57-43 win against Arizona State. ... Arizona has won two in a row, including Friday at Utah. ... CU has yet to sweep a weekend home set since joining the conference a year ago. The Buffs are looking for their first sweep today. ... In their past two-and-a-half games (100 minutes played), the Buffs have held their opponents to 26.9 shooting from the floor (38-of-141). ... CU sophomore Lexy Kresl already has 23 career games with two more 3-pointers, including Friday against ASU. ... Arizona is 2-1 in Pac-12 road games this season. ... This is Arizona's first game against a ranked opponent this season. The Wildcats' last win against a ranked opponent was Jan. 16, 2005, at No. 19 UCLA. ... During Pac-12 play, CU has averaged 53.8 points per game, while giving up just 50.6. Arizona has averaged 69.2 points per game, while giving up 64.8. ... Arizona came into the weekend as the top free throw shooting team in the conference, hitting 72.9 percent from the line. CU was seventh, at 68.0.

KEY STAT: This season, CU has done a great job of finishing games, outscoring its opponents by 144 points after intermission (592-448). The Buffs have been outscored in the second half just once, by Cal, in five conference games this year.

COACHES: Linda Lappe is 53-32 in her third season at CU and 103-68 overall. Niya Butts is 73-70 in her fifth season at Arizona and for her career.

PROBABLE STARTERS: Colorado -- G Chucky Jeffery, 5-10, Sr. (13.7 ppg, 8.6 rpg, 4.1 apg); G Brittany Wilson, 5-7, Jr. (8.0 ppg, 2.7 rpg, 2.4 apg); G Lexy Kresl, 5-11, So. (5.8 ppg, 2.3 rpg); F Arielle Roberson, 6-1, Fr. (13.7 ppg, 5.8 rpg); C Rachel Hargis, 6-4, Jr. (5.4 ppg, 3.2 rpg). Arizona -- G Davellyn Whyte, 5-11, Sr. (16.7 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 5.1 apg); G Layana White, 5-8, So. (3.4 ppg, 2.3 rpg); G Carissa Crutchfield, 5-8, Jr. (6.1 ppg, 2.7 rpg, 3.5 apg); F Cheshi Poston, 6-2, Sr. (7.3 ppg, 5.9 rpg); F Alli Gloyd, 6-1, Jr. (10.4 ppg, 5.9 rpg).

SERIES: CU leads the overall series 8-3, including 2-0 last year. The Buffs have won five straight against the Wildcats, dating back to 1989. CU is 5-1 at home against the Wildcats, with the only loss coming in 1975, which was CU's first season.

UP NEXT: CU will visit No. 7 California on Friday at 9 p.m.