

Women's basketball: CU's Swan's ankle won't slow her down

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It has not taken long for Jamee Swan to realize that basketball in college is nothing like it was in high school.

"It's like driving a slow car and then driving a race car," she said. "It's completely different."

So far, the Colorado women's basketball freshman has enjoyed the ride. Yet, she knows that in order to stay in the fast lane, she's got to get one of her tires fixed.

Rated as the top player from Arizona by HoopGurlz.com, Swan is a 6-foot-2 forward from Marana High School in Tucson. Coached by her mother, Diane, Swan averaged 20.8 points and 12.8 rebounds per game last season. She also posted more than three blocks and three steals per game.

She has the ability to help the Buffs in two areas where they really need help: rebounding and post defense.

"Everything else is kind of falling into place and I'm still trying to get used to it," she said as the Buffs were wrapping up summer workouts, "but I definitely feel like rebounding and defense are my strong points right now."

What's not strong is Swan's left ankle. She has injured it three years in a row. As a sophomore in high school, she broke her ankle playing volleyball. She sprained it as a junior and again before the opener of her senior season. After returning from that injury, she played a few games before re-injuring her ankle in January.

"I've been not so hot on my ankle since," she said.

The good news is that her ankle does not cause her pain at this point.

"It's just weak," she said.

There's time to fix that -- hopefully -- before her first season as a Buffalo begins.

"We're going to do stuff to make it stronger and from there, we'll see what we have to do," she said. "For now, it's going to be taped and ankle braced and rehabbed all the time."

Swan is intent on not only strengthening her ankle, but also on making an impact for the Buffs as a freshman. Her initial goal is a modest one.

"I would like not to miss a game this year," she said.

She appears to have the mental makeup and physical tools to be a valuable asset when she does play. Swan said that during pickup games with her CU teammates this summer, she felt "pretty comfortable" with the team.

Already, Swan has learned that college courses are a bit tougher and time management is critical. Now it's time to make sure she can be the player that head coach Linda Lappe wants her to be. CU coaches have told her they want Swan to work on her face-up and high-post games, while also polishing her ball-handling skills and studying the playbook.

With the help of her mother, Swan said she plans to be in the gym "all the time" during her final weeks in Tucson before returning to Boulder. She also plans to utilize two friends -- a team trainer and a personal trainer -- to get her ankle, and her overall body, stronger for the rigors of college basketball.

By the time the season rolls around, Swan hopes her tire is mended and that she'll be ready for the high speed of college basketball.

"By the time fall comes around, (the ankle will) definitely be a lot stronger than it is now," she said.

"I just want to get stronger and better and make more of an impact on the team, as much as I can."

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