

## Volleyball: CU Buffs staying busy during offseason

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It has been four months since the Colorado volleyball team last played a match, but head coach Liz Kritza said her team has shown a good amount of improvement in that time.

"I have a hungry bunch," Kritza said. "They don't want to just compete. They're not happy at all with the performance. They're pleased, excited and honored to be playing in (the Pac-12 Conference), but these kids want to win it."

CU went 14-18 (4-16 Pac-12) last fall. It was a vast improvement from the back-to-back six-win seasons in 2011 and 2010, plus the seven-win season in 2009.

For the past two-plus months, the Buffs have been working diligently to get even better.

"For us, that January through March phase is where they really make gains as an athlete," Kritza said.

Starting in mid-January, the Buffs went through a seven-week period of heavy physical training. They spent eight hours per week with physical training, plus two hours per week of skills training. Strength coach Chris Sheckler has done quite a bit of work to get Kritza's players ready for the 2013 season.

"He's been a fantastic addition to our program, because I think he really understands individual differences," Kritza said.

The Buffs have a wide variety of players, from a pair of 5-foot, 3-inch back-row players to 6-foot-5 hitters. The back-row players rarely have to jump, while the hitters jump hundreds of times a day.

"(Sheckler) has really taken the time to come in and pay attention to what all the different players are doing," Kritza said. "He comes into practice to film them bio-mechanically just to make sure what he's doing in the weight room will correlate directly to what I'm expecting them to do in the gym."

So far, Kritza has been pleased with the work the Buffs are putting in during the offseason.

They recently played a tournament at the Air Force Academy, where all 15 players got significant playing time.

"I think it served its purpose," she said of that tournament. "It was a lot of repetition for everybody on the roster, and early in the spring season it was good."

### Making progress

Senior hitter Kerra Schroeder is progressing well in her rehabilitation from a torn ACL that ended her 2012 season two matches into the season, on Aug. 25. Schroeder was a senior last year, but wound up using the year to redshirt so she can return this fall.

"She's very aggressive in her rehab," Kritza said. "She's older, she's more mature, she understands what her window of time to train looks like. She looks good. We have her in portions of practice as permitted. She's jumped and working her way back in."

## Notable

Four Buffs recently went to the Olympic Training Center for national team tryouts. Alexis Austin and Nicole Edelman tried out for the Junior National team, while Elysse Richardson and Taylor Simpson tried out for the A2 team, which is a training roster that feeds into the national team. Kritza said results of that tryouts have not been released yet. ... Kritza is excited about the addition of assistant coach Kevin Maureen Campbell, who was hired last week. Campbell is considered a great recruited who is "well connected with prep and club volleyball," Kritza said. ... The Buffs are planning to face New Mexico in a scrimmage on April 13 at home; it will be open to fans.

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