

## Women's basketball: CU Buffs' Lauren Huggins waiting her turn

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

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Lauren Huggins is still waiting for her first opportunity to see the floor for the Colorado women's basketball team.

For now, the freshman is soaking up her new surroundings and learning what she can.

"Honestly, things are going great," said Huggins, a 6-foot-1 wing. "Practice is going well and even though I haven't gotten in the game yet, I'm still out there trying to support my teammates as much as I can."

Huggins was a big part of CU's highly rated 2012 recruiting class. ESPN's HoopGurlz.com rated her as the 11th-best wing in the country and the 64th-best player overall. She was a two-time All-Continental League choice at Littleton's Heritage High School.

The Buffaloes (1-0) have played just twice, including an exhibition game, and Huggins is the only one of the team's three true freshman on scholarship -- Jamee Swan and Ky Weston are the others -- that has not played yet.

Her time will come, though.

"Lauren came in during the preseason and was a little bit behind, we felt like, in terms of her conditioning and her physical presence," head coach Linda Lappe said. "I think she's gotten a lot better in the last few months, especially once practice has started. We knew that was where Lauren was going to be able to come in and help us out and do some good things."

Huggins admits she was behind some of her teammates, but has also been pleased with her progress so far.

"With the leadership we have behind (seniors) Meagan (Malcolm-Peck) and Chucky (Jeffery), they definitely pulled me up and I'm continuing to make strides," she said.

Watching both games from the bench may not be exactly how Huggins envisioned her college career would start, but she's not at all hanging her head. In fact, she's enjoying the benefit of getting a new perspective on the game.

"It's exactly what I expected," she said of watching from the bench. "Great players are ahead of me right now and they're my teammates. If I can work to get time on the floor and help them out, that's great. If they're out-working me and I can support them on the bench, good for me too."

"I think that especially observing from the bench and seeing where I'll be playing and knowing tempo and speed and exactly where I'll need to be to get on the floor is definitely going to help."

Although Swan and Weston have played in both games, Lappe said that doesn't necessarily mean Huggins is behind her classmates at this point. Lappe also said that it often takes freshmen a while to get comfortable.

"Even Jamee and Ky still have a long ways to go," Lappe said. "In terms of what we expect from these freshmen, we knew we didn't have to have them come in and be our leading scorers or be our leading rebounders this year, that they could more so fill a role and progress.

"Your program is in a good state when you don't have to play freshmen in order to compete. We think our freshmen are going to be very good, we just don't know when that exactly is all going to take place."

Huggins is hoping it'll be sooner rather than later for her, but until then, she's happy to progress and do her part for the Buffaloes. When she is ready, she's expected to give the Buffs a solid presence on defense and to be a threat from 3-point range.

"Work as hard as I can to get some time on the floor," she said of her goals for this year, "and help our team reach the goals we want to have."

Follow Brian on Twitter: @BrianHowell33.

## Women's basketball: CU Buffs' Linda Lappe signs four to 2013 class

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Heading into her third season as the Colorado women's basketball coach, Linda Lappe has steadily built a winning team.

The Buffs' head coach is hoping she added four more winners on Wednesday.

Lappe announced that the Buffs have signed four players to the Class of 2013: Zoe Beard-Fails, Desiree Harris, Haley Smith and Briana Watts. All four had made verbal commitments weeks ago, but could not sign their letters of intent until Wednesday.

"I feel like each one of our signees has only begun to be as good of a player as they're going to be in the future," Lappe said. "They're all extremely coachable, they're all great people and they all are competitive in everything they do."

Beard-Fails is a 6-foot-2 forward from Herndon, Va. She averaged 27 points and 18 rebounds at Georgetown Day School as a sophomore, but missed all but games of her junior year after tearing an ACL. She expects to be at full strength for the upcoming season.

Harris, a 5-8 combo guard from Oakland, Calif., posted 23.5 points, 7.0 rebounds, 2.9 steals and 2.7 assists per game last year at St. Joseph Notre Dame.

Smith is a 6-foot wing from Skyline High School in Sammamish, Wash. Her numbers (about seven points and five rebounds per game) don't jump off the table, but she is believed to have almost unlimited potential and exceptional athletic ability. She has also been surrounded by good talent and should be ready to explode as she takes a leadership role for her team this year.

Watts is another player with untapped potential. A 6-4 center from Clovis West High School in Fresno, Calif. (she played her first three years at Buchanan High), Watts was the first player to make a commitment to the Buffs. She averaged about six points and six rebounds per game on a perimeter-oriented team.

"We felt like we needed to sign one at about every position and we pretty much got that," Lappe said. "We felt like we added a lot of physical play in this class, we feel like we added some great defenders and I think their skill set is only going to continue to get better."

Colorado currently has 13 players under scholarship, two below the NCAA maximum of 15. The Buffs will lose three of those players to graduation after this season (Chucky Jeffery, Brenna Malcolm-Peck and Meagan Malcolm-Peck). With the addition of this class, the Buffs should go into the 2013-14 season with 14 scholarship players -- the most Lappe has had during her tenure at CU.

"The best teams I've ever seen or been a part of either as a player or coach, you had a lot of depth and you had a lot of good players and the players really pushed each other to get better every day in practice," Lappe said. "When you got to the games it was really easy because you'd seen better in

practice all week long. That's really what we're going for and going for a lot of different types of players."

#### Notable

When the Buffs begin the 2013-14 season, the roster will be nearly full of Lappe's signees. Twins Ashley and Brittany Wilson, who will be seniors next year, are slated to be the only two players left that were recruited by former coach Kathy McConnell-Miller. The Wilsons never played for McConnell-Miller, however. ... In Lappe's first year, 2010-11, the Buffs had just 10 players on the roster. ... Lappe has now signed 12 players since becoming head coach, just one of those (current freshman Lauren Huggins) from Colorado.

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