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Freshman Alexis Austin adds growth to the volleyball team

By [Jillian Arja](#) in [Front Page](#), [Sports](#), [Volleyball](#) on Nov 29, 2012 10:07 / [comments](#)

A new school, new town, and new environment: most freshmen have enough on their plate making the adjustment away from home and into college life. Adding a varsity sport into the mix and you will find Alexis Austin, a freshman outside hitter for the University of Colorado volleyball team and a native of Houston, Texas.

"I had a really good adjustment," Austin said. "Of course there were tons of bumps that I had to continuously overcome but I think I made it through."



Freshmen Alexis Austin goes up for a hit as her teammates cover her in the Oct. 12 victory against ASU. (Amy Leder/CU Independent File)

Austin began her career as a Buff in an impressive fashion. Playing outside hitter for the Buffaloes she recorded a team best 364 kills this season, averaging 3.14 kills per set. She also had a team-high 393.5 points. Her 364 kills ties the 31st best total in CU single season history. Austin led the Buffs in kills in 18 of its 32 matches this season and recorded 19 double-digit kill performances.

Austin's accolades not only caught the attention of the hometown crowd. She was nominated a few times to be a Pac-12 player of the week, but was not selected; next season it's a prize she has her eyes on.

"I was nominated a couple times to be the Pac-12 player of the week, just didn't get it," Austin said. "That is my goal, to actually get it one time."

Being at center stage is a familiar feeling for Austin.

During her high school volleyball career, she was named a top-25 volleyball player in the 2012 class by ESPN and earned a No.26 ranking by PrepVolleyball.com. She was picked as Cypress Falls High School MVP and was named the Texas 17—5A First Team All-District. During the summer of 2011, Austin traveled to Turkey and competed for the U.S. Girls' Youth National team at the International Federation of Volleyball Girls' Youth World Championships. In addition to that, she played for the Thunder Volleyball Club, based out of Kingwood, Texas where she was coached by Marion Chlebana. Quite the pedigree for such a young player.

By the time she was a senior she had her choice of many of the top schools in the country. In selecting schools, Austin said she picked CU because she wanted to help the volleyball program grow.

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BUFFS ON VID

"I have always been on the underdog team, and so that is one of the reasons I picked CU. I like to be a part of the growth," Austin said.

With the addition of Austin, the Buffs added eight more overall wins to their record and three more Pac—12 wins than last season. The volleyball team was 14—18 overall and 4-16 in the Pac—12.

Though the improvement was enormous, Austin is striving to keep her team out of the margins.

"As a team, I feel like we need to be more consistent. But yes I think our team is going to build from this year and do even better next season," Austin said. "We do have some work to do though."

Personally, Austin says that she wants to work on her play in the back row to help her team put more balls in play. Austin played middle hitter in high school, so she had to make the adjustment from the middle to outside. Outside hitters are typically the players that run the attack, whereas middle hitters provide for the occasional kill.

"I had to learn so many new things on the outside and then I had never played back row all the way around before so I had to learn that too," Austin said. "I would definitely like to improve my play in the back row."

Austin has already contributed to the Buffs growth this season, helping CU improve over their previous season. She has high hopes for herself and her team for the upcoming season. Do not be shocked if she she is amending her goals early on, as it's difficult seeing the young up—and—comer not accomplishing them. As a freshman, we have three more years to watch her grow and build the team. Stay tuned.

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