



**The 2012-13 Colorado women's basketball team.**

Photo Courtesy: Chip Bromfield, ProMotion Ltd.



## With Plenty To Build On, Lappe's Buffs Live for Today

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Colorado women's basketball knows where it wants to be at the end of the season, it's the same place 300-plus other NCAA Division I women's teams want to be.

But head coach **Linda Lappe's** third-year Buffaloes aren't concerned about where they want to be five months from now. They are worried about today; what the team is doing on any given day to get better. Then from there the end results should take care of themselves.

"What we have really focused on is doing something that is uncommon," Lappe said. "More so than getting to the NCAA Tournament, which we can't do (today), every day we are working towards that, and that is the ultimate goal, but we have tried to focus on taking it one day at a time and understanding what that takes (to get there)."

As fall practice for the 2012-13 season began Tuesday at the Coors Events Center, Lappe and her staff have the

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luxury of the most experience they've had in their time on the bench. In her first season, five freshmen and sophomores were part of the regular rotation. Two years later, those five players are now juniors and seniors with a combined 394 games played and 219 starts.

More importantly, beyond the sheer numbers of games, the variety of experience has been wide in range. They've experienced winning tight games; big games at home and on the road. They've beaten ranked teams; they've won win-or-go home contests.

The two with the most experience are Colorado's senior duo of **Chucky Jeffery** and **Meagan Malcolm-Peck**, who bring different types of game and leadership to the floor. Jeffery, a 5-10 guard, is a returning All-Pac-12 Conference performer and one of the most dynamic players in team history. She led Colorado in scoring (15.5 ppg), rebounding (8.0 rpg), assists (3.8 apg) and steals (2.3 spg) and is among CU's career leaders in those categories, and then some.

Malcolm-Peck looks to rebound from a year where her numbers were down but her leadership qualities certainly were not. She enters this season CU's active leader in starts (81) and games played (98). Malcolm-Peck averaged 4.3 points and 4.3 rebounds as a junior, but is the unquestioned vocal leader on the team. So much so that she was named captain for this season, shortly after last year ended.

"I feel like we have had great leadership from Meagan so far this year," Lappe said. "She has really set the tone for the rest of our players and done a great job communicating. Anything that comes up, she is sure she is on top of it."

Meagan's twin sister **Brenna Malcolm-Peck** is Colorado's third senior. Brenna has played just three games over the past two years, continuing to fight back from chronic knee injuries. Her future playing status remains uncertain, but she continues to be a valuable asset to her teammates.

Colorado's junior twin guards, **Ashley** and **Brittany Wilson**, and fellow classmate **Rachel Hargis** have also benefitted from two solid years of game action. Brittany Wilson was second on the team in scoring, assists and steals as a sophomore and really shined during the Buffaloes postseason run averaging 13.7 points and four rebounds over the final six games.

Ashley Wilson provided a spark of energy off the bench and thrived in that role. She did a lot of the grunt work for the Buffaloes and was particularly crafty on the offensive boards. Despite her 5-8 stature, Ashley Wilson compiled 97 rebounds (2.9 rpg), 43 of which came on the offensive end.

Hargis continues to grow as a solid low-post presence for the Buffaloes. She started the first half of last season, but came off the bench in the second half primarily to give CU a better matchup against finesse Pac-12 teams. Either way, Hargis has contributed positive minutes, especially defensively. She has been one of Colorado's better shot blockers the last two seasons, entering her junior year with 50, good enough for 17th on CU's all-time list.

Even with the experience of veteran players, the Buffaloes will still expect their three sophomores and four freshmen to make a huge impact, greatly improving the depth of the team.

Guard **Lexy Kresl** set Colorado's freshman record for 3-pointers made last season with 63. Forward **Jen Reese** led all Pac-12 freshmen in rebounding on a per game basis (6.0) and shot 45 percent from the floor before her season ended nine games early with an injury. Guard/forward **Jasmine Sborov** came on strong at the end of last season, essentially moving into the starting lineup after Reese went down.

"We are still going to be young but our veterans have all played and that is something we have to utilize in the preseason and as we head into the conference season," Lappe said. "In a lot of ways we are ahead of where we were last year, and I think every year builds on the last, so that's not surprising, we should be ahead of where we were last year."

That depth is more pronounced with a solid group of freshmen, with each bringing something different to the

table.

One freshman, not so new, is forward Arielle Roberson. The younger sister of CU men's basketball standout, Andre, Arielle was a redshirt in the CU program last season after developing a torn labrum in her left hip. She was one of the better players out of the state of Texas in 2011, and is hungry to contribute.

Colorado's incoming freshman class was rated as the 27th best in the nation according to *ESPN.com HoopGurlz*, and that doesn't count Roberson who came in with the 2011 class.

**Jamee Swan**, a 6-2 forward from Tucson, Ariz., was an honorable mention WBCA All-American and ranked as the eighth best forward in the nation, and 38th best player overall. **Lauren Huggins**, a 6-1 guard/forward from Littleton, Colo., was also a Top 100 player, ranking as the 11th best wing and 64th best player overall. **Kyleesha Weston**, a 5-7 guard from Kansas City, Mo., is this staff's first true point guard recruit, coming off a year where she was a finalist for the DiRenna Award, given to the top girls player in the K.C. metro area.

Swan averaged 20.8 points and 12.8 rebounds as a senior and will be a big factor down low for the Buffaloes. Huggins can stretch the court with extensive range. She hit 5-of-6 from 3-point range at the 2012 edition of "The Show" Colorado's annual high school all-star game, earning MVP honors.

Weston averaged 18 points and five assists for Park Hill High School, but more importantly her addition will allow Colorado to have both Jeffery and Brittany Wilson spend more time off the ball, giving the Buffaloes more offensive and defensive options.

"I think fans will be happy to see our freshmen, they have really gotten off to a great start," Lappe said. "I know fans always like to see new faces, and I think we have three really good freshmen that will contribute in their own separate ways."

The key for the Buffaloes will be to continue to build on what they've already accomplished, from previous seasons for the veterans and off season workouts for the whole team.

"We challenged our team over the summer to get better as individuals, our guards to become better ball handlers, our shooters to become more accurate from the outside and the inside, and our post to really work on their low-post game, and I feel like they all did that throughout the summer," Lappe said. "So we have been able to see the biggest progression just on the court."

"Our players have come in every day with the right attitude and work ethic. It has been fun to coach them on individual skills, and not having to worry about if they are going to come in and be ready to go every single day."

If the Buffaloes end up where they want to be five months from now, it will be at home. Colorado will serve as one of eight NCAA Tournament first- and-second round hosts, March 23 & 25 at the Coors Events Center. But there is a lot to do between now and then.

"Our staff has a lot of experience in the NCAA Tournament and we're all on the same page in understanding all the tools needed to get there," Lappe said. "The fact is, it's not easy to get there and just because we are hosting it doesn't mean we are in, we've got a lot of work to do before that."

SHOW MENU



## Women's basketball: CU Buffs excited to get back on court

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

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Racks of basketballs were wheeled out. Coaches blew whistles. Players ran sprints.

The Colorado women's basketball team conducted its first official practice of the 2012-13 season on Tuesday afternoon, and the Buffs were thrilled to be back on the court together.

"Oh yeah. You can feel the energy coming from everybody excited to get the season started," junior guard Ashley Wilson said.

CU enters its third season with head coach Linda Lappe. Under her direction, the Buffs have made back-to-back appearances in the WNIT. A year ago, they went 21-14 and reached the quarterfinals of the WNIT.

Just one player (forward Julie Seabrook) graduated from last year's team, so the Buffs bring back a great deal of experience. Seniors Chucky Jeffery and Meagan Malcolm-Peck are leaders and seasoned veterans. Juniors Ashley and Brittany Wilson and Rachel Hargis bring a good deal of court experience to the table, as well.

Sophomores Lexy Kresl, Jen Reese and Jasmine Sborov all got significant playing time and starting experience as freshmen last year, and the Buffs are looking for big things out of this year's four freshmen: Lauren Huggins, Arielle Roberson, Jamee Swan and Ky Weston.

"I think we were all ready," said Lappe, who is 39-30 at CU. "We had a great preseason, but there's nothing like putting on the practice gear and getting after it as a team. We talked to our team about getting better individually and that's going to help our team, but now it's about getting better as a team. I think that's the most exciting part."

Lappe said the nerves and chaos of the first practice were evident, but added, "I thought we had a solid first day and I thought we could see some good things out of some people already. You can see what players have been working on over the summer."

Ashley Wilson said the players know the offseason workouts and team-building activities are important, but that the team was eager to get to practice. Sborov agreed, especially after having offseason surgery to fix bone spurs in her right foot.

"It's different coming off a surgery for me. It's new," she said. "I have so much adrenaline and I'm ready to go."

The Buffs will host Western State in an exhibition game on Nov. 2. They will play their first official game on Nov. 11 against Idaho at Coors Events Center.

### Sidelined

Brenna Malcolm-Peck, whose career has been marked by injuries, is not likely to take the court any time soon, if ever, for the Buffs.

She played 14 games as a true freshman in 2009-10, but has seen just six minutes of action since then as she has battled knee and concussion problems. She had offseason knee surgery again and is nowhere near returning.

"I'm not expecting it, but I hope that I'm wrong," Lappe said of Malcolm-Peck playing. "If (the knee) happens to

start doing a lot better, we haven't ruled anything out."

Lappe said the goal at this point is to get Malcolm-Peck's body healthy enough for her to enjoy everyday life.

"We want to make sure that when she leaves, she can do whatever she wants to do, hike and bike and run or whatever, way before she thinks about playing basketball," Lappe said.

Malcolm-Peck has two years of eligibility left, but Lappe said she will be listed as a senior this year and won't try to play after this year.

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## Colorado women's basketball team optimistic as practices begin

By **TOM KENSLER** |  No Comments

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BOULDER — The Colorado women's basketball team opened fall practices Tuesday afternoon, getting a jump on the CU men's team which must wait until Friday night's "Buffs Madness."

CU women's coach Linda Lappe said she couldn't wait to get started. Colorado, 21-14 last season (6-12 in Pac-12) and a participant in the WNIT, said this team has a good blend of experience and youth.

The roster includes seniors Chucky Jeffery and Meagan Malcolm-Peck and four juniors. Jeffery (15.5 points, 8.0 rebounds) is among the top players in the Pac-12.

"This is the first time we have juniors and seniors with a lot of game experience," said Lappe, in her third season since taking over at her alma mater. "We had a great preseason and we're excited."

Although Colorado returned four starters off last year's team (losing 6-3 Julie Seabrook), Lappe said she expects contributions from each of the three true freshmen: 6-foot-1 Lauren Huggins of Heritage High School in Littleton; 6-2 Jamee Swan of Tucson (Ariz.) Marana and 5-7 Lyleesha Weston of Park Hill High School in Kansas City, Mo.

"They all bring something different," Lappe said. "I think all three of them are way ahead of where our freshmen were in other years."

Also anxious to make her debut is redshirt freshman Arielle Roberson, a 6-1 forward from San Antonio (Texas) Wagner and sister of CU men's basketball standout Andre Roberson. Arielle underwent back surgery last fall and sat out the 2011-12 season.

The Colorado women's hoops team will join the men's squad Friday night in the Coors Events Center for "Buffs Madness" to kick off the start of hoops season. Madness activities, which are free to the public, will immediately follow the 7 p.m. CU women's volleyball match against Arizona State. The volleyball match also will have free admission.

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