

Another close loss caps disappointing weekend

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

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One look at the upcoming schedule shows that the road for the Colorado soccer team only gets tougher from here.

That made this past weekend a disappointing one for the Buffs.

On Sunday, the Buffs fell to visiting Washington State 1-0 at Prentup Field and went winless in its two-game weekend homestand.

"We can take some positives, but these were two matches this weekend where maybe we could have gotten something out of them," head coach Danny Sanchez said.

The Buffs (6-3-3, 0-2-1 Pac-12) took a four-game unbeaten streak into the weekend, but lost in overtime to Washington on Friday before the disappointment on Sunday.

Washington State scored in the 73rd minute when Brandi Vega lofted a corner kick in front of the CU goal and Jocelyn Jeffers was there to head it in.

"It was in my area and they depend on me to be able to get those out and I did not, so I think it's just as simple as that," CU defender Amy Barczuk said.

Buffs goalkeeper Annie Brunner wasn't so quick to place blame. She credited the Cougars (7-3-1, 1-1-1) for a great play.

"It was a good header on their part," Brunner said. "(Jeffers) had excellent placement and it was a well-taken corner."

Regardless of whether it was a defensive breakdown or a great offensive play, it was a frustrating result for the Buffs, who played a good game on defense. Washington State managed just three shots on goal, and Jeffers' goal was the only shot the Cougars put on net in the second half. CU also held the Cougars to just two corner kicks, but turned one into a goal.

"I thought we defended very well for most of the game and it's just a little unfortunate on the corner kick," Sanchez said.

Barczuk added, "It just shows you how important set pieces are. Corners are so dangerous. When you're a team that wins a lot of corners, it puts you in really good positions to score."

CU, meanwhile, didn't have many scoring chances. The Buffs had a 5-3 advantage in shots on goal, but Sanchez said many of those were "half chances."

"Not enough quality at the end of the day to really break down a team like that," he said. "The product in the final third wasn't good enough."

The Buffs may look back at the weekend as a couple of missed opportunities. Washington and Washington State are good, but the next few weeks figure to be more challenging.

CU's next four games are against California (who upset No. 23 Oregon State on Sunday), No. 2 Stanford (the defending national champ), Oregon State and No. 3 UCLA.

"It doesn't get any easier, that's for sure," Sanchez said. "We're in a position as a program, we just have to keep getting better -- even if we won both games this weekend.

"We are competitive and I like the spirit of this group. I like how hard they work."

Notable

In both games over the weekend, CU had the edge in shots on goal. Prior to this weekend, the Buffs were 5-0-1 when winning that category. ... CU's Anne Stuller was held to just three shots. She had 18 in the previous three games combined. ... The Buffs had 1,158 fans in attendance. It was the fourth time in five home games the Buffs have drawn at least 1,000 fans. ... Barczuk was hit with a yellow card in the second half. It was her third of the season.

Follow Brian on Twitter: @BrianHowell33.

Washington State 1, Colorado 0 At Prentup Field, Boulder

Washington State (7-1-1, 1-1-1) 0 1 -- 1

Colorado (6-3-3, 0-2-1) 0 0 -- 0

Goals (assists) -- Washington State: Jocelyn Jeffers (Brandi Vega), 72:41.

Goalkeepers (Min-Goals allowed-Saves) -- Washington State: Gurveen Clair (90-0-5). CU: Annie Brunner (90-1-2).