

Soccer: CU Buffs face Sanchez's former team -- Wyoming

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On Friday afternoon, the Colorado soccer team heads out on the road to face the Wyoming Cowgirls in Laramie.

It won't be just any other road game for head coach Danny Sanchez and his assistants, Jason Green and Don Trentham.

Before coming to Boulder this season, Sanchez spent the previous four years guiding the Cowgirls. Green was one of his assistants for all four years, while Trentham worked on the Wyoming staff a year ago.

The road trip is sure to bring back memories for Sanchez and the staff, especially as they eat at familiar restaurants or see familiar landmarks.

"It'll feel special, I think," Sanchez said. "We loved Laramie and we loved everything about it. I love the people of Wyoming. I love the administration, I love the team, I love the players.

"It'll feel weird, but we're all Buffs now and we won't talk about it to be honest. We'll focus on that Wyoming is (6-2). We know how difficult it is to play there."

Sanchez played a big role in making Wyoming a tough place to play.

The Wyoming program was born in 1995 -- one year before CU began play -- and the Cowgirls struggled for years. They went 0-20 in 1995 and just 27-115-7 during their first eight years.

Sanchez's predecessor, Anne Moore, got the Cowgirls rolling with three straight winning seasons from 2003-05.

Sanchez then took the program to a new level, going 36-34-11 during his four seasons. He led Wyoming to its best season ever in 2011, going 12-6-4. That included a 1-0 win against the Buffs -- Wyoming's first win against CU since 1997.

While at Wyoming, Sanchez had been pointing toward this season.

"We knew that this team was going to be good and they're proving it," he said of the Cowgirls. "I'm glad they're doing well and I hope they win the Mountain West. I hope they go to the (NCAA) tournament, because that was the goal for this year."

That said, Sanchez said any sentimental feelings ought to be washed away by kickoff.

"Come 4 o'clock on Friday, we're going to want to win," he said.

Wyoming will, no doubt, be juiced about facing its former coach. For CU, however, the game is a big one. At 4-1-2, the Buffs are off to a good start, but this should be one of their toughest tests in non-conference play.

"For us, it's good to go in these environments, on the road in a different situation playing a good team and really test us," Sanchez said. "It's going to be a huge test for us. They're a good team and we know it, so we'll need to be ready to play."

CU is 8-2-1 all-time against Wyoming, including 7-0-1 from 1999-2010. The Buffs are 3-1 in Laramie, the only

loss coming in 1997.

Showing improvement

The CU volleyball team is off to a 7-2 start, already matching the most wins of any season in the Liz Kritza era.

Kritza, in her fourth season at CU, came into the year with a 19-66 mark, with a peak of 7-22 in 2009.

Trying to snap a streak of five consecutive losing seasons, the Buffs are off to their best start since a 7-2 start in 2003.

CU will visit Air Force on Thursday and then will host Cal State-Bakersfield and Norfolk State on Saturday at the Colorado Invitational. Saturday's matches begin at 11 a.m.

Notable

Senior golfer Jason Burstyn is off to a great start. He won his first collegiate event at the Ballyneal Challenge last week. He followed that up by winning the Gene Miranda Air Force Falcon Invitational on Monday. ... The CU volleyball team has two win streaks of at least three matches this season. The Buffs never won more than two in a row from 2009-11. ... The soccer team wraps up non-conference play on Sunday with a home game against Air Force. The Buffs are 3-1 against the Falcons, but the teams haven't faced each other since 2004.

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