

Much-better CU Buffs look like they mean business in volleyball

By Nick Groke The Denver Post The Denver Post

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The Pac-12 is, by far, the best women's volleyball conference in the nation. Five of its teams are ranked in the top 10 — including No. 1 UCLA and No. 2 USC. And entering the start of league play this week, every team had a winning record.

But Colorado, guided by fourth-year coach Liz Kritza, has been a surprise so far. The Buffaloes are 11-2 after a 3-0 victory Wednesday night over Utah to start their Pac-12 schedule.

CU on Saturday hosts California, which, even at 6-5, is still receiving votes in the coaches poll.

"The fashion in which we won (against Utah) is important because it shows that we're taking another step, which is huge for these young players," Kritza told Boulder's Daily Camera.

Those players include junior middle blocker Nikki Lindow, who leads the Buffaloes in blocks and, with freshman outside hitter Alexis Austin, shared the team lead in kills entering this week.

For a team that was 6-24 overall and 1-21 in the Pac-12 in 2011, CU seems to have righted its ship.