

Howell blog: CU Buffs' Lappe pleased with Italy trip

By Brian Howell, Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

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During a 10-day trip to Italy earlier this month, the Colorado women's basketball team got the opportunity to bond as a team, get some experience on the court, and pick up a couple of wins.

"We experienced a little bit of everything and it was a great cultural experience," Buffs head coach Linda Lappe said. "Obviously the basketball wasn't as good as we thought it could or that it might be, but overall the trip was outstanding."

Playing a trio of Italian teams, the Buffs rolled to a 2-0 mark. They routed the Toscana All-Stars 80-47 in the first game and the Lazio All-Stars 96-22 in the second game.

In a third game, the Buffs faced another group of Italian players and led 20-7 after the first quarter. After that, the teams shuffled the rosters, with CU players on both sides and Italian players on both sides. That led to a different, yet enjoyable experience for both sides, as the Buffs got to play with some of Italians.

On the court, Lappe was pleased with what the trip - including the 10 practices before the trip - did for her team, which is coming off an NCAA Tournament appearance.

"We learned a lot through our 10 practices and saw where we think we're going to be stronger this year and where we might need to spend some time in the preseason," Lappe said. "We have a much better understanding this year than any other year I've coached of where we're at and what we need to work on in the preseason."

CU's true freshmen - Zoe Beard-Fails, Desiree Harris, Haley Smith and Bri Watts - all got significant playing time. The Buffs also saw the return of Rachel Hargis, a senior center who got on the court in a game for the first time since injuring her knee before the NCAA Tournament in March.

As for the point guard position, where the Buffs must replace departed senior Chucky Jeffery, Lappe said that is an ongoing process.

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