

Howell blog: Elliott likes what she sees from CU Buffs lacrosse

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It's been a while since Ann Elliott was announced as the first head coach for the Colorado women's lacrosse team and she has yet to coach her team in a real game.

The Buffaloes are inching ever closer to that moment, though.

On Tuesday, Elliott and the Buffs announced their 2014 schedule, which kicks off Feb. 13 at Stetson in DeLand, Fla.

CU has a 17-game schedule that includes eight contests in Boulder. The home opener will be Feb. 22 against Regis at Folsom Field.

Elliott said the schedule isn't quite as difficult as the one played by national power Northwestern - where Elliott played and coached before coming to Boulder, but said, "We're excited to keep building year after year our schedule - the depth, the opponents that we'll play."

For now, Elliott is focused on building her team. She was hired March 26, 2012, and since then has been recruiting her team. Last month, they finally got on the field together.

"We're very excited obviously to have finally started," Elliott said.

The Buffs are playing a limited schedule of games this fall, including a tournament at Navy last weekend, followed by a game against Drexel in Philadelphia.

"That was a great challenge for our girls to play a lot of teams that were in the (NCAA) Tournament last year and that are very competitive," Elliott said. "I think they got their first real taste of what college lacrosse is all about and what it's like to travel on the road and quickly turn around and play a game the next day."

Of the 23 players on the roster, 21 are freshmen, so leadership is coming from the coaching staff. Elliott said she likes that the group is "very coachable."

While the young Buffs may not have the experience and game knowledge that veteran teams have, Elliott said her squad shows a good amount of fight already.

"Our thought is that we want to be able to compete in every game we play. One thing we've noticed from our team is they're willing to work hard and they're competitive," she said. "They want to win and they truly believe that every time they step on the field they can and should win."

The Buffs will be at the Regis Play Day in Denver on Saturday to wrap up the fall portion of their schedule.

CU will play in the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation, with conference games against Denver, Fresno State, St. Mary's College, UC Davis, Stanford, USC, San Diego State, California and Oregon.

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