



2013-14 SEASON IN REVIEW

The 2013-14 season was one of ups and downs for the Colorado women's basketball team, but the one constant was that the expectation and tradition of winning has returned.

Colorado was 19-15 overall, logging its fourth-straight winning season and postseason tournament trip. The Buffaloes survived a bumpy Pac-12 Conference schedule, tying for ninth at 6-12, to make a run to the "Sweet 16" of the Postseason WNIT.

Preseason expectations were certainly plentiful. Both the media and coaches picked Colorado to finish third in the Pac-12 and the Buffs entered the season ranked No. 19 in both the *Associated Press* and *USA Today Sports* Coaches polls.

The Buffaloes stormed out of the gate winning nine straight, building on a 33-game nonconference regular season winning streak that had spanned back to 2010-11. During that stretch Colorado also claimed its fifth straight Omni Hotels Classic championship, and 17th overall, by defeating South Alabama, 94-61, in the first round and Rice, 75-58 in the title clash.

The Omni Classic wins, which put Colorado at 6-0, vaulted the Buffaloes to No. 11 in the AP poll where they stayed for three weeks. Home wins over Illinois and Denver and a road victory at Wyoming moved Colorado to 9-0, lifting its Coaches' poll ranking to No. 14 and setting up a showdown with No. 7 ranked Louisville.

Colorado battled in this road contest between two top 11 ranked teams. But in the end, the 2013 NCAA runner ups were able to pull out a 69-62 decision, putting an end to the Buffaloes' 33-game nonconference winning streak.

In what has apparently become a tradition, Colorado's Pac-12 schedule was heavy loaded at the beginning. The Buffaloes played four of their first six on the road, and the two home games against the consensus No. 1-2 preseason picks in the league race.

Colorado split the opening weekend, falling at USC 55-45 but rebounded for a 61-59 win at UCLA. While playing solid at times, the Buffaloes weren't consistent enough in home losses to No. 19 California and No. 4 Stanford.

At this point of the season two themes began to emerge. One, the Buffaloes were in every game, but just unable to finish consistently; 13 of Colorado's 15 losses were by 10 points or less. The second,

injuries would begin to take their toll.

Several players missed multiple games with injuries. Colorado had 10 different starting lineups in 2013-14 and no five started more than seven games together. The Buffaloes were the only team in the Pac-12 not to have at least one player start every game and only two – **Rachel Hargis** and **Jamee Swan** – played in all 34. The Buffaloes lost starting wing **Jasmine Sborov** for the second half of the season, and played without **Jen Reese**, the team's second leading scorer and rebounder, for the final postseason run.

After falling to 1-5 in the Pac-12, the Buffaloes fell out of the national rankings after 25 straight weeks. Colorado rebounded with home wins over Arizona and Utah and a nice road win over Oregon to go an even 3-3 over the next six. But then the Buffaloes dropped three straight, including a 55-51 setback at No. 20 Arizona State.

Following that loss to the Sun Devils it appeared the season may spiral out of control. At 14-12, and 4-11 in the Pac-12, Colorado found itself down 20 points late in the first half at last place Arizona. But the Buffaloes dug deep and embarked on one of the greatest comebacks in team history.

Colorado had trimmed Arizona's lead to 16, 39-23, at halftime. The Buffaloes then outscored Arizona 26-10 in the second half, holding the Wildcats to just two field goals, and 10 percent shooting (2-of-20), eventually winning 61-56 in overtime. The 16-point halftime deficit overcome to win is the second largest in team history and the 20-point comeback is believed to be the best overall.

In what has become a trademark over the last four seasons under head coach **Linda Lappe**, the Buffs finished strong, winning five of their last eight culminating in a Round of 16 WNIT appearance.

After defeating Arizona, Colorado claimed a pair dominant wins over UCLA in the span of a week. The first was a 62-42 home win, where the Buffaloes' defense nearly matched their record performance against the Wildcats, holding the Bruins to 12

second-half points and 12 percent shooting (3-of-25).

Colorado met UCLA again in the first round of the Pac-12 Tournament. The No. 9 seeded Buffaloes had the offensive side working this time. **Brittany Wilson** had 17 points and twin sister



Jen Reese



Jamee Swan



Ashley Wilson had a career-high 16 as Colorado dispatched the No. 8 seed Bruins, 76-65, giving the Buffaloes one Pac-12 Tournament win in all three seasons they've been a member of the league.

Taking advantage of a 12-day break between games, Colorado came out well rested and strong in a first round WNIT win over TCU, 78-71. Colorado then defeated Southern Utah in a regular season rematch, this time 79-68 in round No. 2.

The postseason run came to an end in the Round of 16 at UTEP. Colorado fell behind by 13 points early in the first half, but managed to climb back to take a brief lead late in the game. The Miners though, behind a program record crowd of 8,234, held on for a 68-60 decision, eventually advancing to the championship game.

Sophomore forward **Arielle Roberson** led Colorado in scoring (12.0 ppg) and rebounding (8.3 rpg) while ranking second in blocks (33) and third in field-goal percentage (.458). On the Pac-12 leaderboard Roberson ranked fifth in offensive rebounds (3.4 orpg), ninth in overall rebounding, blocks and field-goal percentage, 14th in defensive rebounds (4.9 drpg) and 20th in scoring.

An honorable mention All-Pac-12 selection, Roberson had a team-best seven double-doubles on the season four of which occurred within the final five nonconference games. She recorded three straight double-doubles (Wyoming-Illinois-Denver), becoming the first Buff to do that since Chucky Jeffery had three in a row from Feb. 3-Feb. 10, 2013 (at USC, vs. Oregon State, vs. Oregon). Roberson was named the Pac-12 Player of the Week for Dec. 2-8 averaging 15 points and 11 rebounds while hitting 48 percent from the field in the wins over Wyoming and Illinois.

Junior forward **Jen Reese** was second on the team in scoring and rebounding, finishing just a fraction of a point behind Roberson at 12.0 points per game while pulling down 5.8 rebounds. An honorable mention selection to the 2014 All-Pac-12 team, Reese was sixth in the league in field goal accuracy at 48.3 percent while also ranking eighth in free-throw percentage (.744) and 21st



Arielle Roberson



Ashley Wilson

in scoring. She scored in double figures in 17 of her 27 games before missing the final seven with a broken bone in her left shoulder. Reese had a pair of double-doubles, including an 18-point, 13-rebound effort in the win at Oregon. She matched her career high of 22 points twice this season, coming in back-to-back home games against the Arizona schools in January.

Senior guard **Brittany Wilson** led the team in steals (42) while ranking second in assists (93) and third in scoring (10.8 ppg). She joined twin sister Ashley as the two leading scorers in postseason play (11.0 ppg) and led the way for the Buffaloes during the Pac-12 Tournament averaging 16.5 points over the two games. On the overall Pac-12 charts she was 11th in free-throw percentage (.735), 13th in assists and 25th in

scoring. Wilson had Colorado's top individual scoring effort of the season, putting in a career-high 26 points in the win over Iowa.

Sophomore forward **Jamee Swan** topped Colorado in both field-goal percentage and blocked shots. She also ranked high on the Pac-12 charts in those two categories, coming in at fifth in field-goal accuracy at 50.5 percent and eighth in blocks at 1.1 per outing.

Senior guard **Ashley Wilson** finished her career in style. Serving as the team captain, she recorded career-high numbers in every category. Wilson averaged 7.6 points, 4.2 rebounds, just under two assists per game and was second on the team in steals with 38. Ten of her 12 career double-figure scoring games came this season, including seven of the final 11 contests down the stretch — Wilson only had two double-figure scoring games in her first 97 career outings. She shot 73.1 percent from the free-throw line as a senior, ranking 12th in the Pac-12. Wilson persevered through numerous injuries throughout her career, still appearing in 121 career games tying for 20th on CU's all-time charts.

Junior guard **Lexy Kresl** led Colorado in assists (3.1 apg) and free-throw percentage (.841) while ranking third in both steals (1.1 spg) and 3-point field goals (27). Kresl ranked third in the Pac-12 in free-throw accuracy at 84.1 percent (69-of-82) while ranking 11th in assist-to-turnover ratio (1.2) and 12th in assists. Her free-throw performance also ranks 19th on CU's single-season list.