



# Tough test awaits CU in season opener

## No. 20 Florida visits Buffs today

Camera staff report  
Friday, August 22, 2008

The University of Colorado soccer team begins play with its biggest non-conference game of the season when the Buffs host 20th-ranked Florida today.

The Buffs' 2008 campaign begins at 4 p.m. at Prentup Field against a Gators squad that won the Southeastern Conference title and made a Sweet 16 appearance last season.

CU hosts in-state rival Denver at 3 p.m. Sunday.

The Buffs are coming off of a 2007 campaign in which they advanced to at least the second round of the NCAA tournament for the fourth season in a row.

The Buffs return 13 letterwinners from a year ago, including nine starters and leading scorer Nikki Marshall.

Six seniors also return for the Buffs.

"The seniors have high expectations for this season," senior defender Michelle Wenino said. "It's our last year and we want to go out strong and go further than we've ever been. We want to win the Big 12 Tournament and go deep into NCAA's. The six of us all know what it takes to get there and we want to push everyone else to help us get to where we want to be."

Wenino, a first-team All-Big 12 selection, started every game for the Buffs and led the team in minutes played with 2,018.

Both goalies from a year ago also return in Kirstin Radlinski and Kara Linder, who combined for 10 shutouts.

Eight freshmen join the Buffs this fall, including Silver Creek High School grad Kate Russell.

"Playing both Florida and Denver right off the bat will be a good way to see what we will be made of this season," Wenino said. "With three freshmen in the starting lineup, Florida will be a great test for us, and the Denver game is always a tough and fun matchup."

For Friday's match against Florida, the Boulder Buff Club Tailgate will be providing a free hot dog and drink to the first 500 fans. On Sunday against Denver, the first 500 fans will receive a free CU inflatable pennant.



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