



Gators take bite out of Buffaloes

Colorado loses second straight in own tourney

By Michael Kelly For the Camera
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The Colorado Buffaloes thought No. 8 Florida was more vulnerable on Thursday than Colorado State was on Wednesday.

"We thought they were more beatable than CSU was," senior Alex Buth said. "We were twice as pumped up."

They might have been, but the results were the same. Like the No. 21 Rams, the Gators beat the Buffs in four games, 25-22, 25-20, 22-25, 25-18, in the Colorado Invitational on Thursday.

After starting the season 6-0 and winning 18 of 19 games, the Buffs (6-2) have lost two straight and have dripped six of their last eight games.

"We're frustrated. Nobody likes to lose, especially lose two in a row," Colorado coach Pi'i Aiu said. "But if we dwell on the two losses we're going to lose to North Carolina, too."

The match with the Tar Heels on Saturday night is the Buffs' last chance to win a match in their tournament. Colorado's mantra this season is to forget about the past and focus on the present, so they won't stew over dropping two matches to ranked teams.

"We're taking every game as its own," junior Emilee Sisco said. "That's our motto this year -- one and done. If we lose a point or a game, it's over and we move on to the next game or point."

The Buffs applied that philosophy to their match with the Gators. After dropping the first two games, Colorado stepped up its intensity in the third game, grabbing as much as a six-point lead and keeping the Gators at bay. When Florida made a small run to close the gap to 24-22, Aiu called a timeout and Sisco came through with a kill that gave the Buffs the win.

"I feel like we played a better match tonight," CU senior Callie Webster said. "The second game against CSU we had a huge dip. A lot of us went home thinking about that game and learned from it. We definitely learned from that and didn't have that big dip."

In the first two games, Florida grabbed the edge early and didn't falter. The Gators led the second game 15-12 when they started to put some distance between them and the Buffs. A kill by Kristy Jaeckel got Florida rolling, and when Colorado called a timeout the Gators led 22-16.

Colorado's timeout worked -- at least for a while. The Buffs pulled to within 22-20, but they couldn't complete the comeback, and the Gators finished the game with a kill by Cindy Bathelt.

"We were right with them, but that's not good enough," Buth said. "It was very frustrating."

Now the Buffs' goal is to get one win in their tournament and start another winning streak.

"It's more important that we continue to play well, but at this point a little confidence booster would be nice," Webster said. "Winning six matches and losing two, we're definitely hungry to win another."



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