



CU's McConnell-Miller signs four

Class includes 3 top in-state preps

By Chris Shelton

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Freshman Alyssa Fressle has yet to play in a regular season game for the Colorado women's basketball team, but already the Highlands Ranch guard is making an impact on the program.

Coach Kathy McConnell-Miller on Thursday credited Fressle for helping CU land three of the four top in-state players in the 2009 recruiting class. It's CU's largest in-state recruiting class since 1997.

"I honestly think that Alyssa really was the leader in being the first player out of high school that had significant choices who said, 'I'm going to stay home,'" McConnell-Miller said. "When Alyssa Fressle came here our players went from two days of playing pick up basketball in the summer to four and five. She can't get out of the gym, and it's contagious. That's what these (2009) girls do."

The Buffs received letters of intent from Boulder twin wing players Brenna and Meagan Malcolm-Peck on Thursday, and Colorado Springs point guard Janeesa "Chucky" Jeffery on Wednesday. Also signing was 6-foot-7 center Melissa MacFarlane of Omaha, Neb. The only player CU missed out on was Broomfield center Anna Prins, the state's top prospect, who chose Iowa State over CU, among others.

The 2009 recruiting class addresses three main needs -- depth at point guard, mental toughness and a hole at center.

The Buffs will bring in the type of point guard they believe can compete in the Big 12 in Jeffery, who was a bit of an unknown in this recruiting cycle because she did not play much club basketball this spring and summer.

"We feel like we got a steal in Chucky, in that she could have gone a lot of places," McConnell-Miller said. "It's what we needed. There's no doubt. ... She's got the size (5-10). She's got the ability to run it. She's got good leadership skills and she's got the handles. She's got everything you need."

McConnell-Miller began recruiting the 6-2 Malcolm-Pecks when she became CU's coach in 2005.

"The Malcolm-Pecks go to Denver (twice a week) for training," McConnell-Miller said. "They work out for two hours in the morning. Then they go to practice. It's inside of their hearts. We're adding three kids to the roster that are going to elevate the mental toughness, the physical nature of the game and the love and the passion for the game."

MacFarlane will be CU's lone back-to-the basket center when she arrives. The timing is important since the Big 12 will be adding Prins, as well as the top prospect in the nation -- Brittney Griner, a 6-8 center who dunks regularly and who signed with Baylor on Wednesday.

"(MacFarlane's) been worked with, but never been asked to do more than stand in the paint and score," McConnell-Miller said. "We're going to challenge her to elevate her game and elevate it quickly. ... She's got the potential, it's just a matter of how quickly she responds at this level."

Dunn out

Sophomore reserve center Courtney Dunn was injured in Sunday's exhibition game against Regis. She suffered a bone bruise and will miss Sunday's 2:30 p.m. season opener at home against Central Florida. McConnell-Miller did not know how long Dunn would be out.



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