



CU women adding new wrinkle

Bufs starting to drive to basket

Saturday, December 29, 2007

Although not new to the offense run by the Colorado women's basketball team, the Buffs showed a new dimension to their attack in Friday's 81-38 win over Southern Utah.

Coach Kathy McConnell-Miller hopes to see more of it today when CU hosts Jacksonville State (5-7) at 2 p.m. in the Coors Events Center.

What McConnell-Miller wants to see more of is herplayers driving to the basket.

"I really thought, off the catch, we tried to explore off the dribble," McConnell-Miller said of Friday's game. "That was the first time I've seen that out of our offense consistently."

The Buffs have been working on taking the ball to the basket -- what McConnell-Miller calls "drive and drift" -- in practices all year.

"Drive and drift is almost a mainstay in practice," McConnell-Miller said. "It's something we do every day, but maybe not something that's carried over to the flow of the offense."

One reason for the No. 25 Buffs not driving to the basket up to now was that the Buffs were relying so heavily on 3-point shooting.

Colorado (9-2), riding an eight-game win streak, have taken 281 shots from 3-point range this season -- most in program history up to this point.

Colorado's offense has revolved around trying to get the ball inside and then back outside to open shooters. The Buffs settled for outside shots instead of taking it to the hoop.

But in Friday's game, players such as Bianca Smith, Aija Putnina, Jackie McFarland and Brittany Spears put the ball on the floor and went to the basket. McFarland finished with 22 points, Spears 17, Smith 12 and Putnina 6.

It paid off in another way, too. The Buffs took 16 free throws and made 13.

"I did like the aggressive nature of trying to take teams off the bounce," McConnell-Miller said. "We've been a good 3-point shooting team. We've been good with the inside-outside combination. ... It just gave us a different dimension. Some of them scored. Some of them passed out of it and we hit the shots. But it's definitely something we'd like to add and be more consistent with."



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CU women's basketball preview

By Chris Shelton

Sunday, December 30, 2007

TODAY: Colorado (9-2) hosts Jacksonville State (5-7) at 2 p.m. in the Coors Events Center.

BROADCAST: Radio on KKZN (760 AM) with Cory Lopez and Carol Callan.

THE SERIES: First meeting.

KEY STAT: The Buffs are on an eight-game win streak.

CU UPDATE: Colorado is going for a perfect December for the sixth time in program history. CU is 6-0 this month and is going for its first undefeated December since the 2003-04 season. CU's best ever December was a 9-0 mark in the 1992-93 season. ... Colorado has held its last three opponents to under 44 points.

JSU UPDATE: The Gamecocks haven't played since losing to Alabama 63-54 on Dec. 22. ... They have lost three in a row. ... Jacksonville State is allowing opponents to average 70.6 points per game. ... Meanwhile, JSU has scored at least 70 points in nine of 12 games this year. ... The Gamecocks are 2-4 on the road this season.

PROBABLE STARTERS: Colorado: Susie Powers, G, 5-10, Sr., 4.1 ppg, 4.5 apg; Hannah Skildum, G, 6-0, Jr., 4.5 ppg, 2.0 rpg; Brittany Spears, F, 6-1, Fr., 13.6 ppg, 7.0 rpg; Jackie McFarland, F, 6-3, Sr., 17.3 ppg, 8.0 rpg; Aija Putnina, F, 6-3, So., 7.0 ppg, 8.0 rpg; **Jacksonville State:** Kelsey Johnikin, G, 5-8, So., 7.4 ppg, 2.7 apg; Danielle Beneby, G, 5-9, Fr., 9.1 ppg, 2.5 apg; Eren McMichael, G, 5-8, So., 11.5 ppg, 2.1 rpg; Jolie Efezokhae, F, 6-1, So., 12.8 ppg, 6.8 rpg; Cierra Duhart, F, 6-0, Jr., 10.6 ppg, 7.8 rpg.

UPCOMING: Colorado hosts Pepperdine in a 7 p.m. game Friday.



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