



DeSaverio, Buffs make quick work of Sooners

No. 18 CU gears up for No. 12 Oklahoma St. with easy victory

By Kyle McDaniel Camera Sports Writer
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Buffs forward Gianna DeSaverio has a knack for being in the right place at the right time.

The Colorado soccer team's senior striker is fast and has the ability to turn an error in the backfield by the opposing team's defense into an opportunity for a goal.

"If they make mistakes when she's around, she's going to pounce on it," associate head coach Paul Hogan said. "That's just the way she is."

CU coach Bill Hempen was not available to the media after the match.

DeSaverio showed off her ability by scoring two goals less than one minute and 30 seconds apart on Friday against Big 12 foe Oklahoma. Her effort helped the No. 18-ranked Buffs beat the Sooners 5-0 at Prentup Field without the help of star Nikki Marshall, who is training with the U-20 National team.

DeSaverio's first goal came on a cross from the right side of the goal by Colorado freshman midfielder Kate Russell. Russell, who finished the game with two assists, played a ball deep into the box, and DeSaverio managed to deflect the ball with part of her upper body.

"It was nice to score -- to finally finish some opportunities," DeSaverio said. "The first one, kind of hit it in. But that's OK. It doesn't matter -- whatever goes in the goal."

Her second goal came when she stole a lazy pass from an Oklahoma defender and had a one-on-one with Sooners' keeper Lisa Jett. DeSaverio cut the ball to her left side and fired a shot into the back of an empty net.

DeSaverio helped the Buffs take a 2-0 lead into halftime, but the team wasn't finished scoring against the struggling Sooners (1-8-0, 0-1 Big 12).

Freshman Kelly Butler scored an unassisted goal about midway through the second half when she fired a laser shot from about 20 yards out, giving Colorado a 3-0 lead. Sophomore Mel Hicks added Colorado's last two goals late in the second half.

Hicks, who had not scored a goal this season until Friday, was happy she finally was able to find the back of the net.

"I guess I'm just relieved," Hicks said. "I don't know what the word is. It was rewarding. I have the most supportive teammates in the world. After I scored that first goal, I just turned around and I looked at everyone on the sidelines. All the teammates, even though we were up (3-0) and it wasn't a game-winner or anything, it was so exciting to finally be able to be apart of the success."

Both of Hicks' goals came on serves into the penalty box from Colorado outside midfielders. Coach Hogan said Colorado was able to switch the ball from one side of the field to the other, which helped the outside players cross the ball near the goal.

"Our central midfield did a great job of swinging the ball out wide to give them (outside midfielders) the ability to serve the ball into the box for our chances," Hogan said. "We do that consistently in training. It's something we do a lot."

Friday was in some sense a tune up game for the Buffs. On Sunday, Colorado (8-1-1, 2-0) hosts a tough Big 12 opponent in No. 12-ranked and undefeated Oklahoma State at 1 p.m. But, after scoring five goals on Friday, the Buffs feel they have the confidence to beat Oklahoma State.

"I think it was important for us to score some goals so that going into our next game, it's going to be a little bit harder, but now we have more confidence in our finishing," DeSaverio said. "I think that helps a lot going into a harder game."

The Buffs, who are now on an eight game winning streak, should also have Marshall back for the critical Big 12 match.



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