



# Hempen's Buffs remain in contention for Big 12 title

## CU tied for first with 3 league games left

By Kyle McDaniel Camera Sports Writer  
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With four games remaining to play in the regular season, the Colorado soccer team is starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

The No. 22-ranked Buffs won another Big 12 game on Sunday and took a positive step toward their goal of winning the conference title, defeating Baylor 4-0 on a chilly afternoon.

Junior midfielder Kelly Menachof scored two goals in the second half to lead the Buffs. Senior striker Gianna DeSaverio and Nikki Keller secured CU's other two goals.

Colorado now has three Big 12 games and one non-conference game remaining. CU coach Bill Hempen said the team just needs to continue to play strong as it closes out the regular season.

"We just have to make sure we maintain our focus," Hempen said. "I think they're starting to see a little bit of a light at the end of the tunnel as far as what we can accomplish here at the end of the year."

The Buffs improved to 11-2-2 overall and 5-1-1 in Big 12 play. Colorado remained tied for first place in the Big 12 with Texas A&M, each with 16 points. Baylor dropped to 5-7-2, 1-3-1.

Colorado dominated Baylor by possessing the ball well in Baylor's half of the field. The Bears struggled offensively to find any rhythm as a result and didn't have a shot on goal in the first half.

The Buffs were firing on all cylinders as DeSaverio kicked things off early for Colorado. She scored three minutes and 59 seconds into the game after Keller crossed the ball into the box and DeSaverio beat Baylor keeper Gianna Quintana on the right side of the goal.

Colorado continued to put pressure on the Bears but couldn't find the back of the net for the rest of the first half. Going into halftime with a 1-0 lead, Hempen cautioned his team against letting up.

"What I made sure they understood is that we're one mistake away from being tied," Hempen said. "Now having said that, they played pretty darn good in the first half. They just had to maintain that focus and maintain that intensity."

The Buffs came out in the second half where they left off and dominated possession again. Keller scored Colorado's second goal of the game shortly after halftime. She managed to strike the ball on a deflected shot after several Buffs fired shots that were blocked by Baylor defenders in the box.

Keller said her goal was a confidence booster for the team at that moment.

"The first half we moved the ball around great," Keller said. "We just weren't finishing it, especially on my goal. It was like the fourth shot and it finally went in. It gave us the confidence we needed and then we got two more after that."

The Buffs will play their next three games on the road. They face Nebraska on Friday, and will travel to take on Iowa State Sunday. Colorado will then play at Drake before coming home for their regular-season finale against Texas A&M on Oct. 26.



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