



# Mullaney moving forward

## Bufs host guard's former team tonight

By Ryan Thorburn

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Kelly Jo Mullaney has turned the page.

But the Colorado sophomore understands why she is a storyline today when the Buffs host Colorado State at the Coors Events Center (7 p.m., FSN).

Two years ago, Mullaney was an important piece in Jen Warden's rebuilding puzzle in Fort Collins. As a true freshman she averaged a team-high 14.5 points per game for the Rams, including 17 points in a 56-51 loss to CU.

Mullaney was also one of the CSU women's basketball players who made national headlines for all the wrong reasons when the group planted a homemade bomb outside of a friend's house in a prank gone wrong.

No one was hurt in the December, 2006, incident but property and the program's image were damaged.

"I don't regret going to CSU at all. It was a learning experience," said Mullaney, who was suspended by Warden over the incident 13 games into her career and never suited up for the Rams again. "I enjoyed my time at Colorado State and had fun there. I've moved forward and I've grown a lot from that experience."

CU coach Kathy McConnell-Miller gave Mullaney a fresh start in Boulder.

Last season, while sitting out per NCAA transfer rules, the talented player from Minneapolis was able to get a different perspective.

"It was really hard. I've never been one to sit on the bench," Mullaney said. "Since third grade I've been playing basketball all year in games and summer leagues and all that, so it was definitely hard. You gain more knowledge watching the game and watching your teammates play. I think that was helpful."

Mullaney had a quiet CU debut on Sunday, finishing with two points, one assist and three turnovers during the 86-59 victory over Central Florida. She emerged as the team's starting point guard after Whitney Houston was lost for the season due to a knee injury last month.

"Offensively we have to focus on better execution," Mullaney said. "But with the type of players we have the offense will come."

When Mullaney takes the floor tonight there aren't going to be a lot of familiar faces on the visiting

bench.

Warden, a former CU player and assistant coach, was fired after compiling a 21-69 record in three seasons at CSU, including last season's painful 4-28 campaign.

Starting forward Juanise Cornell is Mullaney's only former Rams teammate still playing in Fort Collins.

"I'm just really excited. I'm not going to look at it differently than any other game or opponent," Mullaney said. "But it will be fun to be able to play them just because I went to school there and stuff. I don't have a lot of connections because all my friends and everybody have transferred and the coach is gone."



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