



# Smith, Buffs aiming to get back on track

## Junior guard working through shooting slump

By Ryan Thorburn

Tuesday, December 2, 2008

November is over and Bianca Smith expects the same for her scoring slump.

After shooting 36.9 percent from behind the arc last season, the junior guard has been struggling with her stroke with 10 made 3-pointers on 42 attempts (23.8 percent) through five games this season.

During Colorado's current three-game losing streak Smith has averaged 6.7 points and suffered through a 1-for-13 night from 3-point distance during the blowout loss at Virginia.

"It's kind of ironic because this same time last season I was 0-for-11 in the Sienna game and we lost," Smith said after Monday's practice. "Maybe Thanksgiving is not my thing."

The Buffs (2-3) will try to bounce back from a last-place finish in the Coors Classic tonight when they host Arkansas-Pine Bluff at 7 p.m. at the Coors Events Center.

If Smith can get her groove back CU could really have a balanced offense with Brittany Spears (20.6 ppg), Kara Richards (12.0) and Alyssa Fressle (10.4) all scoring in double figures.

Last season the Buffs relied on all-everything forward Jackie McFarland to do most of the heavy lifting.

"With our offense it's built for four and five players to score. It's not built for one person to score all the points," Smith said. "That's been our biggest focus this year is we don't have just one go-to person. We have five people on the floor that can shoot, pass and score."

After point guard Whitney Houston was lost for the season due to a knee injury, head coach Kathy McConnell-Miller had to do some shuffling in the starting lineup.

Smith, who is listed at 5-9, has found herself matched up with 6-foot-something forwards at times this season in the Buffs' four-guard attack. She is averaging 5.8 rebounds, which ties her with the 6-4 Richards for second on the team.

"Post defense is something I've had to add to my game, which has been a little difficult because I'm smaller than almost all the forwards we've played," Smith said. "When we get into the Big 12 something's going to have to give. I'm going to have to get in the weight room or something. ...

"But offensively I actually prefer the four (position) because it gives me an opportunity to play against bigger and slower posts."

After dropping back-to-back games to UMass and Drexel at home, McConnell-Miller gave her players Sunday off to clear their heads. She found out later that Smith and Spears showed up at the Coors Events Center that night anyway to get some extra shots up.

"That's a good sign," McConnell-Miller said. "They know they had a tough weekend but on their day off when the lights are out they're still coming in and lacing them up. ...

"I don't anticipate a hangover (from the losses). I just think it's a matter of strategically finding ways for them to be successful and bringing out the best in them right now."

Smith, a tri-captain along with seniors Richards and Hannah Skildum, understands how important it will be for the Buffs to finish the non-conference schedule with some confidence and victories.

There are currently four Big 12 teams ranked in the top 10.

"It was a hard pill to swallow," Smith said of finishing 0-2 at the Coors Classic. "We just had to come in here (for practice) with a positive attitude and let everybody know that we're going to keep fighting.

"This is preseason and it's nothing compared to what we're going to face in the Big 12, so we have to get stronger and learn from our mistakes and get better."



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colorado classics

## Scott-Pebley shows a builder's touch

Reporter Irv Moss writes about stars from the past

By Irv Moss  
The Denver Post

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Raegan Scott provided a strong presence in the paint during her basketball career at the University of Colorado during the program's glory days of the 1990s. (Denver Post file photo)

With a resume filled with basketball experience, Raegan Scott-Pebley thought she was well-versed on just about every detail of the sport.

Her father, Ray Scott, coaches basketball. After graduating from Mountain View High School in Orem, Utah, Scott-Pebley went on to play at the University of Colorado, where coach Ceal Barry was directing a team that annually was among the best in the mid-1990s.

Her playing experience continued in the WNBA, and then she turned to coaching with assistant jobs at George Mason and Colorado State.

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But she found she still had plenty to learn when she accepted her first head coaching job. She took over at Utah State for the 2003-04 season, resurrecting its women's basketball program after a 16-year absence.

"I knew it would be a challenge but also a really good opportunity," Scott-Pebley said. "I knew it was going to be rough and there would be a lot of hard work developing a program."

There was more to the job than practicing and playing games. She was starting a program from scratch.

"We needed uniforms," Scott-Pebley said. "We didn't have any basketballs. We needed facilities, like a locker room. We tore down walls and put down carpeting. We didn't have any players. There was the fundraising."

Utah State's return to women's college basketball didn't turn any heads. Scott-Pebley's first team finished 5-22, but she wasn't discouraged.

She knew she wanted to be a coach and follow in the footsteps of her father, whom she remembered as always having a smile on his face, enjoying his work. And there was her experience playing for Barry at CU as a 6-foot-4 center.

"Ceal's program was based on integrity and discipline and was a source of pride for the university," Scott-Pebley said. "She did a great job teaching her players the game, and it was a great time to be a Buffalo. We want to run a program here with the same strong principles we had at CU."

Scott-Pebley was out of basketball for a year before taking the Utah State job. While coaching at CSU, she met her future husband, Keith Pebley, who was a member of coach Sonny Lubick's football staff.

Pebley now is coaching high school football in Logan, Utah.

With five seasons on the job, Scott-Pebley has settled into the normal tasks of coaching. Recruiting is every coach's monster, and it only was compounded when the Aggies moved from the Midwest Conference to the Western Athletic Conference during Scott-Pebley's term. Utah State brought back its women's basketball program so it could fulfill requirements to join a conference.

"We've expanded our recruiting boundaries to include international players," Scott-Pebley said. "We thought it was a way to cast a bigger net out there. It



Raegan Scott-Pebley (Special to The Denver Post)

has helped us become more competitive."

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Her squad this year has two players from Senegal, two from Australia and one from Canada.

"We're working to get better every year," Scott-Pebley said. "We were 14-14 the second year. We're 3-3 this year. It takes time for the seeds to grow."

As the seeds grow at Utah State, Scott-Pebley is doing her part to add honor to the coaching profession.

## Scott-Pebley bio

Born: Aug. 12, 1975, in Fountain Valley, Calif.

High school: Graduated from Mountain View in Orem, Utah.

College: Colorado.

Family: Husband Keith, son Joe, daughter Harper.

Hobbies: Travel, and she's an avid reader.

Aspirations: A strong tugging at her heart to do humanitarian work in Senegal.

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