



# Visiting Cyclones picking up steam

## Colorado hosts No. 21 Iowa State

By Ryan Thorburn  
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The future looks promising for the Colorado women's basketball program.

Brittany Spears, the Big 12's third leading scorer, is a sophomore. Alyssa Fressle and Julie Seabrook are only freshmen. A very talented recruiting class will arrive on campus this summer.

But right now it's tough for CU head coach Kathy McConnell-Miller, who recently signed a contract extension through 2013, to think about the possibilities.

"I can't live for next year and I can't coach this team thinking about next year," McConnell-Miller said. "I'm definitely pleased with all of that. That's all good and well. But my seniors, Hanna (Skildum) and Kara (Richards), have given everything to this program. These kids have battled every single day, so we're focused on the next practice and the next game. We have eight games left in the regular season and the Big 12 Tournament and who knows what can happen."

The Buffs (10-10, 2-6) -- who opened up Big 12 play with four consecutive losses, all against ranked opponents -- host No. 21 Iowa State today at the Coors Events Center (2 p.m., FSN).

The Cyclones (17-4, 5-2) are coming off back-to-back wins over No. 18 Kansas State (60-50) and No. 10 Texas A&M (67-50).

"They're experienced in so many ways," McConnell-Miller said. "They're just a very solid team."

Iowa State averages a league-best 7.9 3-pointers per game and Bill Fennelly's balanced lineup includes five players averaging between 7.0 and 13.0 points per game.

Senior guard Heather Ezell, coming off a 25-point outburst against Texas A&M, leads the team at 12.7 ppg. Nicky Wieben, who missed the Cyclones' run last March with a torn ACL, is averaging 9.0 ppg. and 5.0 rpg.

"This is going to be the greatest example in my time at Iowa State where if our players put the team first, we'll be very good," Fennelly predicted before the season at the Big 12 media days.

Iowa State has won nine of the last 10 meetings with CU, including a regular-season sweep and first-round win at the Big 12 Tournament last season.

The Buffs -- coming off a disappointing 65-54 loss at Kansas on Wednesday -- played Baylor and Oklahoma tough at home and defeated Nebraska 75-73 a week ago at the Coors Events Center.

"I definitely think we're a different team at home, unfortunately," McConnell-Miller said. "I wish I could figure out why that is. But we've had solid practices and I think they're ready to go out and play with intensity."



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## CU women's preview: Feb. 7, vs. Iowa State

**TODAY:** Colorado hosts No. 21 Iowa State at 2 p.m. at the Coors Events Center.

**BROADCAST:** Television: FSN with Marc Stout (play-by-play), Ceal Barry (color) and Alanna Rizzo (sideline); Radio: KKZN AM 760 with Mike Rice (play-by-play) and Carol Callan (color).

**STORYLINE:** The Buffs (10-10, 2-6) are coming off a 65-54 loss at Kansas on Wednesday. ... Kara Richards scored 17 points and 10 rebounds but was on the bench in early foul trouble during KU's decisive 21-4 run before the half. ... The Cyclones (17-4, 5-2) are coming off an impressive 67-50 victory over No. 10 Texas A&M. ... Heather Ezell led the way with 25 points against the Aggies.

**KEY STAT:** During Big 12 play Colorado is the lowest scoring team (54.1 ppg) and Iowa State has the conference's No. 2 scoring defense (53.1 ppg).

**COACHES:** Kathy McConnell-Miller is 51-63 in her fourth year at CU. Bill Fennelly is 297-136 in his 13th season at ISU.

### PROBABLE STARTERS:

**Colorado** -- G Britney Blythe, 5-9, sophomore, 2.6 ppg, 1.3 rpg, G Bianca Smith, 5-9, junior, 10.8 ppg, 4.8 rpg, G Alyssa Fressle, 5-10, freshman, 8.7 ppg, 2.8 rpg, F Brittany Spears, 6-1, sophomore, 17.8 ppg, 7.9 rpg, C Kara Richards, 12.3 ppg, 6.9 rpg.

**Iowa State** -- G Heather Ezell, 5-9, senior, 12.7 ppg, 3.0 rpg, G Alison Lacey, 6-0, junior, 9.9 ppg, 5.5 rpg, G Kelsey Bolte, 6-1, sophomore, 10.1 ppg, 4.7 rpg, F Amanda Nisleit, 6-0, senior, 7.8 ppg, 5.0 rpg, F Nicky Wiben, 6-4, senior, 9.0 ppg, 5.0 rpg.

**SERIES:** Colorado leads 36-25, including an 18-8 edge in Boulder.

**UP NEXT:** The Buffs travel to College Station next Saturday to take on No. 10 Texas A&M (1 p.m., no television).



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