



# Cyclones dust Buffs

## CU women fall to Iowa State

By Kyle Ringo

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Another long, cold stretch on the offensive end doomed the Colorado women's basketball team Wednesday night on the road at No. 25 Iowa State.

The Buffs played strong through the first half but fell apart early in the second, making just one field goal in the first five minutes after halftime, allowing a senior-laden opponent to pull away to a 76-63 victory.

Scoring slumps have been a season-long scourge for coach Kathy McConnell-Miller and her team. They haven't solved the problem because it's never just one issue causing the droughts.

"If it was the same thing every time, it would be easy to fix, but it's not," McConnell-Miller said. "Sometimes we're turning it over. Sometimes we're taking shots too quick or we're settling for shots."

When the Buffs finally got out of their funk Wednesday and back into a rhythm, the Cyclones had built a double-digit advantage that grew to 19 points. It was too much to overcome.

ISU coach Bill Fennelly earned his 300th win at the school and his team won its 20th game of the season. It is the 10th time in Fennelly's tenure the Cyclones have won 20 games in a season.

Fennelly has had McConnell-Miller's number since she took over the CU program. The Cyclones have beaten the Buffs six consecutive times and in 11 of the past 12 meetings.

"When we guarded something really well, they're very experienced and they used their counters extremely well," McConnell-Miller said.

Three players scored in double figures for the Cyclones. Sophomore Kelsey Bolte finished with 23 points and nine rebounds. She made five of six 3-pointers. Alison Lacey scored 20 points and Nicky Wieben added 19.

CU senior Kara Richards scored 21 points and pulled down 10 rebounds, making nine of 14 field goals. Part of the problem that leads to long scoreless stretches is the lack of a consistent third scoring option other than Richards or Brittany Spears.

McConnell-Miller said her team plays its best when three or four players are aggressive and smart on the offensive end. Most of the time the third option is guard Bianca Smith, but Wednesday it was Kelly Jo Mullaney.

The sophomore kept the Buffs in the game in the first half, scoring 13 consecutive points for the Buffs during one stretch and making her first seven shots. Mullaney scored a career-best 20 points in a game in which Spears and Smith combined for just 14.

“Kelly Jo really just took command of things,” McConnell-Miller said.

The Buffs fell to 11-14 and must win their final three regular season games and at least one Big 12 Conference tournament game to have any chance at a postseason berth. The only option other than finishing at or above .500 is to win the conference tournament outright.

McConnell-Miller said her team is aware of the hill it must climb.

“They want to be successful,” McConnell-Miller said. “They want to keep playing. They’re not done. This isn’t a team that has given up and it’s not a team that’s not playing its best basketball. They’re playing really well right now.”



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