



Buff spikers host Red Raiders tonight

By Ryan Thorburn

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A lot of Big 12 volleyball teams would be looking past Texas Tech tonight with a match against No. 3 Texas looming.

Not Colorado.

Remember, this is a team coming off a six-win 2007 season and a tough road trip last week that yielded losses at Baylor and No. 2 Nebraska.

The Buffs -- whose only conference victory last season was at home against the Red Raiders -- plan to ignore Texas Tech's record (5-12 overall, 0-6 in conference) and the fact that Texas will be visiting the Coors Events Center on Saturday night.

Both matches are scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m.

"I didn't even know Texas was coming in. When are they coming?" CU head coach Pi'i Aiu said half-jokingly. "With what happened last season I don't think we look past anybody. I think we know everyone can beat us. Texas Tech split with us last year, and we know this is a big match."

Despite losing six of their last eight matches, the Buffs (8-6, 2-3) have a chance to make a move in the standings this week. They are currently in a three-way tie with Missouri and Texas A&M for sixth in the Big 12 entering this key two-game home stand.

"We're right in the thick of things I think. Nebraska, Texas and Kansas State have kind of separated themselves from the pack. And Baylor is starting to do so," Aiu said. "Fifth in this conference is not bad. And anywhere from fifth to 12th is really wide open for anyone."

CU's three losses in conference were on the road to heavyweights Kansas State, Nebraska and Baylor. Picking up a win over Texas -- and, of course, Texas Tech -- would provide the Buffs with a nice boost up the conference ladder.

"We've got to keep building," Aiu said. "I think we're doing it as we continue to work hard, but we've got to work hard every day."

The Buff Club will host a barbeque at the northwest entrance of the Coors Events Center prior to tonight's action. The first 500 fans will receive a free hotdog and drink. An autograph session will follow the match.

Soccer

The Buffs (9-2-2 overall, 3-1-1 Big 12) return to action on Friday when they host Texas at 4 p.m. at Prentup Field.

CU head coach Bill Hempen will be back on the sideline after missing what was officially his 250th career victory -- the Buffs' 2-0 win at Kansas last Sunday -- after getting two yellow cards during the team's loss to Missouri to open the road trip.

The Longhorns (8-1-2, 1-1-1) are currently tied for sixth in the standings with Baylor (5-5-2, 1-1-1), which visits Prentup Field at 1 p.m. on Sunday.

Fans will have the opportunity to donate their coats Friday at the game for the "Coats For Colorado" charity. The first 100 people who donate a coat will receive a pair of CU Crocs flip-flops.

Cross country

The CU men's cross country team -- which won its 18th consecutive Rocky Mountain Shootout in Boulder last Saturday -- is ranked third in the latest USTFCCCA poll, released Tuesday. Oregon is ranked first and Oklahoma State is second.

The CU women returned to the poll this week at 30th after not being ranked last week.

The Buffs will be back in action on Oct. 18 at Pre-Nationals in Terre Haute, Ind.



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