



Former Buff hopes to take CU on another great Tripp

New assistant was on program's 1st tournament team

By Chris Shelton
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Back in 1989, the Colorado women's basketball team defeated Oklahoma State 98-92 in double overtime to win the Big 8 tournament.

That same season, the Buffs went 14-0 in Big 8 play and took a 20-game win streak into the NCAA tournament.

The Buffs then opened the NCAA tournament before 11,199 in the Coors Events Center against UNLV, and lost.

The year before, Colorado made its first ever trip to the NCAA tournament.

Tracy Tripp hopes to share her memories of playing in those games with the current CU players in her new role as the program's director of operations.

Tripp played for former coach Ceal Barry's Buffs from 1985-89 and once scored 38 points in a Feb. 4 1987 game against Oklahoma State.

"Relating Colorado basketball, and the tradition and the expectations, sheds some light on the players that might not know about it," CU coach Kathy McConnell-Miller said earlier this week. "She was one of the first Buffs to (go to the NCAA tournament). To communicate it to the players, that's important."

Tripp will have been on the job three months this Saturday. She replaced Ann Strother, who left after one season to continue her professional playing career overseas.

Tripp took a step back in her career to come to CU.

The Fort Collins native was the associate head coach at Denver last season and was an assistant at DU for 13 seasons. With the Pioneers, Trip coached All-American Misa Pavlickova, a WNBA draft pick and Olympian for the 2004 Czech Republic.

Instead of developing players, recruiting and drawing up Xs and Os, Tripp is now in charge of CU's team travel, film exchange, budget monitoring, community service and facility coordination.

"A lot of young people come through as directors of operation," Tripp said. "Whereas I'm doing the other thing where I have the experience of coaching. Hopefully I do bring that experience and maturity

to the position."

Why?

"No. 1, I love Colorado," Tripp said. "I don't want to leave. That's a decision I made long ago. I love the outdoors. I love to hike. I love to mountain bike. I love to ski. Colorado is a part of me. The opportunity to come back here was a great opportunity ... I couldn't pass it up."

Tripp said she would like to eventually return to coaching.

"There are three other (assistant) coaches on the staff and I'm sure a couple of them would like to become head coaches," Tripp said. "I would hope that I would be able to move into one of those positions if they became available. But right now I'm doing the most I can to make the program the best it can be. Whether that's giving some advice, or organization, or clipping video -- whatever I have to do to get Colorado basketball where it should be and where it has the potential to be."



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