



# Bufs' Smith realizing her role is on perimeter

## Junior's outside shot opening opportunities for Richards

By Chris Shelton

Wednesday, January 28, 2009

BOULDER, Colo. — Colorado junior Bianca Smith tried to be something she's not earlier this season.

Drives to the basket trying to create something that wasn't there were hampering not only her game, but the success of the Colorado women's basketball team.

After a long talk with coach Kathy McConnell-Miller, it was made clear that Smith needed to focus more on coming off screens on the perimeter and knocking down 3-pointers.

The talk hit home.

In her first three Big 12 games, Smith made just 2-of-15 shots from 3-point range. The Buffs lost all three.

But heading into today's 7 p.m. home game against Texas Tech (FSN), Smith is 12-of-19 from behind the arc in her last two Big 12 games, including Saturday's 61-56 road win over Missouri that snapped a four-game losing streak. Smith had a season-high 25 points at Missouri.

"She took it to heart," McConnell-Miller said of the talk. "She evaluated what she's doing. She realized she was not helping the team the way she can."

The Buffs (9-8, 1-4) need Smith to stay out on the perimeter because she plays the power forward position and if she's outside knocking down 3-pointers it draws a big defender outside.

The goal is to give CU center Kara Richards single coverage in the paint.

It worked at Missouri. Smith made 7-of-11 treys and Richards made 6-of-8 shots for 15 points.

"Now, (Smith is) seeing how it's helping everybody else when she stays on the perimeter," McConnell-Miller said.

The Buffs head into the game against Texas Tech (11-7, 2-3) with some confidence after winning on the road Saturday, especially after facing four consecutive top-25 teams to open league play.

"It was a huge victory for us," said Smith, who ranks second in the Big 12 in 3-pointers made with 44. "It showed our maturity. When we didn't score for a six-minute stretch, but we still came out with a victory. ... That first four-game stretch prepared us for anybody that we're going to face now."



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## CU women's preview: Jan. 28

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**TODAY** -- Colorado (9-8, 1-4) hosts Texas Tech (11-7, 2-3) at 7 p.m. in the Coors Events Center.

**BROADCAST** -- Television on FSN with Marc Stout, Ceal Barry and Alanna Rizzo. Radio on KKZN (760 AM) with Mike Rice and Carol Callan.

**STORYLINES** -- Colorado looks to continue to build its confidence after winning at Missouri on Saturday. Texas Tech has lost two in a row.

**KEY STATS** -- In last year's 62-44 CU loss at Texas Tech, current Colorado starters didn't fare well -- Kara Richards (0 points, 2 minutes), Bianca Smith (2 points, 19 minutes) and Brittany Spears (4 points, 33 minutes).

**COACHES** -- Kathy McConnell-Miller is 50-61 in her fourth season at CU and 141-149 overall. Kristi Curry is 43-39 in her third season at Texas Tech and 222-90 overall.

### PROBABLE STARTERS

**Colorado** -- G Britney Blythe, 5-9, So., 2.5 ppg, 1.6 apg; G Alyssa Fressle, 5-10, Fr., 9.1 ppg, 3.5 apg; G Brittany Spears, 6-1, So., 17.4 ppg, 7.9 rpg; G Bianca Smith, 5-9, Jr., 10.9 ppg, 4.9 rpg; C Kara Richards, 6-4, Sr., 11.8 ppg, 7.0 rpg.

**Texas Tech** -- G Maria Moore, 5-5, Sr., 9.4 ppg, 3.8 apg; G Jordan Murphree, 6-0, Jr., 10.3 ppg, 2.2 spg; F Ashlee Roberson, 5-11, Jr., 5.6 ppg, 5.2 rpg; F Dominic Seals, 6-2, Sr., 13.7 ppg, 8.0 rpg; C Kierra Mallard, 6-3, Fr., 8.9 ppg, 7.5 rpg.

**SERIES** -- Texas Tech leads 5-2 in Boulder and 14-5 overall.

**UP NEXT** -- Colorado hosts Nebraska at 1 p.m. Saturday (FSN).



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