



Colorado women fall to No. 21 Iowa State

Scoring slumps continue to plague Buffs

By Kyle Ringo
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BOULDER, Colo. — There is a lot of head-scratching going on in the locker room of the Colorado women's basketball team.

The season is well into February. The postseason seems to be slowly slipping away with each loss and though practices started nearly four months ago, coaches and players still haven't figured out why the Buffs go through at least one long, ugly, sloppy stretch in nearly every game.

It happened again Saturday afternoon at the Coors Events Center against No. 21 Iowa State and it cost the Buffs in a 53-47 loss.

The pain came in three doses for coach Kathy McConnell-Miller's team. The Buffs started the game in a funk, scoring just eight points in the first 10 minutes. They went through a 9-minute stretch in the second half in which they scored just three points. While the Cyclones were making just two of 10 free throws in the final 2 minutes, the Buffs were unable to execute and get the ball through net.

The Buffs appeared to be on their way a disheartening blowout early. They allowed the Cyclones to go on a 17-2 run and scored just two points during one 6-minute stretch in the first half.

"We talked about the runs that teams make on us and that we consistently have to recover from, and their run was very early," McConnell-Miller said. "I thought we exhausted a lot to come back.

"We've got to get the point where we don't allow teams to go on runs, where we go on runs and we're the ones making easy buckets and transition buckets."

Junior guard Bianca Smith went scoreless in the first half and finished the game with just two points in 21 minutes. McConnell-Miller turned to Kelly Jo Mullaney and Hannah Skildum, who helped the Buffs cut into an 18-point lead before halftime.

CU whittled it all the way down to five points less than 4 minutes into the second half. They had possession and a chance to trim the advantage further. Sophomore Brittany Spears was called for traveling and the Cyclones slowly extended the lead back to 13.

Fox Sports Net televised the game and its crew noticed a clear difference in how the teams approached each opportunity on offense. With several minutes remaining in the game, FSN said the Cyclones were averaging 27-seconds of possession time for every made basket. Meanwhile the Buffs averaged 17 seconds.

CU actually outshot ISU making 44 percent of its shots to the Cyclones 43 percent. Four Cyclones combined to make seven 3-pointers, including two from forward Nicky Wieben, who led all scorers with 18 points.

It was still a winnable game in the final 3 minutes. The Buffs cut the lead to six and Spears drove into the lane attracting the attention of three Cyclones. She dumped a pass to center Kara Richards, who missed a wide-open layup.

The Buffs didn't score again until Spears made a shot with 6 seconds remaining.

Iowa State continued to give the Buffs life. Over the final 2:16, the Cyclones made just two of 10 free throws.

"You don't dodge that bullet very often," said ISU coach Bill Fennelly whose team improved to 18-4 .

McConnell-Miller said she made a mistake by not instructing her team to foul when trailing by seven in the final 45 seconds. ISU guard Denae Stuckey had missed two free throws, but the Cyclones nabbed one of 11 offensive rebounds and ran much of the remaining time off the clock.

"I don't know. It was a bad decision. It was a bad decision. We should have fouled," McConnell-Miller said.

Spears led the Buffs with 14 points and Alyssa Fressle scored 10 as the Buffs fell below .500 (10-11 overall, 2-7 Big 12).

Iowa State 53, Colorado 47

IOWA STATE (53)

min fg-fga ft-fta rb ast pf tp

Wieben 31 8-16 0-0 4 2 3 18

Nisleit 26 3-4 0-0 4 5 2 7

Stuckey 17 0-1 0-3 4 1 0 0

Bolte 25 2-6 0-0 5 2 2 5

Ezell 37 3-8 2-6 3 4 2 11

Williams 16 0-1 0-0 0 0 0 0

Lacey 28 3-9 2-4 5 2 0 8

Arlen 4 0-0 0-0 3 0 0 0

Ross 8 0-1 0-0 1 0 1 0

Anderson 8 2-3 0-0 2 0 0 4

Totals: 200 21-49 4-13 33 16 10 53

COLORADO (47)

min fg-fga ft-fta rb ast pf tp

Spears 37 7-12 0-1 12 5 0 14

Richards 38 3-9 2-5 6 0 4 8

Fressle 37 4-8 0-0 2 1 3 10

Smith 21 1-5 0-0 4 0 4 2

Blythe 11 1-2 0-0 0 1 1 3

Skildum 20 2-5 0-0 1 0 2 6

Mullaney 32 2-5 0-0 2 0 3 4

Dunn 4 0-0 0-0 0 0 0 0

Totals: 200 20-46 2-6 29 7 17 47

Score by halves:

Iowa St. 31 22 -- 53

Colorado 22 25 -- 47

3-point field goals -- Iowa State (7-17): Ezell 3-7, Wieben 2-2, Nisleit 1-1, Bolte 1-3, Stuckey 0-1, Williams 0-1, Lacey 0-2; Colorado (5-15): Fressle 2-4, Skildum 2-4, Blythe 1-1, Smith 0-4, Spears 0-2.

Officials --Barlow, Kantner, Jones.

Technical fouls -- none.

Attendance -- 2,753.

STEALS

Iowa State (6):Ezell 3, Wieben, Stuckey, Bolte.

Colorado (5):Spears 2, Fressle 2, Smith.

BLOCKED SHOTS

Iowa State (1):Wieben.

Colorado (2):Richards, Fressle.

TURNOVERS

Iowa State (14):Wieben 2, Nisleit 2, Ezell 2, Williams 2, Lacey 2, Arlen 2, Ross 2.

Colorado (17):Spears 6, Fressle 4, Mullaney 3, Smith, Blythe, Skildum.



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