



K-Mac expects more from Spears

Bufs coach believes freshman full of talent

By Chris Shelton
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Brittany Spears began her college basketball career on a high note, but Colorado coach Kathy McConnell-Miller expects more out of her freshman when the Buffs host the 21st annual Coors Classic today and Saturday.

Spears made her college debut memorable by scoring 15 points and grabbing four steals in the first half of Colorado's 66-48 win at San Francisco last week.

The wing player averaged 17 points, seven rebounds and 3.5 steals per game in CU's two-game West Coast road trip to San Francisco and USC.

"She didn't perform the way she can," McConnell-Miller said. "Despite her good statistics, we felt like she could have achieved more on the offensive and defensive end. She just doesn't know yet what she's capable of."

Spears will make her CU home debut when the Buffs(1-1) face the Siena Saints (1-3) at 7:30 p.m. today in the second game of the Coors Classic. Rice (5-1) opens the tournament at 5 p.m. against Clemson (2-3).

The 6-foot-1 guard/forward could prove to be a valuable scoring threat to take some of the pressure off senior Jackie McFarland in CU's offense.

Spears' quickness provides a new sense of energy on CU's defensive end, too. Spears had five steals at San Francisco and that was one more than any CU player had in a game last year.

"The coaches went over where the passes would be," Spears said. "So I anticipated them because I knew where they were going to be."

Her effort made an impression on McFarland.

"The biggest thing for her was that spark defensively for us," McFarland said. "We haven't had that kind of quickness and a person who can steal a ball like that. That adds a lot to our team in what we can do."

But CU's offense struggled at USC and McFarland was held to just two shots in the first half.

McConnell-Miller hopes to iron out the kinks in CU's offense this weekend.

The Buffs averaged 21 turnovers in their first two games, too.

"They're getting a little more comfortable on the offensive end, but still not knowing where their points are going to come from," McConnell-Miller said. "We need to get Jackie some more touches. Most importantly, we need to take care of the basketball. We're not handling the pressure as well as we need to."



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