



CU women play host to Northern Colorado

Bufs expect 3-point barrage from Bears

By Chris Shelton

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The last time Colorado played Northern Colorado in a women's basketball game, the Bears took 42 shots from 3-point range.

Northern Colorado only made 12 and Colorado went on to win 92-65 last February in the Coors Events Center.

The two teams meet again at 7 p.m. today in the Coors Events Center and CU's defense against the 3-pointer could be crucial. The Buffs' two losses this year came against teams that lit it up from downtown.

"Ball pressure is something we've focused on," CU coach Kathy McConnell-Miller said of practices leading up to tonight's game.

The Buffs (2-2) are coming off a disappointing Coors Classic tournament last weekend in which they lost to Siena on Friday and came back to beat Rice on Saturday.

In between games, junior Kara Richards lost her starting job at center to sophomore forward Aija Putnina.

Opponents are slapping a zone defense on CU and forcing the Buffs to win games with outside shooting. Colorado is making just 30.9 percent of its 3-pointers, while opponents are making 36.4 percent.

"We fine tuned some things against the zone," McConnell-Miller said of working on rebounding, moving the ball better and being more active against zone defenses. "They knew the zone was coming. We worked on it. But right now, there's a mind-set where they're more comfortable with it.

"The most encouraging play of the weekend was from Hannah Skildum. From an offensive and defensive standpoint, that was the most composed I had seen her. Now it just gives us a bigger look we hadn't had. She just has to move forward. If she can do that, then we're bigger, better and deeper."

Skildum, a 6-foot junior forward, averaged 9.5 points and 22.5 minutes per game off the bench in the Coors Classic.

The Bears (3-2) have posted wins over San Francisco, Colorado State and Southeast Missouri State this season, and lost to Oral Roberts and New Mexico State.

They're led by junior point guard Whitley Cox, who is averaging 20.2 points per game.

"She can score," McConnell-Miller said. "She can post up. She can shoot. Susie (Powers) is going to have her hands full."



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