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Contact: Ron Knabenbauer 720.987.9512  
knabenba@colorado.edu

## **Big Special Teams Night Gives CU Hockey 5-1 Win Over CSU**

BOULDER – In what might have been a preview of the regional final, the Colorado Buffaloes hockey team finally earned a victory over their rival from Fort Collins.

Senior **Andy Neitenbach** and freshman **Chase Komatz** both scored two goals to help No. 4 Colorado defeat the No. 3 Colorado State Rams 5-1 on Friday night at the CU Ice Arena.

The victory is the Buffs first over the Rams this season and improves their record to 14-10-1-2 while CSU drops to 20-13-1-1 on the year.

Senior **Conor Williams** had a goal and an assist for Colorado while Neitenbach finished with a three point night, adding an assist to go with his two red lighters. Senior goaltender **Kevin Litinsky** (13-12-1) played solid in net for CU, making 38 saves on 39 shots.

Colorado's game plan coming in to the contest was to get the lead early, and they did just that as Williams scored a power play goal with nearly eight minutes left in the first period. Colorado finished 3-for-8 on the power play while Colorado State went 1-for-8 with the extra attacker.

The Buffs extended their lead to two goals after applying some late pressure in the period. On a Colorado odd man rush, Komatz fired the puck from the right side, picked up the rebound in midair and swatted it into the net with 22 seconds left in the stanza.

Colorado took a 3-0 lead 1:36 into the second period after Neitenbach crashed the Rams net and poked the loose puck across the goal line for his first tally.

On the CU scoring sequence, CSU goaltender John Miller injured his right leg. After trying to skate it off, Miller was helped to the Rams locker room where he didn't return to the game. Miller, who made 10 saves on 13 shots, was replaced by Ryan Perich, who already had two wins against Colorado this season.

Perich played solid for the first couple of minutes in net, but he couldn't keep it a three goal game as Neitenbach scored his second of the night at 7:28 in the second period. Perich finished with 21 saves on 23 shots.

Colorado State finally got on the scoreboard with 6:47 left in the second period on a Parker Harrison power play goal in which he did some nice puck movement in front of Litinsky before sliding the puck past the CU goalie's left pad.

The Rams entered the third period with a new sense of energy and fired some good shots on Litinsky, but last season's first team All American goalie made big stop after big stop, keeping the game at 4-1.

Colorado extended their lead back to four goals after Komatz scored with 8:20 remaining.

The Buffs outshot the Rams in each of the first two periods, but CSU fired a fury of shots in the third to win the overall shot battle, 39-36.

CU has two more regular season games before the playoffs start, a home-and-home series against No. 14 Northern Colorado next weekend. The Buffs will begin the weekend on Friday night at 7:30 p.m. at the Greeley Ice Haus before playing at home on Saturday at 7:15 p.m. Saturday's game will be senior night as the team will be honoring the 10 seniors that will be playing in their final home game.

The Buffs will begin the postseason on Feb. 25-26 at the ACHA D-II West Regional Tournament in Logan, Utah. Colorado will need to get victories on both days of competition in order to advance to the national tournament. One of those wins will mostly likely have to come against Colorado State as the two schools are on a collision course to face each other in the regional final.

### **Scoring Summary**

#### *First Period*

11:55 CU Conor Williams, assisted by Andy Neitenbach – PP

19:38 CU Chase Komatz, assisted by A.J. Koller

#### *Second Period*

1:36 CU Andy Neitenbach, assisted by J.P. Park and Scott Cooley – PP

7:28 CU Andy Neitenbach, assisted by David Starr and Scott Seale – PP

13:13 CSU Parker Harrison, assisted by Erik Waring – PP

#### *Third Period*

11:40 CU Chase Komatz, assisted by Conor Williams and Alex Lelwica

### **Shots**

CSU – 39

CU – 36

### **Power Plays**

CSU: 1-for-8

CU: 3-for-7