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Bufs Close Regular Season versus UNC, Senior Night Saturday

BOULDER – The Colorado Buffaloes hockey team will conclude the 2010-11 regular season this weekend with a home-and-home series against the University of Northern Colorado Bears. CU will play UNC in Greeley on Friday at the Greeley Ice Haus at 7:30 p.m. and in Boulder on Saturday night at the CU Ice Arena at 7:15 p.m.

Saturday's game in Boulder will be senior night as the Buffs will honor the 10 seniors during the game. The players that will be playing in their final home game are **Scott Cooley, Conor Williams, Andy Neitenbach, Mark Viau, Andrew Gillis, Scott Seale, Matt Ullrich, A.J. Koller, Mike Nunley, and Kevin Litinsky**. Below are short bios of all 10 players.

Last week, the Buffs defeated the CSU Rams for the first time this season in a dominate 5-1 victory in front of the CU faithful at home. Neitenbach and freshman **Chase Komatz** both scored two goals in the game for Colorado.

Colorado comes into this week's matchup ranked fourth in the ACHA West Division with a 14-10-1-2 record while Northern Colorado is ranked 14th in the region with a 5-17-1-1 mark. The Buffs won the two previous games against the Bears this season, winning 10-3 on Nov. 12 and 7-5 on Nov. 13.

Since Northern Colorado moved to division two in 2008, Colorado holds a 6-2-1 series lead over their in-state rival. CU holds a 4-1 advantage against UNC at the Greeley Ice Haus and a 2-1-1 mark against the Bears at the CU Ice Arena.

On Tuesday, the final ACHA D-II rankings were released with Colorado staying at number four in the standings. The Buffs will play the No. 8 Northern Arizona Ice Jacks in the first round of the ACHA West Regional Tournament on Friday Feb. 25 in Logan, Utah. If CU can get past NAU, they will then likely face No. 3 Colorado State, No. 5 Nevada-Las Vegas, or No. 6 San Diego State the next day with a berth to the national tournament on the line.

Northern Colorado didn't crack the top 10 in the final rankings, meaning their season will end after the final buzzer on Saturday night in Boulder.

Admission to Saturday's game at the CU Ice Arena is \$5 for the general public and \$3 for students with a Buff One Card.

Kevin Litinsky, G, Calabasas, Calif.

Kevin Litinsky grabbed hold of the starting goaltender job in his very first varsity D-II game in his freshman year, which he happened to sport a shutout, and hasn't let go of the title since. Litinsky has led the ACHA in shutouts in his previous three seasons and set a career high last year with five shutouts. He has an overall record of 71-33-4 (.683) and has posted two 20 win seasons (2007-08 and 2009-10). Last season was probably Litinsky best in net, finishing with a 20-6 record, a 2.63 goals against average, a 0.926 save percentage, and five shutouts. The nation seemed to agree as he picked up honors as the West Division Most Valuable Player and was selected to the ACHA All-West first team, the ACHA All-Tournament first team, and the All-America first team. This season, Litinsky sports a 13-10-1-2 record, a 3.01 goals against average, a 0.910 save percentage, and two shutouts. Though his numbers may be slightly down from years past, there is doubt that without Litinsky, the Buffs wouldn't be where they are today or where they have been the last four seasons.

Scott Cooley, D, Clarkson, Mich.

Scott Cooley spent all four years on the varsity D-II squad and quickly became one of the leaders on the team. Cooley became president of the team in his sophomore year, before becoming vice president in his junior season where he also held the title of captain, an honor that is usually held for seniors. After missing most of his junior season with a leg injury, Cooley regained the title of team president and captain for his senior campaign. Cooley's most productive year on the ice came in his sophomore season in which he tallied five goals and added 13 assists for 18 points in 39 games. This season, he has played in every game and has scored four goals while also adding seven assists (11 points).

Conor Williams, F, Lafayette, Colo.

In his four years on the varsity D-II squad, Conor Williams has been one of the most productive players in CU hockey history. Williams currently has 172 points (82 goals, 90 assists) in 126 career games. One of this season's alternate captains, Williams started as a scorer, but in the last two years he has become more a playmaker, assisting on more of his teammates goals than finding the back of the net himself. Still, Williams has led the team in goals in all of his previous three years. His best stat year came in his sophomore campaign in which he scored 32 goals while assisting on 19 others (51 points). This season, Williams has 18 goals and 24 assists (42 points).

Andy Neitenbach, D, Brighton, Colo.

A five year player on the varsity D-II team, Andrew Neitenbach has become the lead enforcer on this year's squad. Neitenbach began his time at CU as a forward, but soon switched to defense. Though he has spent much of his time on the backend of the ice, he still has a shot of a forward as he's scored 17 goals the last two seasons. One of this year's alternate captains, Neitenbach's best season came in 2006-07 when he scored 22 goals and tallied 13 assists for a total of 35 points. This season, Neitenbach has 12 goals, seven of which have come on the power play, and 17 assists (29 points).

Mark Viau, F, Westminster, Colo.

Mark Viau has spent the past four seasons on the varsity D-II squad and has become one of the key components to Colorado's offense this season. After a disappointing 2008-09 season in which he only tallied 18 points (five goals and 13 assists), Viau had a career year last season, scoring 18 goals while also assisting of 15 others (34 points). One of the alternate captains on this year's team, Viau has continued his solid play this season with 13 goals and 12 assists (25 points). He currently has 93 points (47 goals and 46 assists) in 127 career games played.

Matt Ullrich, F, St. Louis, Mo.

Matt Ullrich has spent all four seasons with the varsity D-II team. He has 38 career points with his best season coming last year in which he tallied seven goals and seven assists (14 points) while only playing in 19 games. This season, Ullrich has two goals and one assist.

Mike Nunley, F, Castle Rock, Colo.

Mike Nunley might not have played a lot of games in his tenure in Boulder, but he has been a staple in the CU hockey program as a member of the varsity D-II squad for four years. His best season came in 2008-09 when he scored six goals and added eight assists for 14 points. This season he has three goals and two assists. Last year, he was one of five Buffs to earn the honor as an Academic All-American in the ACHA.

A.J. Koller, F, Chesterfield, Mo.

Though A.J. Koller began his career with the junior varsity D-III squad, he quickly became an important role player on the varsity team. In his first full season with varsity Buffs in 2008-09, Koller tallied 16 goals and 19 assists for 35 points. His numbers were down last year as he only picked up 19 points, but he played a huge role on Colorado's power play as he scored nine of his 13 goals when the Buffs had the extra attacker on the ice. This season, Koller has 12 goals and 12 assists (24 points) and has played in all 27 games.

Andrew Gillis, F, San Carlos, Calif.

Andrew Gillis began his time in the CU hockey program at the junior varsity D-III level, but he moved up to the varsity team in his sophomore season. Gillis might not have the highest stats for a forward, but his physical presence on the ice is felt by opponents. His best year on the varsity squad came last season when he scored five goals and added seven assists for 12 points. This season, Gillis has four goals and four assists (eight points), bringing his career D-II points total to 31.

Scott Seale, F, Littleton, Colo.

Scott Seale spent his first three years on the junior varsity D-III squad where he was one of the highest scorers for the team. In the 2008-09 campaign, he tallied 27 points (nine goals and 18 assists), and increased that total last year with him ending his junior season with 36 points (11 goals and 25 assists). Seale has brought that scoring touch with him this year on the D-II team as he has 10 goals and six assists for 16 points. He is one of the leading scorers on the power play as he's scored three goals when Colorado has the man advantage on the ice.