

Coach Paul Roeder: 43 years of baseball

by Steven Ziolkowski
Staff Writer

Paul Roeder, Clackamas Cougars' baseball coach, has been coaching and playing ball for 43 years. He's wearing a cougar baseball cap, but that's not the only hat he wears at the College. When Roeder isn't coaching, he's College engineer and supervises a three man crew.

"We start practice in the late afternoon and I take some vacation time to make a few of the games," Roeder says.

Baseball runs in the Roeder family. "My Dad played semi-pro. And I can remember splitting the headphones with my uncle - listening on a crystal receiver to Babe Ruth playing Chicago in the late '30's," Roeder recalls. Including his son, Brad, there are now three generations of ballplayers in the Roeder clan.

One of Roeder's engineering assistants comes to the door and they talk out an electrical problem with an outdoor lighting system, then the coach continues, "Coaching is different today. You're dealing with individual players." He says that in the past there was more regimentation and

players." He says that in the past there was more regimentation and players weren't interested in the reasons why. "The game is more scientific today," he adds.

In the late '60's we got the pitching machine. And we didn't have sports medicine. We didn't say that a player had a rotator cuff tear, it used to just be called a sore shoulder," Roeder comments.

He says that other things have changed too. That there's a lot of conditioning research that's been done, for instance, and research about depth perception and the dominant eye in vision. Some of the pitches have changed too. "We've got a modern one called a slider or nickel curve," he explains. "It's got a downward break and gives the look of a fast ball. It's deceptive."

Roeder's assistant is back in the doorway and asks to borrow the coach's keys. "I think I've got that electrical problem licked, but there's two high school kids here looking for their school's cooler. I found a cooler on the field the other day and locked it in the shed. It's sitting on the tractor seat in there," he says, catching the keys Roeder



Paul Roeder comes from three generations of ball players including his son Brad.

Photo by Beth Coffey

tosses to him.

"I started coaching because I like to game," Roeder says. And he adds that at the college level skills are pretty well developed and you find a lot of promising talent, "We watch high school games and regional games in the summer. And we get letters from guys that are interested. We're always looking for quick hitters, kids with wheels, or a live arm in a pitcher."

Roeder previously assisted head coach Gene Peterson at Clackamas for about six or seven years and has been head

coach here now for four years.

He is presently assisted by Charlie White, who is playing ball with Warner Pacific College next year. Roeder comments about the Cougar team, "We're a talented team, but very young - almost solid freshman." One sophomore, lead-off hitter number 10, Scott Brown, is hitting .429 and is tied for the lead in runs scored - five. Scott leads the team in RBS's with six.

"Dan Eberhardt is probably the best defensive catcher in the league," Roeder says proudly, "And we've probably got the

best foot speed in the league - but we're not hitting in the clutch - it's because we're a young team." But when they're on base, the Cougars know what to do. In 22 attempts, 17 bases were stolen for a 77% success ration.

Pitching this season is Jim Burnett, Dan Marston and Brad Roeder with Bob Daniel for short relief. "Defensively, we're a very good ball team. Our infield is great, and we've got one of the best short stops in the league, number five, John Davenport," Roeder says thoughtfully, then adds, "We've got a great outfield, too."

Roeder's assistant brings him back his keys and says, "Those guys sure were glad to see that cooler. I bet they got chewed out good for forgetting it." Everyone in the room smiles, some laugh.

Roeder takes the play in stride, like a fielder picking up a grounder and peeling it to first for a quick out. He says, "Baseball is a good activity for physical and emotional development. For talented players it's a good way to get financial help through the last two years of college."

Portland: a great location for the Mariners

by Jerry Ulmer
Contributing Writer

Once again Portland is faced with an opportunity to become a legitimate major league city. The lowly Seattle Mariners, doormat of the past, present, and future, are for sale. Almost a month ago owner George Argyros slapped a \$35-\$65 million price tag on the Mariners quicker than you can say "Portland could be conceived as such." A Los Angeles millionaire has stepped forward with ideas of keeping the team in the Kingdom, saying he is seeking a west coast baseball franchise. Someone needs to tell him that Portland is the better choice.

Major League Baseball could survive in Portland. We don't even need to build a stadium. CIVIC? ARE YOU NUTS? No, I'm not. Civic is a diamond in the rough. A few inexpensive improvements and it would be one of the most charming parks in

America. First of all, we must plant grass. It can survive the rain with a good drainage system, and has in the past. The grass creates an oasis amidst the concrete jungle. It looks great, much better than the green parking lot that exists now. A grass stain is much more exciting than a rug burn, besides, it's much softer, something that would be welcomed by the football teams frequenting Civic in the fall.

Second, we need theater-type seats in the upper level. Besides looking "big league," it expands capacity and is more comfortable for fans.

Thirds, we have to paint over those tacky little league ads on the fence. Imagine, the "blue Monster" in left field would bring valid comparisons of Fenway Park, except Civic would likely be louder due to its shape.

And finally, we need real dugouts, the kind that are actual-

ly dug-out. Those car-ports Civic has now are not dugouts. These improvements are inexpensive when compared to a new stadium, and will easily pay for themselves in the long run.

People like to argue that Portland can't have baseball because of the rain. But the weather is very good from June to October, the bulk of the season. It is not uncommon for the City of Roses to go an entire month without rainfall during this span. Granted April and May would be trouble, but they are everywhere else, too. Some say parking is a problem, but in reality it is no different than parks like Wrigley Field or Fenway. And the downtown location is excellent for business.

Now, the real issue, will enough people go to the games? Yes, look at how Portland supporters have sold out every game for a

decade, even during losing seasons. This is more than can be said for the fair-weather fans the Sonics have in Seattle, Seattle supports winners well, but the struggling Mariners do not draw. In Portland they would.

Portland is a town that averages 7,000 people a game for junior hockey. It is sports-starved. If the Mariners averaged 12,666 a game (the Blazer average) they

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