

Strong pitching could mean success for Cougars

by Mark A. Borrelli
Sports Editor

Pitching and defense should be the key for the Clackamas baseball team this season, as new Coach Greg Tagert will try to direct his squad to a northwest championship.

Last year the Cougars got off to a great start and were in first place midway through the season. They held the second and last play-off spot into the last week of the season before losing three games in a row and finishing tied for third place. Tagert in his first year hopes that a late season slide won't happen again. Great pitching gives him reason to be optimistic.

Tagert, in his first season as the Cougar mentor, inherits a talented pitching staff that should be the strength of the Cougars this season. Returning pitcher Jay Prall throws some serious heat, and will be the opening day pitcher for Clackamas.

"Pitching will be a key. We have nine good pitchers. We're going to go with a four man rota-

tion," said Tagert.

Top contenders for the Cougars starting rotation are: Jay Prall, a sophomore from McNary who will be the Cougars opening day pitcher, Mike Jimerson, Mike Hel-

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frich, Craig Andyke and Tim Arendell will all battle it out for a spot on the starting rotation.

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Although pitching will be a strong point for the Cougars this season, offensively Clackamas has some fire power.

A pair of returning players, both from Tigard High School,

will provide some power for the Cougars this year. Kevin Kvarstrom, who started almost all of last year, will bring his loaded bat back this year and play first base for the Cougars. Dino Fiarito will return behind the plate, and is also a long ball threat.

"We have some power. Although we are going to rely a lot on pitching and defense, we have some players who can hit the ball pretty good," said Tagert.

Amongst those players are Kvarstrom, who blossomed into a fine defensive and offensive player last year.

"We're counting heavily on Kvarstrom for hitting. He's our number three hitter and an outstanding player," said Tagert.

An injury to Mike Helfrich, the everyday shortstop for the Cougars, has forced some adjusting in the Clackamas infield, but some capable backups give the Cougars a solid team. Joe Gentner and Todd Applegate will back up Kvarstrom at first base. Scott Kenagy should get the nod to start at second base, and will be backed

up by Mitch Vanetta. Doug Manley will fill in at shortstop for Helfrich. At third base Kenagy, Vanetta, or Steve Bray from Oregon City will get the call.

The Clackamas outfield looks very solid, led by speed demon Kevin Kmetec in center field. Dave Horine will play right field, and Todd Applegate should start the season in left field.

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west championship. We have some talented players, and it looks as if we are going to have some depth on the team," said Tagert.

Tagert, in his first year as head coach, comes to Clackamas from the University of New Mexico,

where he was pitching coach. He is joined on the staff by new assistant Coach Bob Cain, who was a member of the Cougars pitching staff last year, but recurring arm problems forced Cain to opt for coaching.

"Bob works well with every phase of the game; he's an excellent addition to our coaching staff," said Tagert.

The transition period for Tagert has gone very smoothly, thanks to the help of some people in the Clackamas athletic department.

"Paul Roeder has been a great help with the transition, as has been Dale McGriff and Carol Petersen. They have been very supportive and helpful," said Tagert.

The Cougars will get their season underway this weekend in a tournament at Bellevue. Clackamas is scheduled to be at home for a pair of games against Pierce College Mar. 17 and 18. Coach Tagert would like to see fan support at the Cougars' games this season, and urges everyone to come out and support the team.

Track team starts season

by Angela Wilson
Staff Writer

The Clackamas track team is expecting a good season with "outstanding returning members, and great first year athletes."

"We have a large talented and motivated group this year," said Mike Hodges, head track coach.

Saturday Clackamas competed in their first meet of the season at Linfield. The Cougars fared well, and also experienced their first meet in the snow.

Gabe Crane was one of the top performers at the meet, placing first in the 110 meter high hurdles with a time of 15.0, second in the 400 meter hurdles at 55.3, and tying for third place in the long jump at 21 feet 8 inches.

A new school record was set in the javelin by Mike Hieb, who placed second with a throw of 206 feet 5 inches. Jim Allen placed

third in the discus at 136 feet 5 inches, and for the women Chris Nylen placed sixth in the shotput with a "lifetime personal best" of 38 feet 6.5 inches.

Nate Golden placed sixth in the 400 meter with a time of 52.4, and tied with Crane for third place in the long jump at 21 feet 8 inches. Todd Gibson placed third in the 200 meter with a time of 22.8.

In the women's 10,000 meter run, Heather McElheny placed fifth, coming in at 43:35.8, and Sonia Hult placed sixth with a time of 44:06.6.

In the women's 100 meter Latonya Bates placed fifth at 12.6, and in the men's 1500 meter run Dusty Moore placed sixth with a time of 4:19.1.

The Cougar's next meet is the Willamette Open on Saturday, Mar. 17 at Willamette Uni-

Softballers to get underway

By Staci Beard
Staff Writer

It may not be sunny and warm yet but spring is around the corner and the softball season is about ready to lift off.

The team looks strong defensively, but positions have not been totally decided on yet. Fiskum wants to see the players more under game situations and how they are swinging the bat.

Five sophomores help to fill the team's need for experience and leadership.

Yvonne Johnson, last year's number one pitcher and MVP of the NWAACC is returning for her second year.

"She is a proven player. We are looking to her for another good year," stated Fiskum.

Also returning is a second team all-conference catcher, Mary

Ferguson.

"Ferguson has a strong arm. She is also great at calling the pitches that the batters have problems hitting," explained Fiskum.

Two outfielders are also returning for more action. One is Leanna Helvig, a second team all-league selection. The other is Trina Hutchison, a first team all-conference player.

"Helvig is doing a great job in left field. She has a great attitude. Hutchison is another one with a strong arm. She has really been smacking the ball this winter," stated Fiskum.

The fifth returning player is shortstop Dionne Madigan.

"She is extremely aggressive and can make some outstanding defensive plays. She is willing to go all out to make those plays, which helps to inspire the rest of

the team," explained Fiskum.

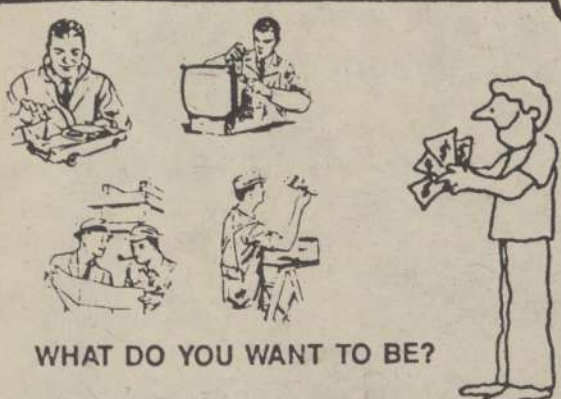
One of the keys to the team's success, Fiskum feels, is the leadership that these returnees need to give.

"That is crucial to our success. They know what it takes to win in this league. They know we could have done better last year," points out Fiskum.

Another key to the added strength of the team is faster base runners.

"We were lacking in a number of people who were fast base runners. We have improved on our speed, so we will be able to do more stealing and more hit and runs," said Fiskum.

The Cougars will have their skills put to the test for the first time with a home game against Willamette University at 3:30 p.m. Mar. 15.



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