

Cougar softball ends successful season with fourth place finish

■ Wirkkala and Wellin are named to All-Tournament team for their play-off shows

by Frank Jordan
The Print Staff

Clackamas Community College finished a successful softball season with a fourth-place finish in the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges' championship tournament last weekend in Yakima, WA.

"We had a really great season, with our 27-4 record overall, including going unbeaten (22-0) in Southern Division play," commented Head Coach Paul Fiskum. "We had a disappointing tournament, but I can't say enough about this team. The great attitude, team spirit and incredibly solid work ethic exhibited by these girls made for a very entertaining season. I'm really proud of them."

Clackamas opened tournament play on Friday afternoon with host school Yakima Valley CC. The Cougars came out a little flat, having the game delayed by rain at the start. CCC came back from the slow start to post a 3-2 opening round win.

"We weren't as up for the game as we should have been," said Coach Fiskum. "All of the girls said that it really was hard to mentally prepare for the game, what with all of the delays. But we worked hard enough when we finally stepped onto the field to pull out a win against a good team."

CCC got two runs in the first on singles by Maja Wirkkala, Brandi Kamrath, a squeeze bunt single by Danielle Madigan and a sacrifice fly by Kris Strouhal. The Cougars got another run in the third on consecutive singles by Korrine Wellin, Bridget Jones, Danielle Fitzgerald and Wirkkala. They had the bases loaded with only one out, but couldn't push another run across.

Yakima Valley continued to hit the ball well throughout the early going, getting two runs in the fifth. Fitzgerald ended the rally by throwing out a runner at

the plate for the third out.

Wirkkala continued her outstanding season hitting the ball, leading the Cougars against YVCC with a 2-3 performance, scoring a run, driving in another and stealing a base. Keri Gunderson helped out with two hits, among 10 Clackamas base hits on the day.

Game two on Friday pitted Clackamas against perennial NWAACC power Edmonds CC. A real pitcher's duel was the story throughout between Heather Christensen of Edmonds and Becky Cordill of Clackamas. Clackamas hit the ball hard the whole game, but couldn't find a break and Edmonds got an RBI triple in the bottom of the ninth to pull out a 2-1 squeaker.

Michelle Kolbo got the Cougars on the board with a line-drive home run in the fourth. CCC threatened again in the fifth, loading the bases. But the Cougars could not push across any runs and the inning ended with the score tied at one.

"We were real disappointed in our level of play," commented Fiskum. "We had a couple of real costly errors that led to runs and it hurt us in the end."

Clackamas fell into the loser's bracket and played their third game Saturday morning against Wenatchee Valley CC. The Cougars rallied in bottom of the sixth, scoring three runs on five hits to pull out a 6-5 victory.

WVCC took a 3-0 lead early on, but CCC rallied to tie in the fourth, getting singles by Wirkkala and Kamrath, a fielder's choice by Kolbo, and a two-run triple by Strouhal. Emily Routson stepped up to the plate and laid down a bunt for a single to score Strouhal from third to tie the game.

Wenatchee Valley scored twice in the top half of the sixth to take a temporary 5-3 lead, but the Cougars got a single by Strouhal,

a double by Madigan, an RBI single by Routson, another RBI single by Wellin, a single by Lynn Kinnaman and an RBI sacrifice fly by Fitzgerald to score Routson with the eventual game-winning run.

Cordill pitched another strong game to pick up the victory, shutting down WVCC in the seventh inning to end the game.

With Clackamas facing elimination for the second straight game, Cordill came back 20 minutes after defeating Wenatchee Valley to face Spokane CC. Cordill's gutsy effort was not enough as Spokane eliminated the Cougars with a 3-1 victory.

"Again, we hit the ball real hard, but their shortstop and third baseman shut us down. Those two combined for 14 assists defensively, and that was the story of the game," said Coach Fiskum.

Clackamas got one run on five base hits, three of those hits by Kinnaman, but Spokane capitalized on two CCC errors in the sixth inning to put the Cougars away. The Cougars finished the tournament with a 2-2 record and took home a fourth-place trophy, ending a string of three consecutive NWAACC championships.

"We had a great season, but the Spokane game pretty much mirrored our whole tournament," said Fiskum. "We did not have much luck and we didn't generate any luck. It just wasn't meant to be, I guess."

Wellin and Wirkkala were named to the All-Tournament team for their performances during the weekend. Spokane had to defeat Lower Columbia twice late Saturday to win the championship, and almost succeeded, beating LCCC 1-0 to force a second game, but the Red Devils from Lower Columbia avenged the earlier loss by nipping Spokane 2-1 to win the 1994 NWAACC Championship.

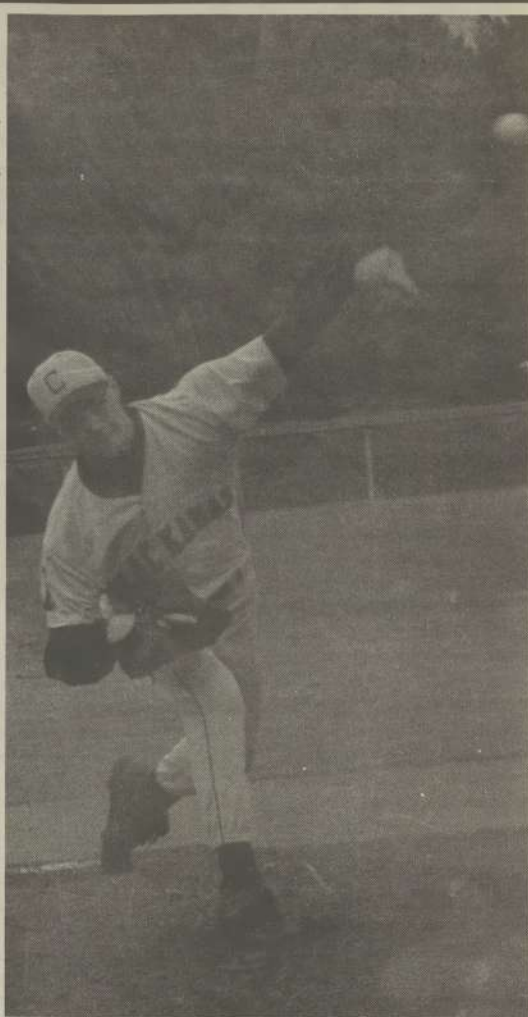


Photo by Karen Hingham

Eric Filla, one of the Cougars' leading sophomore pitchers fires a strike here against Lane Community College.

Murphy playing full time dad

Dale Murphy now spends his time raising his eight kids

by Jeff Adams
The Print Staff

After a two year stay in Philadelphia, Murphy didn't make the team in 1993. So he signed a contract with the expansion Colorado Rockies. This didn't last long as Murphy hung up the spikes around 20 games into the '93 season. "I was gonna be released, and I had to make a decision. One thing I was playing for was 400, but I had to weigh my options and I choose to retire." The 400 he was talking about was, of course, 400 career home runs. Murphy finished his career with 398 only two shy of the coveted mark. 400 home runs is also almost a sure ticket into the Hall of Fame. Murphy still may have a chance at the Hall with his career numbers. Only 26 players in history have hit more than his 398 h.r.'s. During his 16 year career, he won back to back MVP's, played in seven all-star games, won five golden gloves, hit 30 or more hr's six times, drove in 100 runs or more five times, hit .300 twice, led the league in RBI twice and led the league in homers twice. Murphy also at one point played in 740 consecutive games, which is the 12th longest streak in Major League history. He was also considered the classiest player of his time. A fan favorite who never did anything but give 100 percent every time he stepped on the

field and was always giving to charities, and also set up his own charitable organizations.

"I have eight kids, seven of them are boys, and five play little league, so I am just playing full time dad, and loving it."

- Dale Murphy
Future Hall of Famer

Dale Murphy has been retired for about one year now, and is just enjoying life. "I have eight kids, seven of them are boys, and five play little league, so I am just playing full time dad, and loving it." Dale lives in the Atlanta area and his stop in Portland was his first in five years. He looks like the same Dale Murphy that I grew up watching on the Superstation. The All-American boy with the million dollar smile was in true form on Friday. He signed autographs for anyone that wanted one, talked and laughed with old friends from high school, and treated everyone grade A. That's a rarity in a time when autographs may cost you 30 dollars, and a minute of an athlete's time is worth millions. Well, Dale Murphy gave me 20 minutes of his time. And it is 20 minutes that I'll never forget. Dale, you've got my vote for the Hall of Fame, in baseball, and in life.

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