

Clackamas wrestlers prepare for final test

by Jesse Sowa
Sports Writer

The Clackamas Wrestling team finished an impressive second place at the Region 18 Wrestling Championships at Lower Columbia College in Longview on Feb. 11.

The Cougars' placing among the eight teams was their best in seven years. Clackamas had six wrestlers that qualified for the national tournament which will be held in Bismarck, North Dakota this Thursday and Friday.

Clackamas Head Coach Mike Haluska was named the Regional Coach of the Year in only his second year at Clackamas.

The tournament was set up so that the top three wrestlers in each weight class advanced to the national tournament. Those that reached the championship finals qualified for nationals. Any wrestler that lost in the previous rounds was placed in a single-elimination consolation bracket to determine the third and final seed for nationals.

Of the four Clackamas wrestlers that competed in the championship finals, Damon McPherson at 158 pounds was the only Cougar to come away as the regional champ.

McPherson had a bye in the first round before defeating Jared Lancaster of Highline CC (6-2) in the semifinals to qualify for nationals. McPherson beat last year's national champ at 167 pounds, Ray Routh of North Idaho College, by a score of 8-5 to win his weight class.

Clackamas wrestler Travis

Rollins, last year's regional and national champion at 118 pounds, lost a 5-4 decision in the championship match to Kirk Hartzell of North Idaho College, but still qualified for nationals. Rollins

for nationals. Whisenhunt defeated Scott Byer of Yakima Valley CC (11-1) in his opening match, but lost in the second round to Alex Lavell of Big Bend CC, which moved Whisenhunt

Unseated Jeff Vowell (167 lbs.) had a great tournament run, but lost 8-3 to Corey Anderson of Ricks CC in the consolation final to end his own chances of a trip to nationals.

consolation semifinals.

Jason Marshall (190 lbs.), last year's regional champ and sixth-place finisher at nationals at his current weight, reached nationals after defeating Simon White of Lower Columbia College, in the third-place final.

White, who was national champion at 190 pounds last year, found himself in the consolation bracket after losing to Travis Hughes of North Idaho College in the semifinals.

Marshall defeated White 6-1 to send the national champ home empty-handed.

Marshall defeated Justin Poe of Highline CC (10-0) in the first round, but was pinned by Dave Quimby of Big Bend CC in the semifinals to fall into the consolation bracket. Marshall beat Jory Dalling of Ricks CC to advance to the third-place final.

Heavyweight wrestler Steve Santoni advanced to nationals with a second-place finish after a 7-1 loss in the finals to Mike Roberts of Ricks CC.

Santoni had a bye in the opening round and pinned Jeremy Cronenwett of Yakima Valley CC in the first round of his semifinal match to reach the championship round.

Haluska believes that his team has as good a chance as any other team competing at the national tournament to come home as national champions.

But he also thinks that his six wrestlers that are competing must all wrestle at their highest level of potential in order for the team to be in the running for the team title.

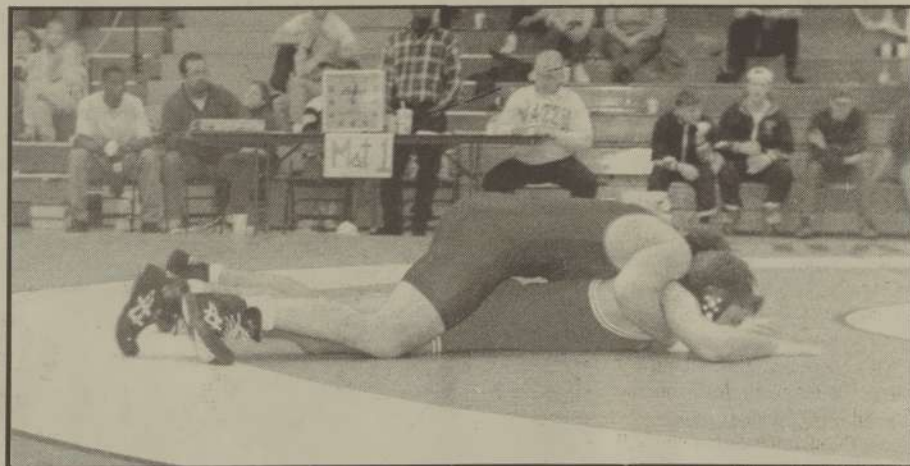


Photo by Jesse Sowa

Clackamas grapplers will travel to Bismarck, North Dakota for the NJCAA

Championships. Six wrestlers will represent Clackamas into the consolation bracket. Whisenhunt received a bye in his next match before beating Gappmeyer.

Damon Martindale (142 lbs.) suffered a tough 8-6 loss to Tim Kitchen of Big Bend CC in the third place final in his bid to reach nationals.

Martindale defeated Kitchen in the first round of the tourney, but couldn't accomplish the task the second time around.

Martindale lost to Mitch Stevens of Ricks CC (6-4) in the semifinals, forcing him into the consolation round. Martindale beat Shannon Gettman of Colorado Northwestern CC to reach the consolation final.

Josh Whisenhunt (134 lbs.), Jake's twin brother, beat Brett Gappmeyer of Ricks CC (13-5) in the third place match to qualify

for nationals. Whisenhunt defeated Ben Doss of Colorado Northwestern CC (13-4) and Jason Bosshart of Highline CC (5-1) during the first two rounds of the tourney.

"Travis Rollins just keeps getting stronger every day," Haluska said.

Jake Whisenhunt (126 lbs.) of Clackamas was beaten in his championship match by Matt Paulsen of North Idaho by a 3-1 count. Whisenhunt had a bye in the first round and defeated Bryan Holman of RCC (18-1) to reach the finals.

Clackamas finishes a 6-8 season with two big wins

Cougars end sour season on a sweet note

by Jesse Sowa
Sports Writer

The Clackamas Women's Basketball team ended a sour season with a few sweet touches that helped them complete the season on a winning note.

The Cougars defeated Portland CC on the road last Wednesday and Linn-Benton at home on Saturday to finish league play with a 6-8 record.

"We finally relaxed and started to have fun," said Clackamas Head Coach Karen Twain of the win over Linn-Benton. "We did all the things we know we can do."

In the game against L-B, the Cougars built an early 16-6 lead on four baskets by Rachel Ferguson and another by Melanie Sharp.

The Roadrunners scored 12 consecutive points to take a 18-16 run until Clackamas went on a run of their own to gain a 26-24 halftime advantage.

The first ten minutes of the second half was nip and tuck as Clackamas held the lead, but was never ahead by more than two. Linn-Benton took its first lead of the second half at 39-37 on a drive to the hoop by Darci Powell with

10:40 remaining.

Linn-Benton led by four (47-43) with under three minutes to

go until Denise Haselwood nailed a three-pointer to pull Clackamas within one.



Photo by Chad Pattenon

Melanie Sharpe puts up a jumper in their victory over Linn-Benton

Laura Stahl hit two free throws at 1:34 to keep the Cougars within one.

Stahl hit the go-ahead basket with 15 seconds left for a 50-49 advantage. L-B missed an outside shot and Ferguson grabbed the rebound. Ferguson was fouled and sank two free throws with five seconds left to seal the victory.

Ferguson led Clackamas with

22 points, 12 rebounds, and five blocked shots. Sharp added six points and 13 rebounds.

The Cougars defeated Portland 82-62 as Clackamas outscored the Panthers 46-27 in the second half to win easily.

Ferguson scored 22 to lead the Cougars while Sharp had another big night with 15 points and 14 rebounds.

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