Cougars win conference title with win over Chiefs

by Jesse Sowa
Sports Writer

The Cougars' Men's Basketball team held on just long enough Monday night to defeat Chemeketa CC and earn a spot in the NWAACC tournament in Eugene in two weeks.

Clackamas won 95-93 in a neutral-site contest to determine post-season seeding at the Sparks Center at Willamette University in Salem in which the ratio between Clackamas and Chemeketa fans was close to equal. The teams tied for first in the NWAACC Southern Division with 11-3 records.

The game remained close during the first 15 minutes as both teams were able to get easy baskets off of transition. With Chemeketa ahead 38-34 and four minutes remaining in the first half, Clackamas scored the last 14 points of the half to take a 48-38 advantage into the break.

The Cougars came out in the first five minutes of the second half and grabbed an 18-point lead at 65-47 on a rebound and basket by Jay Moore. Zach Olson led a 26-9 run by Chemeketa that put them within one at 74-73 with eight minutes to go. Olson led the Chiefs with 30 points in the second half alone and a game-high 36.

Ryan Coffee and Nate Williams each hit three pointers as Clackamas extended their lead to nine at 86-77. Another run by Chemeketa brought the Chiefs to within one with less than two minutes remaining, but that was as close as they would get.

Ryan Valley missed a lay in with 30 seconds remaining, but rebounded Zach Olson's shot in the key with one second left and was fouled. Valley hit one free throw to clinch the victory.

"I think the freshmen stepped up and played well for us," said second-year player Matt Stahl of Valley, Jay Lassen, Brian Brutke, Kenny Walker, Aaron Pearson and Jawanza Hadley.

"When our running game clicks, we run well," Stahl said. "We've got Nate hitting the threes for us. Aaron (Pearson) hitting the threes and me on the break. Not many teams can stay with that."

Stahl also pointed to the fact that it will be easier for Clackamas to play more relaxed now that they know their in the NWAACC tournament.

"It's a big win because it takes a lot of pressure off of us," Stahl said. "we're loose. We can play our game and come out and win."

Moore led Clackamas with 17 points. Lassen added 16 points and six rebounds.

Clackamas will play at home on Thursday against #4 Lane CC. If they win, the Cougars will play at home again on Saturday versus the winner of the Chemeketa and Linn-Benton game, which is also being played on Thursday.

Win or lose in the league playoffs, Clackamas will be playing in the NWAACC Tournament at Lane CC March 2-4.

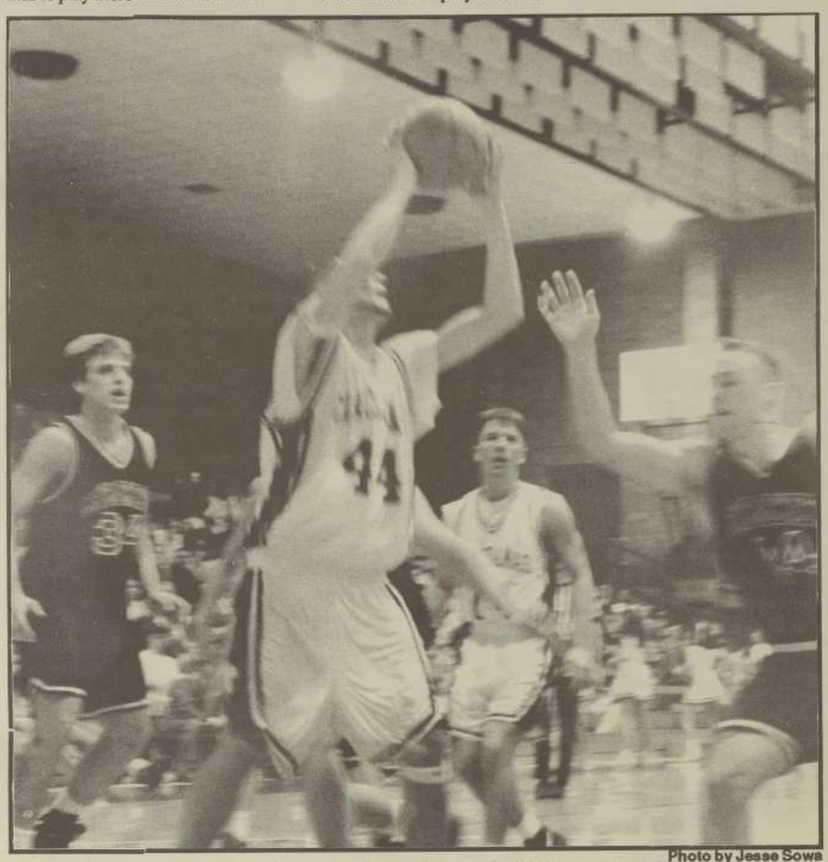
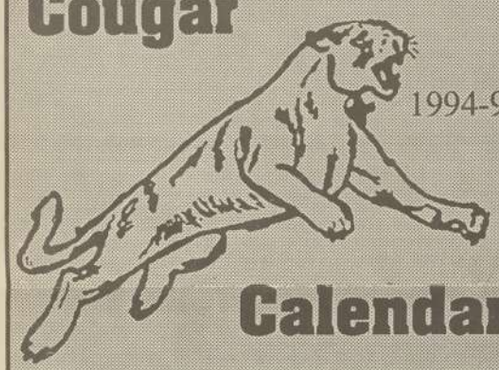


Photo by Jesse Sowa

Matt Stahl (#44) looks underneath for a play against Chemeketa. Stahl finished with 8 points, while teamate Jay Moore led with 17.

Cougar Calendar



MEN'S BASKETBALL

Home	Away
NWAACC Playoffs	NWAACC TOURNAMENT
Lane CC 2/23 7 p.m.	at Lane CC March 2-4
** Winner of Chemeketa - Linn-Benton 2/25 7 p.m.	
** - If Clackamas wins on Thursday	

Good Luck from The Clackamas Print

WRESTLING

Home	Away
	2/24-25 NJCAA Championships @ Bismarck, North Dakota

Good Luck to Travis Rollins, Jake Whisenhunt, Josh Whisenhunt, Damon McPherson, Jason Marshall and Steve Santoni at the National wrestling tournament.

Cougars beat Roadrunners out of conference title, force playoff game with Chemeketa

by Jesse Sowa
Sports Writer

The Clackamas Community College Men's Basketball team played up to its potential last week in defeating both of its opponents to tie for first place in the Southern Division of the NWAACC heading into league playoffs.

The Cougars beat Portland CC on the road last Wednesday and totally dominated Linn-Benton CC at home on Saturday to complete an eight-game winning streak that ended division play. Clackamas faced Chemeketa on Monday night at Willamette University in Salem in a game that decided the number one seed in the division.

Going into Saturday's matchup with Linn-Benton, Clackamas was tied for first with Chemeketa and Linn-Benton. Chemeketa won at Lane, the fourth place team, by a score of 75-70, to set up Monday's playoff game.

Leading 47-35 against Linn-Benton, the Cougars scored the first 16 points of the second half after leading by twelve at halftime to build an insurmountable lead at 63-35.

Clackamas out-scored the Roadrunners 63-36 in the second half as they rolled to an easy 110-71 victory.

Matt Stahl led the Cougars with 17 points and nine rebounds. Nate Williams added 16 points and six assists.

"They (Linn-Benton) are a better team than they showed," said Clackamas Head Coach Royce Kiser.

Kiser believes the keys to the win were being able to keep people fresh by substituting frequently and the reserves picking up the where the starters left of on defense.

"I think our defense got better as the game went along," said Kiser. "The reserves really got in their faces on defense." Kiser credited his guards for helping to wear down Jeff Taylor, the Roadrunners' top-notch point guard.

The Cougars defeated Portland on the road last Wednesday, but game results were unavailable at press time.

Under Kiser during the last three years, Clackamas has gone 38-4 in league play and has won four out of the last five division titles.

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