

Good recruiting class leads to balanced attack for Clackamas Women's Basketball program

Jesse Sowa
Sports Editor

A good recruiting year equals a well-balanced team. And that's exactly what Clackamas Community College Women's Basketball Coach Karen Twain has this year.

Twain sees this year's team as probably the best she's had so far. She feels that this team could be a prime contender for a trip to the Northwest Regional Tournament in March.

Clackamas will be led on the court by 5-foot, 6-inch Denise Haselwood, the starting point guard and co-team captain along with Leslie Knudsen. Haselwood is a sophomore from Centralia, WA with excellent leadership skills. She was also involved with the volleyball team at Clackamas this fall.

"She communicates great on both defense and offense," Twain said. "She really runs the whole show."

Knudsen, a 5-8 sophomore wing player from Gresham High School, returns to the Cougars with considerable improvement over last year. "She's gotten a lot better," Twain commented. "So much so that we're playing her at three positions (guard, forward, post)."

Chelsea Becher is a returning 5-8 sophomore guard from Canby HS. "Chelsea has great

speed and is a good hustler," Twain said.

Shannon Segerstrom is a 5-7 sophomore wing from Mountain View HS in Bend and a starter from last year. Segerstrom is currently out with a knee injury that will sideline her until early January. "She gives us a lot more depth when she's with us. When we get her back I think it will really help us."

Returning to Clackamas this season as Twain describes as one of the two best post players in the league is Melanie Sharp, a 6-0 second-year post player from Sweet Home HS with excellent inside skills. Sharp just returned to the basketball program after a strong volleyball season. "She can really leap," Twain said. "She's quiet on the floor and you don't know that she's doing the damage, but she's doing it."

Lisa Sorenson, a 5-9 freshman from Silverton HS, is a starting guard for Clackamas with a great outside shot. "She's a pure shooter and has great quickness, also," Twain said.

Sophomore Angela Womack returns to the Cougars as a 5-9 post from McNary HS in Salem. Twain sees great improvement in Womack over last year. "She's a real finesse player and a good shot."

Also playing the post posi-

tion for Clackamas is 5-9 freshman Robin Barchus from North Eugene HS. "For someone that tall, she's very quick and she can really jump," Twain said. Twain expects big things from Barchus this season.

Clair Cox is a 5-10 freshman starting post from St Mary's HS in Portland. "Clair's deceiving because she's only 5-10, but she's as good as any 6-3 or 6-4 post," Twain said. "She's real physical and very strong."

Mindi Loidici, a 5-5 sophomore shooting guard from Oregon City HS, has been out because of illness. Twain considers Loidici to be one of the most talented players on the team. "She's a pure three-point shooter and plays great defense," Twain said.

Denise Griffith is a 5-6 walk-on wing player from Milwaukie HS. "She's a positive addition to the team and has a good attitude," Twain said. "She works real hard."

Lindsey Vrtiska, 5-6 guard from Glencoe HS in Beaverton, is the Cougars' backup point guard. "She has walked in here and made an immediate impact," Twain said. "She understands the game really well and sees the floor. She's going to do a lot of stuff for us."

Another player from

Glencoe, Lindsay Hatch, is a 5-8 wing who is currently starting for Clackamas. "She's just very tenacious defensively," Twain commented. "She's very talkative out on the court and has good speed, also."

Clackamas started their season with two impressive wins at home last weekend in the Cougar Invitational on Friday and Saturday.

The Cougars defeated Grays Harbor CC, 73-66, on Friday night and Blue Mountain CC 78-65.

Against Grays Harbor, Clackamas was led by Sorenson in the first half as she knocked down four three-pointers to keep the Cougars in the game. Sorenson finished 5-11 behind the three-point line and scored 23 points for the game.

Clackamas started the game with a 10-0 run, but the Chokers closed to within one at 18-17 on several Cougar turnovers. Clackamas led 40-34 at halftime and held on in the second half to beat Grays Harbor. Sharp had 14 points and 16 rebounds for the Cougars, while Cox added 13 points and 18 rebounds. Barchus finished with 12 points.

Against Blue Mountain, which Twain considers to be one of the best teams in the Northwest,

Clackamas started slowly and fell behind early 12-4. The Cougars then scored ten consecutive points to take a 14-12 lead behind a strong inside game and good foul shooting. Clackamas led 35-32 at halftime after playing some strong defense to hold their slim lead.

The Cougars broke open the game early in the second half on a 13-1 run that gave Clackamas a 55-37 advantage over the visiting Timberwolves.

Sharp just beat the shot clock and stopped a good run by Blue Mountain with a ten-foot jumper in the key with just over seven minutes remaining in the game. The Cougars maintained a big lead throughout the game.

Clackamas coasted the rest of the way and Twain was able to get a good look at some of her bench players during the final four minutes as she rested her starters.

Sharp scored 22 points 13 rebounds and Cox added 15 points. Sorenson had another all-around game with 12 points, five rebounds and seven assists.

"I have high hopes," Twain said despite a Southern Region that is at its best in several years. What makes it difficult is that I think the league is as competitive as it's ever been. I think every game in our league is going to be a battle."

Men's basketball opens season with good showing at Red Devil Tournament in Longview

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Clackamas Men's Basketball Coach Royce Kiser has seen the good, the bad and the ugly of his team so far this season.

Despite winning their last game by nearly 40 points, Kiser feels that his team has a lot to accomplish between now and the start of league play in early January.

The Cougars are in some turmoil in that Kiser has yet to find a set rotation and doesn't have a secure lineup. Kiser turned to some of his younger players in a 102-63 win over Olympic College on Sunday at the Red Devil Tournament at Lower Columbia College in Longview. "It's not to say that the (other) kids can't change," Kiser said.

Clackamas is led on the court this year by sophomore Aaron Pearson, who Kiser considers to be one of the hardest working players he's ever had. Pearson is a 6-foot shooting guard from Forest Grove who played the point guard position for the Cougars last season.

Kenny Walker is a 6-2 guard from Weiser, Idaho. Walker, a second-year player, runs the floor well and has a good shot. "Kenny Walker is an extremely talented player," Kiser said.

Jared Bullock, a 6-4 freshman guard from Sheldon, is a player that Kiser considers to be well-rounded. "He does a good job

in all phases of the game," he said. "He's not quite there yet, but he's a complete ball player."

Leif Spencer is a 6-6 first-year guard from Cleveland High School in Portland. Spencer has a good shot and is a big rebounder. "He's searching to find his game now, but I'm sure he's going to find it and he'll be a real good ball player," Kiser said.

Jace Outlaw, a 5-11 sophomore guard from Roseburg, is thought of by Kiser to be a good defender and a smart player. "He's a pretty good floor general," Kiser said.

Brian Hay, a 6-2 point guard from Glencoe High School in Beaverton, is a player that's still learning the Clackamas system. "He does a real good job of directing the floor," Kiser said.

A player that helped lead Clackamas to the Northwest Tournament last year was Ryan Valley, a 6-8 sophomore post from Pendleton. "He's strong and he's quick," Kiser said. Valley broke his foot last spring, but is recovering rapidly. "He's still struggling a little, but he's going to play better," he said.

Jawanza Hadley returns to Clackamas this season as a much improved player over last year. Hadley is a 6-5 post from David Douglas HS in Portland. "If he continues to improve and play hard, he could be an exceptional basketball player," Kiser said. "He's very quick and athletic."

Ty Overby, a 6-4 freshman post from Beaverton, is one of Clackamas' most physical players and continues to improve as the season goes on. "I think Ty is very talented and he's going to be a good player," Kiser said.

Kiser believes Jay Lassen, a 6-8 second-year post from Crescent Valley HS, is the most improved player over last year and the best passer from the post position. "He's our best post-up offensive player," he said. "He's smart on the floor."

Tio Beall is a 6-8 first-year post from South Salem HS that is also still learning the Clackamas system. "He's playing better each week," Kiser said. "He's getting a lot smarter on the floor."

Kiser believes that his team must practice more on working against the press and executing the offense better. He also sees a need to step up on defense and rebounding on the offensive of the floor. "It's a real weakness on our team," Kiser said of the team's rebounding.

Clackamas collected two wins and one loss in Longview last weekend. The Cougars defeated Treasure Valley CC in two overtimes by a 97-95 score. Clackamas was led by Pearson, who scored 20 points and sank four of five shots behind the three-point stripe. Spencer added 17 points and eight rebounds.

On Saturday, the Cougars fell to defending Northwest champion

Clark College of Vancouver, 93-74. Clackamas trailed by just nine at halftime, but Clark blew the game open and won going away. Walker and Beall led the Cougars in scoring with 16 apiece. Spencer added 15.

Clackamas broke it open against Olympic and never looked back. The Cougars led 55-33 at

halftime and only got better in the second half. Hadley scored 32 points, while Pearson had a triple-double with 17 points, 10 rebounds and 13 assists.

The Cougars will travel to Pasco, WA on Friday to play Columbia Basin at 8 p.m. and to Pendleton on Saturday to take on Blue Mountain at 6 p.m.



photo by Chad Patteson

The men's basketball team prepares for matchups against Columbia Basin and Blue Mountain this weekend.