

Cougars beat Linn-Benton for regional berth

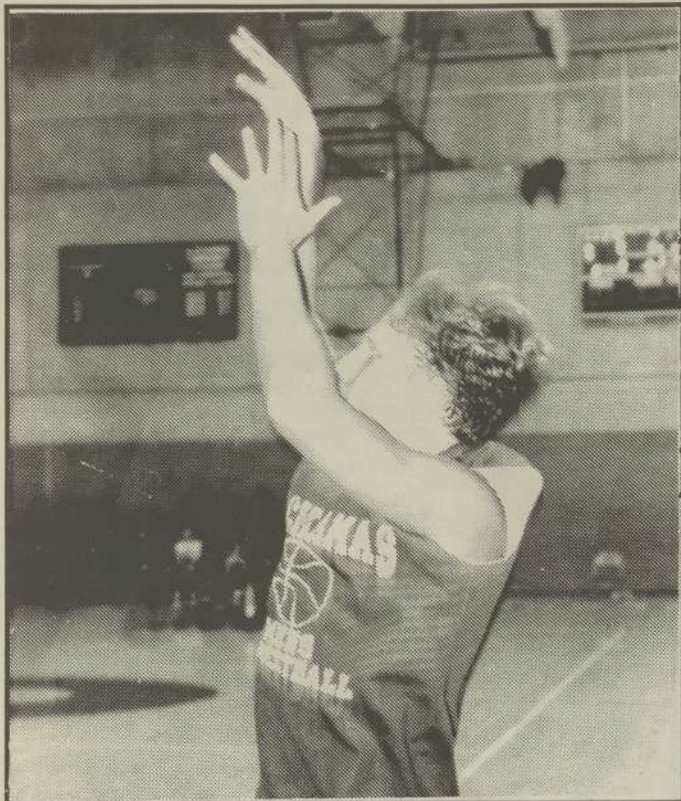


Photo by Lora Wahrgren

Aaron Pearson shoots during practice as the men's team prepares to take on Lower Columbia on Thursday during the first round of the regional tournament.

Jesse Sowa
Sports Editor

The Clackamas Men's Basketball team earned a berth in the regional tournament with a 72-68 home victory against Linn-Benton Community College (L-B) on Thursday night.

Clackamas fell to Chemeketa CC, 105-104, on Saturday in Salem and will take the number two seed from the Southern Region into the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges (NWAACC) Tournament this Thursday thru Saturday at Clark College in Vancouver.

The Cougars will first play Lower Columbia College at 7 p.m. Thursday. Clackamas is currently ranked third in the latest NWAACC Coaches Poll released on Sunday. Lower Columbia is fifth.

Should the Cougars beat Lower Columbia, they will play Friday at 7 p.m. If they lose, they will play at 2 p.m. on Friday.

Against L-B, Clackamas built a sizable lead during the first 10 minutes, but only led by six (42-36) at halftime.

The Cougars fell behind 13-12 with 12:40 remaining in the first half, and then went on a 12-2 run to take a 24-15 lead with 9:25 to go. Leif Spencer led the way with seven points during that spurt.

Clackamas started slow in the second half as the Roadrunners tied the game at 42 apiece with 17:40 remaining. From that point, the Cougars got back to their style of play; tough defense and getting out on the fast break when they can.

Clackamas built the lead to 11 (67-56) on some big plays by Spencer before L-B scored 11 in a row to tie the score with 3:25 to go.

Jawanza Hadley hit Jay Lassen for a lay-in underneath. An L-B player hit the first of two free throws and stole the ball from Hadley on the rebound. Hadley responded with a blocked shot on a follow shot by the Roadrunners, which seemed to turn the momentum for Clackamas.

Hadley missed two free throws with 1:15 remaining, but a missed shot from the field by L-

B gave the Cougars possession. Clackamas held the ball and called a timeout with 25 seconds remaining.

The Cougars got the ball to Hadley about 15 feet from the basket with 10 seconds to go. Hadley turned toward the baseline with seven seconds remaining and was fouled on a shot that he sank to give Clackamas a 71-68 lead. Hadley hit the free throw to seal the win and the regional berth for the Cougars.

"It shows a lot of character," Hadley said after his team had to hold off L-B to earn a berth at the regional tournament.

Despite the success that the team has had, Hadley believes that the team still has something to prove in making it to the NWAACC title game.

"As a team, we set that goal for ourselves," he said. "We haven't met our goal yet."

Against Chemeketa in the seeding game for the NWAACC Tournament, Hadley led the Cougars in scoring with 29 points. Spencer added 19 points and Tio Beall 18 points.

Clackamas track teams get first outdoor action at Washington meet in Seattle this Saturday

Jesse Sowa
Sports Editor

Clackamas Track and Field Head Coach Mike Hodges is looking forward to another successful season with a talented group of athletes.

The men's team finished third last year at the regional meet, the lowest finish for Clackamas since 1989, but Hodges believes that the Cougars can bounce back from that low with a strong group of returners.

Following their Northwest title last fall, all but one member of the Clackamas cross country team will compete in track this season.

Scott Bills was third in the Northwest at 1500 meters last year, Dean Rowell was third in the 5000, Ryan Burck was sixth in the 10,000, Jon Cox was sixth in the 3000-meter steeplechase and John Gotchall qualified for the steeplechase, but did not place.

Freshman Evan Goin of Silverton joins the long distance group following a strong cross country season. Travis Armstrong of Mossy Rock, Wash. was the stae champion at 1600 and 3200 meters last year.

Kasey Johnson from Umatilla placed third in Class 2A at 800 meters in the state meet. Josh Gullickson of Rogue River placed sixth in the state in Class 3A at 800 meters.

Hodges said of Gotchall, "He's one of those people you can count on for a quality performance every time."

The men will also be strong in the throwing events. Jim Hagemann placed in the regional meet in the javelin, while Jim Miller placed in the shot put, discus and javelin, scoring 11 points.

Freshman Shawn Davis of South Medford placed third in state in the shot put and discus last year. Scott Hein of Newberg placed third in the state in the javelin.

Another strong area for the men will be the pole vault. Sophomore Carl Crowe is the all-time leader at Clackamas, although he didn't place at the regional meet. Bill Hurford placed third in the Northwest meet last year. Joe Dean returns from last year as a strong vaulter.

The men picked up two talented vaulters in Bill Jones and Ryan Healey. Jones of Hood River won the Oregon Class 4A title last year at 15 feet, eight inches, and Healey of Memphis, Tenn. cleared 16-1 last year.

The men have improved more in the sprint races than any other area.

Jimmy Horne of Tigard was the state champion at 100 meters and runner-up in the long jump in 1994. Horne also was a finalist at 200 meters. Kenny Carter from Grant High School was state champion last year at 200 meters and runner-up in the 100-meter race. Joel Knight is a two-time state champion from Alaska in the 100 and 200-meter races. Knight also holds the Alaska state record in the 100.

Hodges sees Les Pudwill, who was on the Clackamas 1600-meter relay team that placed at the Northwest meet last year, as a good leader. Josh Klein from Grant High School placed in both the triple jump and relay races at last year's state meet.

Marco Banks from Benson High School was a state placer at 400 meters. Edward Lincoln, also from Benson, will be the Cougars' main hurdle competitor. Lincoln

was the state champion in the 300-meter intermediate hurdles and runner-up in the high hurdles.

"We want to be back battling for the championship," Hodges said of the men's team. Hodges expects Clark and Lane to be two of the top teams in the Northwest this year.

As with the men, Hodges believes that the women can improve this season on their placing at the regional meet last year, which was fifth.

"We believe we can move up a little bit from that," Hodges said. "We don't have the depth we need, but we should do alright."

For the women's team, Marea Crowe is a returning team captain who competes in the 100, 200, 400 and relay races. Melissa Abramson returns from last year and will compete in the heptathlon and both hurdles races.

Jaime Fairchild is the defending Northwest champion at 10,000 meters and runner-up in the 5000. Becky White is a strong middle-distance competitor. Misty Forgey, a quality high jumper, also returns from last year.

Joining the team as freshmen, Kristi Chamberlen of The Dalles and Erica Sloan of Chimacum, Wash. will be the Cougars' best in the throwing events.

Chamberlen, who attended Wahtonka High School, is already fifth on the all-time shot put list at Clackamas from her indoor competitions. She will also compete in the discus. Sloan will also compete in the shot and discus.

The women will be especially strong in the field events. Dianne



Photo by Lora Wahrgren

Ryan Burck and Mishe Simantel run during track practice. Clackamas travels to Seattle on Saturday for a meet.

Waldo of Nyssa is the Class 2A state record holder in the triple jump. Shei'meka Newman from Benson will be a quality competitor in the triple jump, high jump and javelin.

Wanjeria Washington, also of Benson, will compete in the sprint races, high jumps, intermediate hurdles and the relay races. Stephanie Jones from Madison High School will focus on the sprint races. Serrina Miller of Beaverton is the Clackamas school record holder in the pole vault at 10-0.

Mishe Simantel of Oregon City joins the track program after a strong cross country season. Jenny Newell of Tigard is a good middle-distance prospect.

"We think we've improved the women's program," Hodges said. Hodges believes the good weather over the past week has enabled the teams to get some quality workouts in, thus helping them improve on any weaknesses.

Clackamas will begin its outdoor season with a meet at the University of Washington in Seattle on Saturday.