

Cougars brave the meat grinder

Caywood twice defeats #1 wrestler, sidelined with shoulder injury for season

Brendon Neal
Sports Editor

The wrestling team started without much experience but is coming on strong.

Head Coach Mike Haluska expects some of his wrestlers to reach the nationals.

Clackamas wrestling competes in the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA). The competition peaks in January, then teams focus on fine tuning before regionals.

The team is made up of about half freshman and half sophomores. The team started the season with little experience but competed in a number of major duels and tournaments against some of the better teams. "It is real hard to go into college straight from high school. My biggest goal of this year [for the team] is to get better, and I can truly say that everyone is working hard and getting experience in. If they keep this pace up, we have

a real good chance to get a lot of All-Americans [honors]," said Haluska. "It is a fun team, and they work hard. They make it fun."

January is a tough month for Clackamas. The Cougars start the month with duals against the top three teams in the nation.

"A lot of guys call January the meat grinder. It is a real tough month on the body," said Haluska.

Clackamas hosted a dual with #1 ranked North Idaho College and Pacific Lutheran University on Friday and the Clackamas Open Tournament on Saturday.

Corey Caywood (134 pounds) beat the top ranked wrestler, from North Idaho, in his class twice over the weekend, but separated his shoulder in the second match. He is probably

out for the season. North Idaho is the number one team in the nation.

Garrison (142 pounds) placed third in the tournament and has placed in almost every tournament. Damion Martindale and Lonnie Eggert have also placed in most of the tournaments this season.

Haluska thinks there is a good chance at least three or four

wrestlers will place at the nationals in Bismark, N.D., and the team can finish as one of the top five in the nation. Clackamas will host the Region 18 championships on Feb. 15.

Clackamas will host a Double Dual with Lassen and Colby, on Friday. Glenn Garrison (142 pounds), number one at the nationals last year, will compete against Lassen's TJ Williams

whose "coaches call him 'the best true freshman [straight from high school] in several years'," said Hodges.

Williams has placed in several tournaments against four-year college wrestlers but Haluska thinks Garrison has a chance to give him a challenge or win.

The Cougars will travel to Portland State for a tournament on Saturday.



Contributed photo

The Cougars are expecting several wrestlers to place in the national championships in February.

Clackamas drops two, reloads for Chemeketa

John Thorburn
Assistant Sports Editor

The women's basketball team had a rough December.

When the students departed for their winter break last month, the Clackamas women's basketball team geared up for a long haul of tough pre-season games. The Cougars met Western Oregon State on Dec. 17 here in the Clackamas gymnasium and went on to defeat last year's Division II National Champions behind tremendous overall play from sophomore Claire Cox and the rest of the team.

"It was a very strong team effort against Western Oregon State," said Head Coach Karen Twain. "We even had great play from the ladies coming off of the bench."

After this exciting win, the team's hopes looked bright going into the regular season against top programs like Umpqua and Chemeketa Community Colleges. Just before the winter break ended, however, the Cougars lost Shelley Mitchell for most of the season in a frightening car accident and Lauren Mohan to mononucleosis. The loss of these two players are especially damaging to Coach Twain's game plan.

"Shelley was the first person off our bench and was a key contributor," said Twain. "And Lauren was our starting point guard - our only true point guard. Without these two, we have to shift players around to positions where they're not used to or haven't even played before. We'll be lucky if we get Lauren and Shelley back before the playoffs."

"Freshman Robbie Nicks was moved over to guard so she is in a bit of a transition," added Twain. "That is awkward in itself considering she is 6'1" and spotting up for threes."

As school is back in session, the Cougars have played their first two regular season games against Umpqua and Southwestern Oregon Community Colleges (SWOCC).

The women played a close game against Umpqua but the lack of depth and inexperienced players at new positions were a considerable factor and led to a loss.

This past Saturday, Clackamas traveled to a rowdy gymnasium in Coos Bay to take on the Lakers of SWOCC. The

Cougars poured out a tremendous effort and kept the game very close but being shorthanded and missing two of their star players, were not able to overcome the fired up Lakers.

Standing at 0-2 in league play, the Cougars are still well within contention of first place as they captured last season's championship with a 10-2 record.

With twelve games remaining before the playoffs, Clackamas has plenty of time to get on track. Claire Cox is currently averaging 21 points and 11 rebounds per game and will lead her team against top-ranked Chemeketa Community College tonight in our gym. Game time is 6 p.m.



Sophomore Claire Cox led the Cougars past Western Oregon State Warriors. Cox leads Clackamas with an average of 21 points and 11 rebounds per game.

Photo by Joel Coreson

Expansion teams fall short in finals

John Thorburn
Assistant Sports Editor

The Jacksonville Jaguars' and Carolina Panthers' bids for a Super Bowl title came to a sudden end this past weekend.

In only their second season in the National Football League, the underrated Panthers and upstart Jaguars became the two fastest teams to ever reach a championship game.

After defeating the Denver Broncos 30-27 in one of the biggest upsets in league history two weeks ago, the Jaguars seemed poised to make an appearance in New Orleans on Jan. 26, the site of Super Bowl XXXI. Led by University of Washington Alumni Mark Brunell and the strong running back Natrone Means, Jacksonville traveled to Massachusetts this past Sunday to take on Bill Parcells's New England Patriots.

With a defense that had not yet allowed a touchdown in the playoffs, the Jaguars certainly faced a tough opponent in the Patriots. Brunell, facing his old cross-state rival Drew Bledsoe (Washington State), led his team onto the field where they were man-handled on their opening possession.

Two plays after turning over the ball on downs, New England

running back Curtis Martin was celebrating his one-yard touchdown run in the end zone. The rest, as they say, was history. Jacksonville could not muster more than two field goals against the stubborn Patriots defense, and New England went on to win

the American Football Conference Championship 20-6.

In chilly Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wis., the Carolina Panthers met heavily-favored Brett Favre and

the Packers. Home to the most loyal and zaniest fans in the league, Green Bay broke open a close game in the second quarter with a six-yard touchdown strike from Brett Favre to Antonio Freeman.

Carolina played tough but could not match pro stars like Reggie White, Edgar Bennett, Eugene Robinson and Brett Favre, and so went on to lose 30-13. The Packers won the National Football Conference Championship and earned their first Super Bowl appearance since 1968.

New England will be appearing in their second Super Bowl since they lost 46-10 to the Chicago Bears in Super Bowl XX.

