

# Cougars roar past opponents, face Saints in key game tonight

**John Thorburn**  
Assistant Sports Editor

The Clackamas women's basketball team is in top form after winning its third straight game and is staking a claim at second place with the Chemeketa Chiefs.

The Cougars capped off an excellent week of basketball by claiming a commanding 63-45 victory over the Linn-Benton Roadrunners.

The game started out a see-saw battle between the two teams as the Cougars held a 24-22 advantage at halftime. The game was far from being boring, however, as strong hustle by sophomore Clair Cox allowed her to break free to score 20 points and pull down 16 rebounds. Michelle McKinney added 10 points and 13 rebounds for Clackamas.

The Cougars faced a frightful play as leading scorer Melissa Hollenbeck fell to the floor in tears after being charged by Linn-Benton's Melinda Maclean. Hollenbeck immediately clutched her ankle in pain and was helped to the sidelines. Amazingly, Hollenbeck returned to the lineup in the second half and made a strong impact.

"That play was a big momentum shift," said Head Coach Karen Twain. "Melissa basically sacrificed her body for the team

and, right after that, all of the other players got into the game more and stepped it up. She came back in the second [half] and ended up getting a ton of rebounds for us."

Assistant Coach Trev Kiser added, "Anytime that you have a starter that goes down, it's pretty scary."

Clackamas out rebounded the Roadrunners 58-26 for the game.

The Cougars seemed to have everything clicking in the second half as freshman point guard Lauren Mohan controlled the offense.

"Lauren controlled the ball real well for us," said Twain. "She didn't turn the ball over as much as she has, and she really tapped into everything that was going on. She's still getting over some sickness, but I think she's feeling better now so that helps her."

At times, the team seemed to be digging their own grave by missing easy shots and lay-ups but then would come up with incredible plays.

"We're still struggling when we get down," said Twain. "We make all the hard ones and miss the easy ones. It gets frustrating, but we're doing some things in practice that should take care of that."

"The girls are just so excited to get out there," added Twain. "I think we just need to relax and have some fun."

"Overall, I think we did okay," added Twain. "It took us awhile to shake them and put them away, but I think we did real well."

On Wednesday, the Cougars faced Portland Community College in what could have been an ugly contest, but the coaches felt the players would use the game as a time to fine tune the team and get the players that have not had much playing time to shine.

"Our intent wasn't to go out and win by 50 or 60 points," said Kiser. "We tried a lot of different combinations, some new plays and things. Our intent was to prove a point to the girls that there are things that we still need to work on. I think we proved that point real well."

Head Coach Karen Twain praised 6'1" freshman Randi Butch for her strong play against the Panthers.

"I thought Randi Butch did a nice job against PCC," said Twain. "She started that game and probably had the best defensive intensity of anybody out there."

The team seems to be in top form lately. The defense is playing strong and provides the extra spark that jump-starts the offense that is so characteristic of Coach Twain's coaching style.

"We're playing real well right now," said Twain. "Everybody is coming back from either injuries or sickness. With the exception of Melissa, everybody is relatively healthy. Things could be pretty interesting in the next couple of weeks as we get closer to the play-offs. Right now we have to focus on these next few games. Mt. Hood is a very big game for us."

The Cougars' next action is tonight against the Mt. Hood Saints in Randall Gym. Tip-off is set for 6 p.m.

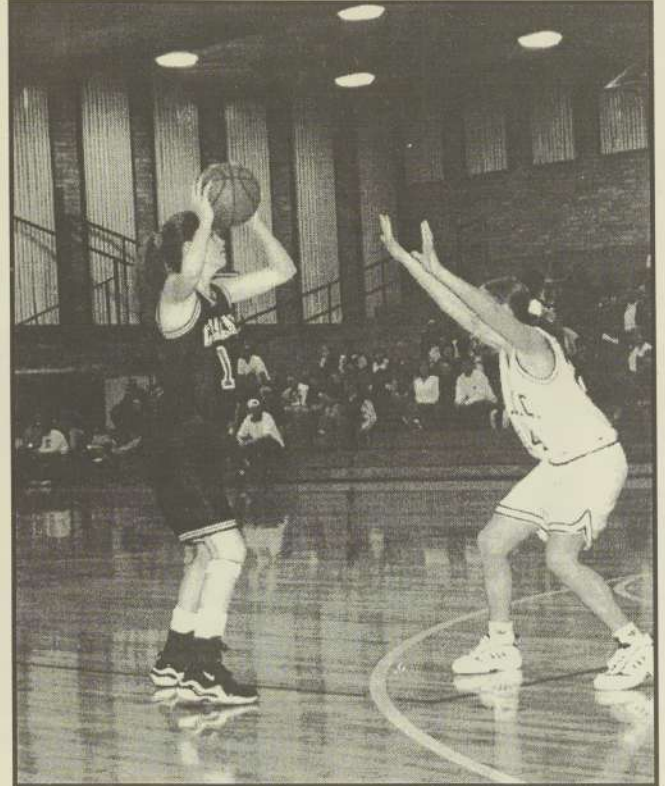


Photo by John Thorburn

Lauren Mohan looks in top form as she controls the Clackamas offense against Linn-Benton. Mohan missed almost all of the first half of the season due to illness.



Photo by John Thorburn

Sophomore Clair Cox soars above the Roadrunners for two of her 20 points Saturday.

1996-97

## Cougar Calendar

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL				
	Home		Away	
2/19	Mt. Hood	6 p.m.	3/6-8	NWAACC Championships at Skagit Valley
2/22	Lane	6 p.m.		
MEN'S BASKETBALL				
	Home		Away	
2/19	Mt. Hood	8 p.m.	2/15	Linn-Benton 8 p.m.
2/22	Lane	8 p.m.	3/6-8	NWAACC Championships Lynnwood, WA
WRESTLING				
2/28-3/1 NJCAA National Championships in Bismark, N.D., all day				

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