

Runner finds strong way of life



CHRISTINA MUELLER
Feature Editor

“
I'm going to continue to run the rest of my life and just see where it takes me.
”

Travis Armstrong

Sophomore Travis Armstrong is living proof that people can accomplish their goals.

Captain of the men's track team and Clackamas record holder in three events, Armstrong has only begun to accomplish his goals.

Armstrong graduated from a small school in Mossyrock, Wash. During his high school years he was quarterback on the football team, played on the basketball team and was student body president.

"Running was something I did only about three months out of the year. As far as running goes, I was kind of like a big fish in a small pond," Armstrong explained.

In his senior year of high school, Armstrong was the state champion in the one and two-mile run. He also was a five-time district champion.

"I was recruited by Coach Hodges pretty heavily, and I really admired his enthusiasm and his confidence in my ability to get better. So I decided to come here [Clackamas], and it's been a good decision for me," Armstrong said.

A lot of other community colleges offered Armstrong a spot on their track teams. He had almost made up his mind to go to another school until he visited the Clackamas campus.

"I really enjoyed talking to Coach Hodges and, for a community college, it really has a small town feel to it. I really like the people here," Armstrong explained.

This season Armstrong has focused on trying to run a wider range of events, from the 800 to the 10,000 meters.

"One of my goals is to make the top ten list, in all five events. There's really some good runners on it: a former Olympian and some other good runners," he said.

Armstrong has set the record in three of those events and is only the second Cougar to have ever done that.

Armstrong also participated in cross country. Last year he was the number one runner.

Coming into the track season of 1996, Armstrong was out of shape af-

ter being down with mononucleosis for two months. He still did extremely well in the '96 season. He was the NWAACC and national junior college champion in the 1500 meter.

Armstrong said he has "begun to break into some of the more elite national class times that would be more competitive at good division one schools."

Setting goals and accomplishing them is something that Armstrong does well. His goals for the next two years include, but are not limited to, being an All American at the division one level and to break a four-minute mile.

"It would be an accomplishment for me, because I'm not really a mile [runner] by nature. Talent-wise I'm more of a long distance runner."

In addition to Armstrong's outstanding performances on the track team, he still manages to keep his grades up (3.45 GPA) and work toward a career in kinesiology. Kinesiology is similar to exercise science, according to Armstrong.

"I'm going to stay involved in the sport [track] the rest of my life," he said. "I'm not sure at what level yet. I'd like to do some coaching, if not at the just volunteer level for youth type thing, but maybe further on doing some professional coaching."

"I'm also interested in physical therapy and that kind of degree would set me up to go into that," said Armstrong.

"Something else that's kind of interesting to me is corporate fitness management. It's kind of an expanding field. I've thought of combining a bachelors in kinesiology with a masters in business," he added.

For the future, Armstrong has been talking with a lot of different schools. The University of Washington, Washington State University, Montana, Colorado and University of Portland are just a few of them.

"There's a lot of factors involved, academics number one and then geographical location," said Armstrong. "I feel like I have two years left for me to run, and I want to go to the best place possible for me. The money isn't quite as big of a factor."

Throughout his running career Armstrong has encountered many dif-



JOEL CORESON / Clackamas Print

Travis Armstrong has led the Clackamas track team past many opponents during this spring season, setting records along the way.

ferent people who have helped him on his way.

"I attribute a lot of my success the last two years to my coaches, both Hodges and [Assistant Coach Jack] Kegg. As far as Hodges goes, I really admire his work ethic, his enthusiasm and his love for the sport. He's really left an impression on me the past two years, a lasting lifelong impression," said Armstrong.

"As far as Jack goes, he's a young coach. He's just doing an outstanding job. Everybody's running really well, running the best they've run in their life. Most people are. Obviously he's doing good things for me. He's an excellent technician. I almost wish I could take him with me when I go down to school next year, as my coach. I'm going to miss him," he continued.

Armstrong's family and the community also supports his success.

Without his dad, Armstrong probably would not be where he is now. His freshman year in high school, the school did not even have a track. Almost single handedly, Armstrong's father coordinated a group of volunteers and, with cash donations, the high

school gained a track. Armstrong's father is his mentor. He really admires his morals.

He also has a lot of respect for his mom.

"If I have any toughness or stubbornness it comes from her. She's the toughest woman I've ever met," Armstrong said.

Armstrong's brother and sister have a tough act to follow but, according to him, they have their own talents.

Hazen, who is almost 16, is following his brothers footsteps by choosing running for his sport.

Armstrong's sister Mallory is 12 years old and is an "extremely talented artist," according to Armstrong.

"My biggest fan is my grandmother," admits Armstrong, although he receives a lot of support from his parents and siblings.

His family travels everywhere to watch him compete.

"Running, to me, is a lifelong sport. It has almost become a way of life, an addiction."

"I'm not going to set any limits on myself. I'm going to continue to run the rest of my life and just see where it takes me," Armstrong said.

Donkey Basketball

Date: Tomorrow

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Randall Gym

Sponsor: Chamber Choir

Tickets:

Adults: \$4

Student: \$3.5

Children: \$3



Cougars unload on Pierce 21-0

BRENDON NEAL
Sports Editor

The Cougar softball team won seven straight games to end the week with a 7-1 record.

After a slow start, Clackamas is in second place in the Southwestern Division with a 16-6 overall record.

"There are six good teams [in the division]. This is the toughest division we have faced in five or six years. Any team can beat any other team any given day," said Head Coach Paul Fiskum.

Clackamas opened the week with a close loss to Mt. Hood. Pitcher Robin Lisak was able to keep it close, giving up only six base hits on 24 at bats. The game went into extra innings and tied one all. Both teams were playing solid defense and Clackamas' struggled to get base

hits.

"We were frustrated. We couldn't buy a base hit. We were hitting the ball, but they [hits] kept going in their direction. It happens on occasion, but it is a shame that we didn't give Lisak run support," said Head Coach Paul Fiskum. "We played a solid game. If you play well, you will win your share of games."

Clackamas was able to come back in the fourth inning after going down by five in the second game of the doubleheader to win 6-5.

Lisa Comstock took the pitcher's mound in the fourth inning and shut the Saints down the rest of the way. Comstock closed the door on the Saints, leaving 10 runners on base.

Lisa Hosford had two runs and an RBI, including a double steal play in the sixth, which gave the Cougars their final margin of victory.

On Friday Clackamas blew past

Pierce 12-0 in five innings.

Clackamas jumped out to a 4-0 lead in the first. Robin Voil led the way with a run in each of the first three innings and batted two for two. Koehler batted in three Cougars and a run.

In the second game, Clackamas slipped in the first inning, giving up two runs and three hits, but came back to win 5-2. Shawna Birnel gave up only one hit after the first inning and struck out eight Raiders.

Last weekend Clackamas swept the Yakima Crossover Tournament in four games.

Clackamas beat Wenatchee Valley 2-0. Saturday Lisak pitched a shut-out with eight strike outs.

Danielle Soldani and Robin Voil each had a run. Soldani went two for two and scored in the third inning.

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