

Cougars perfect in South at 5-0

Two nationally-ranked teams go head to head as Clackamas takes on Chemeketa

JOHN THORBURN
Sports Editor

It's been said all year that the Clackamas-Chemeketa matches would be the biggest games of the year.

Tonight is a big game.

The Cougars [5-0, 21-1], ranked #22 in the nation by the American Volleyball Coaches' Association, travel to Salem today to take on the defending Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges [NWAACC] champions and #12 team in the country in part one of a two-part script that will likely determine the top seed heading into the league championship tournament next month.

Part two is set for Nov. 11, on the final day of the regular season, and will take place here at Clackamas.

"Everybody is talking about this game," said Head Coach Kathie Woods. "Both of us are 5-0 and both teams expect to win. There's going to be a ton of people there so it should be really exciting."

The Cougars faced the Storm, formerly known as the Chiefs, in an early season tournament. After beating Chemeketa handily in the first contest, Clackamas lost the next two games to fall in the tournament's best two-of-three title game.

"We're not worried about that," noted Woods. "That was a pre-season tournament that didn't really mean that much. We would have liked to win it but it just makes us that more hungry for this match."

Clackamas has been nearly flawless since then and looks to be at

the top of its game.

"We have a very aggressive and talented group of hitters," said Woods. "We have many hitters that are all different and play different roles."

"Our setters are two of the best in Oregon and Washington. Any time that you have two great setters there's going to be competition. Kimber [York] and Nikki [Tilton] push each other, though, and because of that they're both stronger."

"Our defense is something that the Cougars have always taken pride in," added Woods. "It's really coming to shape and getting better every day."

Defense is believed to be the key to tonight's match.

"If we play defense we'll win," said Assistant Coach Jake Harwood. "It's just that simple."

Clackamas has had little trouble with the opposition in recent weeks - defeating every league opponent in three games each match.

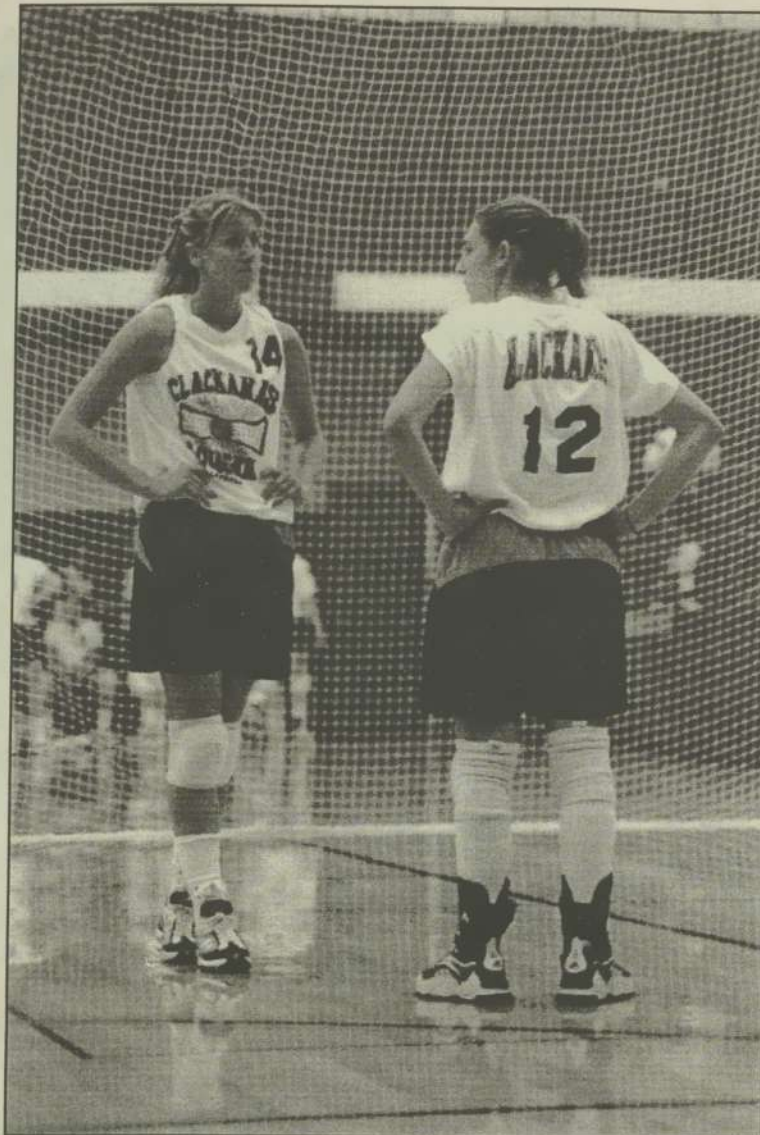
Both players and coaches alike understand what tonight's match against rival Chemeketa means.

The Storm are responsible for the Cougars only blemish this season.

Clackamas had its league-record 28-game winning streak snapped in the final league match of

the year last fall by none other than Chemeketa.

"As this game has gotten closer and closer," noted Woods. "I have gotten more excited and have slept less each night. The Cougars have a vision and a goal. This team can win the NWAACC title and we realize that to get there we have to go through Chemeketa. They're a tough team but there aren't as



JOHN THORBURN / Clackamas Print

Freshmen Jessica Rowley [left] and Nikki Tilton cool down during the Cougars' tournament-winning appearance in Spokane last month. Clackamas won the two-day long event winning 18 games and losing two. The host Spokane Sasquatch, favored to claim the tournament title, were dispelled by the Cougars in four games.

“Both of [the teams] are 5-0 and both teams expect to win it should be really exciting.”

Kathie Woods
Head Coach

A diamond in the rough

JAMES KHOSRAVI
Staff Writer

Sometimes, good people make mistakes.

And sometimes they get labeled, falling into a trap of mistakes and prejudice. The problem is, when they do clean themselves up, the label follows them around. It sticks to them like glue, like a puppy following its owner. After 21 years in this vortex, playing for the Minnesota Vikings must seem like a purple clad heaven to Randy Moss.

Born February 13th, 1977 to Maxine Moss, Randy's life has been full of prejudice and problems. He grew up in the small, predominantly white town of Rand, West Virginia where racial prejudice is common. Attending Dupont High School in nearby

Belle, he lettered in football three times, basketball three times, baseball once and track once; but that is where any love affair with the town ended.

Randy was branded a troublemaker after being convicted of assault and battery. Walking through the halls on March 24th, 1995, he came across a group of white students gang beating one of his close friends, while screaming racial slurs. In response, Randy got involved, injuring one of the other students.

This landed him in jail for 30 days, and his problems didn't end there. Notre Dame revoked his scholarship. Luckily for Randy, then Notre Dame coach Lou Holtz suggested to Florida State coach Bobby Bowden that he sign Randy Moss a letter of intent and offer him a scholarship.

Graduating from high school

soon thereafter, Randy attended FSU, where he did so extremely well that he was in position for the starting job at wide receiver. But Randy couldn't escape trouble.

A random drug test in April 1996 showed up positive for marijuana use. His probation was revoked and he spent 60 days in jail for probation violation, resulting in Coach Bowden asking him to leave Florida State after release.

On November 17th 1996, Randy and his girlfriend Libby Offutt, with who he had fathered a child, got caught up in a mutual argument in which both were charged with battery. They both agreed to counseling, and charges were dropped. Libby's father, Frank Offutt, even said in a later interview that it was both of their faults, adding that he liked Randy and thought he was a

dominant as last year's squad.

"Chemeketa is a consistent team. They play solid defense and they don't make many mistakes. The team that makes the least errors will win."

After tonight's match, the Cougars host the NWAACC Crossover Tournament this Friday and Saturday.

"We're excited to host this tour-

nament," said Coach Woods. "We've been on the road so much this first half of our season that we're just exhausted. It will be awesome to use our own facilities for a while. The lighting in the gym has been improved which is awesome. It will be great to play in front of our own fans."

Before Clackamas returns home, however, they must take care of some business in Salem first.

"We respect Chemeketa," said Assistant Coach Casie Ireland.

"Whichever team wins this match will be a good indicator of who is #1 in the NWAACC. We expect to be that team."

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