

# 'It's time to take back that respect'

JOHN THORBURN  
Sports Editor

Rankings aren't supposed to mean much to coaches.

To Clackamas Head Coach Kathie Woods, however, the latest Horizon Air Coaches' Poll means a ton.

The Chemeketa Storm [8-0, 32-2] sit atop the most recent Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges [NWAACC] rankings while Spokane [6-0] of the Eastern Region and Pierce College [7-0] of the West are 2, 3, respectively. Clackamas [7-1, 29-3] is in the #4 spot.

"It's the first time in years that Clackamas isn't ranked in the top three," said Coach Woods. "Nobody respects us now."

The Storm, a team that defeated the Cougars handily in three games three weeks ago, suffered the only two blemishes to their record against Pierce when Chemeketa lost twice in tournament play. Both teams are undefeated in their respective regions.

Spokane, the wild card team of the group, defeated Clackamas when the Cougars hosted the NWAACC Crossover Tournament, October 9-10. Clackamas defeated Spokane earlier in the same tour-



JOHN THORBURN / Clackamas Print  
**Sophomore Judi Arbuckle elevates for the kill. Arbuckle is one of the Cougars' top hitters.**

namment as well as in the championship match of the Spokane Tournament in September.

"Spokane has had a tough time in recent weeks," noted Woods. "They're a great team, but I was surprised to see them ranked that high with the losses that they have."

Clackamas has had its troubles in recent weeks, as well. With two of the Cougars' three losses coming in a span of four days, however, it appears the defending Southern Region champions are back on track.

On Friday, Clackamas dealt the visiting Southwestern Oregon [SWOCC] Lakers a sound loss.

SWOCC, a team once thought to be a strong threat in the Southern Region, is fading quickly in the division standings.

Amy Kraljev led the Cougars to the 15-4, 15-10, 15-8 victory with 10 kills.

On Saturday, the Umpqua Timberwomen provided little trouble for the Cougars as Clackamas won 15-4, 15-8, 15-2.

Jessica Rowley, who was named the Cougar Player of the Week by her coaches led the team with 10 kills.

When Clackamas wasn't playing one of these two teams, Mt. Hood was taking on the other.

"Mt. Hood is a very dangerous team right now," said Woods. "They're on fire. They're playing very well."

Clackamas faces the Mt. Hood Saints at home on Friday night.

"It should be a good test for us," added Coach Woods. "These last few weeks have been very stressful for us. We hit some bumps and it looks like we're getting back on track."

"I know that I've said it before, but the rollercoaster that this team is on is very characteristic of every team. The physical ability hasn't changed at all. It's a matter of intensity."

Before facing Mt. Hood, the Cougars travel to Albany tonight to take on the Linn-Benton Roadrunners. Linn-Benton, one of the weaker



JOHN THORBURN / Clackamas Print  
**Freshman Kimber York [right] sets up sophomore Amy Kraljev for the kill against Spokane. York leads the Cougars in assists while Kraljev is the team's kill leader.**

teams in the region, shouldn't be overlooked, according to Coach Woods.

"The Southern Region is the toughest region in the NWAACC," noted Woods. "Any team on any given day can beat you."

After playing this week's league games, Clackamas has a huge tournament over the Halloween weekend.

The annual Mt. Hood Halloween Classic features literally the best of the best. The two-day long tournament which starts next Friday, showcases teams like Chemeketa, Spokane, Pierce, Clackamas, Mt. Hood and Clark.

The Cougars, as well as the rest of the Northwest, may have a good indication of whether the latest rankings are right on. Then again, maybe not.

"I hate tournaments," said Woods. "We always play better in 'three out of five' matches. Most

tournaments are best two out of three. We never seem to play our best in tournaments."

In last year's Halloween Classic, Clackamas placed second behind Chemeketa. This year, the Cougars have a first, second and third place finish in tournament play.

"We have some big games coming up in the next three or four weeks," noted Woods. "It should be some very exciting volleyball to watch. I just hope that we aren't too tense to play our game. After the loss to Chemeketa, we really tightened up and played tense. We need to just go out and play and have fun."

"This team is very talented, and when we play our game there isn't any team that can beat us. When we lost, we lost respect around the league. It's time to take back that respect."



FROM THE BOX

## Bowl alliance, polls determine no champion this season

How many college football fans actually believed the hype of preseason polls and rankings?

I recall when Arizona State was in the Top 10. Then they lost.

I recall when Nebraska was #2. They too lost.

Both Washington and Washington State were listed in the Top 25 at one point. Now, they are nowhere to be seen.



In a year when the Associated Press and ESPN Coaches' Polls couldn't predict yesterday's weather, only one thing has been certain—the fans have seen great college football.

From week one as Washington's Brock Huard threw a fourth down touchdown pass with 17 seconds left on the clock to defeat Arizona State, football fanatics have been treated to some of the best games in years.

This was evident as UCLA triumphed over Oregon in a 41-38 overtime victory this past weekend.

A sub-par Michigan squad, a revitalized Notre Dame offense, losses to both Florida and Florida State must be worrisome to the Rose Bowl Committee.

Only a year after signing off on the bandwagon bowl alliance, teams that are thought to be the best are simply losing.

What happens when you have ten, Top 10 teams all 9-1 head-

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## Ruben Droughns

# Tailback's injury could be biggest loss of all



PAUL KITAGAKI JR. / Oregonian  
**Oregon running back Ruben Droughns rushed for 172 yards against UCLA despite playing with a broken fibula.**

The No.12 ranked Oregon Ducks lost a lot more on Saturday than a share of the Pac-10 lead when they lost to No. 2 ranked UCLA by 3-points in overtime.

The Ducks lost running back Ruben Droughns (the nation's 4th ranked rusher)

for the season to a broken lower right leg (Fibula) and damaged ankle ligaments. He underwent surgery at Sacred Heart Hospital in Eugene on Monday. No one is sure exactly when Droughns broke his right fibula, but he could have broken it as early as the first quarter. He twice left the game limping, but came back out onto the

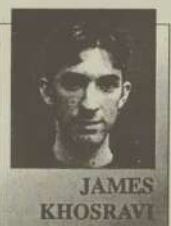
field and returned each time.

What amazes me about this fact is that it means that Droughns played most of the game with a broken right fibula and an ankle with damaged ligaments. I don't know about you, but I'd have trouble walking if I broke

my leg. How he continued to play is beyond me. Droughns must be the toughest player I've ever seen.

Somehow Droughns managed to gain 172 yards and a touchdown against

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JAMES KHOSRAVI

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