

Talented squad sets sights on larger goals

Despite losses, Cougars confident on success in championships

JOHN THORBURN
Sports Editor

The Clackamas wrestling squad is no stranger to tough competition.

With a ninth place finish in last year's National Junior College Athletic Association's [NJCAA] national championships and a sixth place finish the year before, the Cougars are used to matching up with the best of the best.

Clackamas faced the best of the best from last year's national tournament in North Idaho College, defending national champions.

If Friday is any indication how next month's NJCAA championships will end up, then North Idaho will be smiling for a second year in a row.

The visiting Cardinals manhandled the Cougars 41-0 for Clackamas' first dual match of the night.

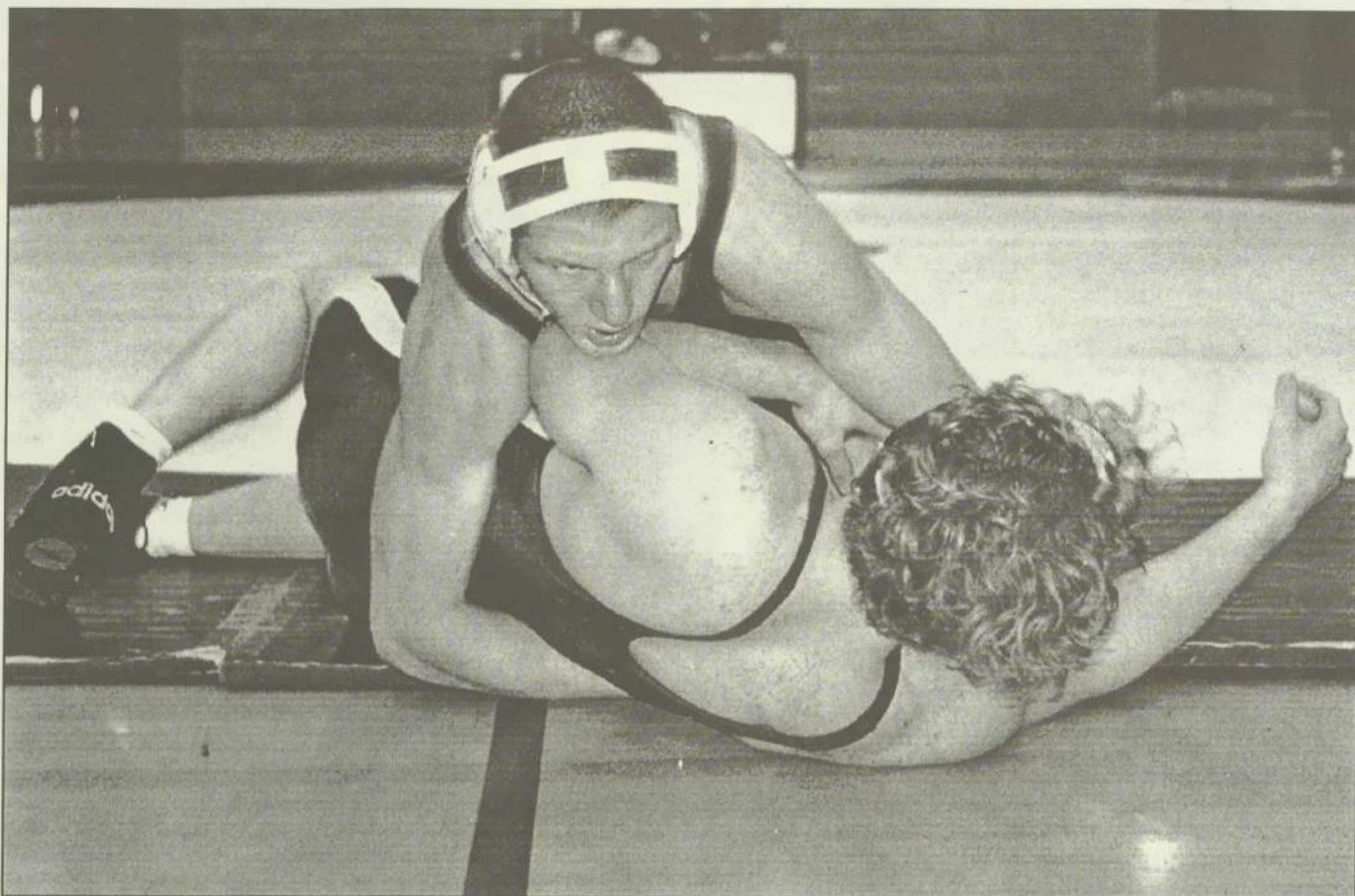
"North Idaho is a tough, tough school," noted Clackamas Head Coach Lloyd Martindale. "We wrestled them tough, but just couldn't push anymore. They were national champions last year for a reason."

In the second dual match of the night, Clackamas faced Pacific Luthern University from Tacoma, Washington—losing 27-12.

On Saturday, the Cougars hosted the annual Clackamas Open.

Ben Vombaur, a freshman from Vancouver's Evergreen High School, won the 125 lb. weight class.

Abel Valdez won the 133 lb.



TIMOTHY A. BELL / Clackamas Print

Sophomore Dennis Olsen attempts to pin a North Idaho College wrestler. Olsen and the Cougars have endured a tough season, but remain focused on their goal of a strong national championships appearance on February 19-20.

weight class and continues to improve with nationals only a month away.

"We're in pretty good shape right now," said Martindale. "We've got a real solid squad right now."

"Last year, we finished 6th. This year, top to bottom, this squad is much tougher. We're a stronger team."

Clackamas travels to Yakima Valley to grapple with the Yaks on Thursday evening.

"Yakima Valley has a respectable program," added Martindale. The competition should be pretty good for us."

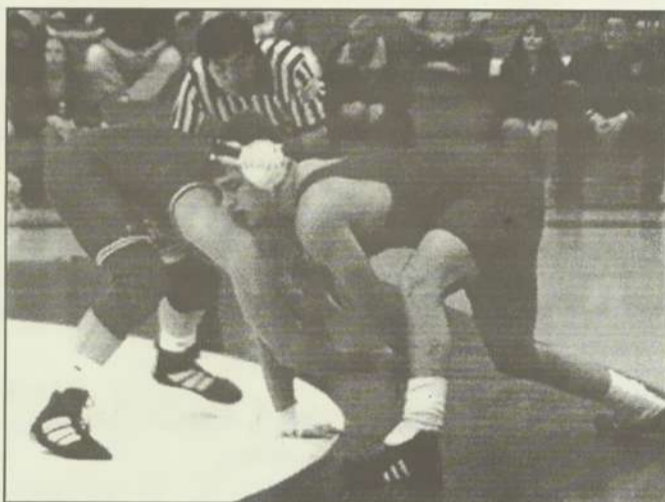
Saturday, the Cougars host a Triangular Meet featuring Southwestern Oregon Commu-

nity College and Highline Community College—both members of the tough Region 18. The first match is scheduled for 12 p.m.

Region 18, widely believed to be the strongest region in the nation, has produced national champion contenders year after year. Saturday's match should be a good test for the Cougars.

"We're excited and we feel confident at this point in the season," noted Coach Martindale. "We've had some rough nights but that comes with the sport. Those nights happen."

"We're looking to finish somewhere in the top five in the nation. With this team, we're capable of doing that."



JOHN THORBURN / Clackamas Print

Clackamas faces Highline and Southwestern Oregon this Saturday in a critical Region 18 triangular meet. Events will begin at noon in Randall Gymnasium.

Coaching whirlwind leaves Northwest out of breath

Every football season ends with the firing of coaches as teams go different directions.

This year though, it seems movement on the coaching front has been much more active than usual, especially in the Northwest.



JAMES KHOSRAVI

Three of the five major teams in the region will see new coaches at the helm this coming season. Here's a look at how the coaching changes break down.

Seattle Seahawks

The hiring of Mike Holmgren will have a major impact on the future power structure in the AFC West. The Seahawks weren't short on talent, as much as they were in need of a leader. Holmgren provides this. He

was one of the only available coaches that was a proven winner, and was the only coach in the group to have already been credited with turning a Franchise around.

Holmgren is the man that molded Brett Favre from an erratic, mistake prone quarterback into a three-time league M.V.P. and a future Hall of Famer. Holmgren coached the Packers to 2 Super Bowl appearances, and numerous division titles.

The Seahawks have one of the most talented defenses in the NFL, as well as an offense that is loaded at the skill positions. He has proven he can develop quarterbacks into stars, and will be looking to do the same here in Seattle.

With a disciplined leader like Holmgren calling the shots as Head Coach and General Manager, the Seahawks look to be one of the bet-

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Pacific Northwest Coaching Changes

Who's Out?



Erickson



Lambright

Who's In?



Holmgren



Neuheisel

Welcome to Seattle, Mr. Holmgren.

Welcome to big-time college football, Mr. Lambright.

The whirlwind weekend, which saw Seattle Seahawks' Head Coach Dennis Erickson replaced by the almighty Packers' Head Coach Mike Holmgren and the Washington Huskies' Head Coach Rick Neuheisel, has come and passed. Let's all jump up and say "Yee-haa" for Northwest football.

Seattle's going to be a pretty nice place to live.

The Mariners' Safeco Field is set to be open next July. The Seahawks' new, open-air stadium is slated for completion in 2002.



JOHN THORBURN

The Sonics are comfortable in their state-of-the-art KeyArena. It makes Portland's Civic Stadium look like a sandlot.

Nearly everyone is pumped up for football to start up again. But did this high morale come at too big a price?

Seattle Seahawks

The Hawks have a talented group of players. With Dennis Erickson, however, it was a different story. He didn't relate well to his players and could never seem to get the ball rolling. The franchise demanded success.

Erickson out, Holmgren in. With Paul Allen running the show, money is no factor.

Holmgren, as a coach, will get the Seahawks into the playoffs.

Let's face it. Jon Kitna at quarterback, however, well never win

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