

After losses, Cougars look to Storm tonight

JOHN THORBURN
Sports Editor

The Clackamas women's basketball team has had its sights set on repeating as region champions all season.

The Cougars' goal of winning their third title in four years, however, took a shot in the chin after losses to Umpqua and Southwestern Oregon last week.

Clackamas [4-2, 14-7] visited Roseburg last week to take on the top-ranked Timberwomen in a game that featured the region's top two basketball programs.

Only minutes into the game, however, the Cougars found themselves playing catch-up to the home squad.

Down by 18 at halftime, Clackamas regrouped to cut the lead to seven in the final frame.

Trailing by 10 with a minute to go, the Cougars were forced to foul and lost 85-67.

"We actually played fairly well," noted Clackamas Head Coach Jim Martineau. "Defensively, we held them to 38 percent shooting but we didn't box out very well and we rebounded poorly."

Clackamas has the kind of firepower that lives and dies by the three-point shot. The Cougars only made four of 22 shots from the three-point mark.

Sophomore guard Melinda Freeman led the team with 20 points while Nichole Hayden added 12. Rachel Hudson and Trina Rogers recorded 11 and 10 points, respectively.

Umpqua's Aubrey Dickson, the leading scorer in the Northwest, led all scorers with 29 points.

On Saturday, Clackamas looked to rebound against the

Lakers of Southwestern Oregon.

Though to no avail, the Cougars' poor shooting and rebounding against Umpqua looked great compared to their efforts in Coos Bay.

"We didn't show up to play against SWOCC," said Martineau. "They are a decent team, but we didn't get ourselves ready and we came out flat."

"We had 15 turnovers in the first half and we were still only down by eight points at halftime. It's our worst game of the year."

Despite facing a deficit of only eight at the break, the Cougars came up lame in the second half to fall 81-56.

Hudson led the Cougars with 16 points while Freeman added 15.

Four Lakers scored in double figures.

"The intensity level has gone down on the team," said Assistant Coach Denise Bean. "Right now there are certain players that want to go out and play, but not the whole team. When one person has a bad game or starts shooting bad, it effects the whole team."

"It's something that they have to deal with as a team. We have to come mentally prepared. We have to pick it up."

Tonight, Clackamas hosts the Chemeketa Storm in a critical game for both clubs.

"Right now, we're in a three-way tie for second place," said Martineau. "Only three teams make the playoffs so this game is huge. It's our first must-win game this year."

The Storm enters the game in a similar situation as the Cougars' scenario. The team from Salem has suffered two losses on the year—one at the hands of Umpqua and another in an upset

victory with an 18-30 score.

"Against Simon Fraser, things went really well," noted Martindale. "At the beginning of the year, they beat us pretty good, so this was a nice improvement."

Simon Fraser, one of the top colleges in Canada, is the site where the Canadian Olympic Team trains for wrestling.

On Saturday, Clackamas wrestlers competed in the Oregon Classic held in the Memorial Coliseum in Portland.

In competition, the Cougars fared well as they faced off against some of the top college wrestlers in Oregon.

"There hasn't been a junior college wrestler to win the Oregon Classic in at least 10 years," said Martindale. "We had three guys that were right in there but all three lost squeakers in the round before placing."

"I was kind of excited after that



Sophomore post Rachel Hudson elevates for a shot over Umpqua's Sarena Snuka in the Cougars' 85-67 loss to the Timberwomen last Wednesday. Hudson finished with 11 points.

JOHN THORBURN / Clackamas Print

loss to Mt. Hood.

Clackamas, however, matches up well with Chemeketa.

"They're very similar to our club," noted Martineau. "They start four players that are 5'9" or shorter so they're not real big. They're a good shooting squad

and defensively, they'll press us."

This Saturday, Clackamas is home for a game against the Linn-Benton Roadrunners. The Cougars escaped a loss to the squad from Albany in a 63-62 win two weeks ago.

"We've got our work cut out

for us," added Martineau. "We need to get back on track against Chemeketa and then Linn-Benton on Saturday so we can get back in the hunt."

The contests against both the Roadrunners and the Storm tip off at 6 p.m.

Wrestlers gear up for Region 18 match

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The Clackamas wrestling squad finished its regular season schedule this past weekend, and is preparing to compete in next month's Region 18 Championships.

Last Thursday, the Cougars completed its home schedule with a match against defending-national champion Lassen College in which the Cougars fell short in a loss.

"Lassen is the defending champions," said Clackamas Head Coach Lloyd Martindale, "but we expected to fare better than we did. We only won two matches, but it was a much closer duel. You can't let up when you're wrestling the national champions, and that's what some of our guys did."

On Friday, Clackamas faced off against Simon Fraser University in a match the Cougars used to allow the younger wrestlers to compete.

Clackamas finished short of a

tournament, and the wrestlers were as well. Ben Vombaur, Abel Valdez and Luke Hyberger all lost two, real close matches. We had some real good wrestling."

Now, the Cougars gear up for the toughest competition they will face this year as they travel to Des Moines, Wash. to compete in the Region 18 Championships next Friday.

"The Region 18 is the most talented in the country," noted Martindale. "North Idaho was co-national champions with Lassen last year and Ricks College has beaten both North Idaho and Lassen this year. Ricks is probably the favored team in the tournament this year."

To qualify for the national championships, a wrestler must place in the top three spots in a weight class.

"We feel we can qualify five or six wrestlers for nationals," added Martindale.

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