

Clackamas rolls, then rolls over

JOHN THORBURN
Sports Editor

Two losses in league play make things difficult on a team. Three losses makes it tough to qualify for the playoffs.

Any more losses makes it futile.

The Clackamas men's basketball squad is going to find out real quick what it's made of.

Tonight
Who: CCC vs. CCC
When: 8 p.m.

With an electrifying 108-69 manhandling over the Umpqua Timbermen last Wednesday, the

Cougars [3-3, 12-7] looked like a well-oiled machine heading into Coos Bay on Saturday.

After suffering an 85-74 loss to the Lakers, however, Clackamas' strength remains to be seen.

"We played real well in Roseburg, then turned around and just played awful down in Coos Bay," said Clackamas Head Coach Clif Wegner.

In Roseburg last week, the Cougars entered the match against the Timberwomen coming off two-straight losses. The squad didn't know what to expect from its opponent who had been up and down in recent weeks.

Shortly after tip-off, however, the Cougars were rolling in the contest and found themselves with a strong hold on the lead at the break.

In the second half, Clackamas continued its dominance of Umpqua in the run-away victory.

The Cougars were led by a strong group of scorers.

Sophomore point guard Jared Price led Clackamas with 24 points. Sophomore Billy Bright had 22 points with seven steals. Sophomore Cody Eckman added 16 while Freshmen Abe Smith and Kyle Bracy poured in 15 and 12 points, respectively. Smith also recorded 11 rebounds.

"Everybody on our team came to play against Umpqua," noted Wegner. "In that game, we're the best team in the NWAACC."

"Jared Price has really stepped up to become probably the best player in the league. He's really on fire right now."

"Billy Bright and Tony Edgerton have really stepped up their performance since league play began which has been a big boost for this club."

Against the Lakers, however, Clackamas wasn't exactly the top team in the Northwest.

"On Saturday," said Wegner, "we were a half-step behind the entire game. They outrebounded us, out hustled us and we just weren't the same team as we were against Umpqua."

Clackamas was led by Bright who had 18 points and Cohen who recorded 16.

The Cougars' team-leader in scoring, Jared Price, was held to seven points on that night—more than 15 points below his average.

Tonight, Clackamas hosts the

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”

Clif Wegner
Head Coach



JOHN THORBURN / Clackamas Print

Sophomore guard Cody Eckman drives towards the basket in Clackamas' 108-69 victory over Umpqua last Wednesday. Eckman finished with 16 points on the night.

Chemeketa Storm in a huge game if the Cougars' have hope of qualifying for the NWAACC tournament in March.

With only three teams qualifying for the championship tournament from each region, Clackamas can't afford to lose any

ground on its Southern Region opponents, according to Coach Wegner.

"Right now, we're in a tie with Chemeketa for third place," said Wegner. "Four teams qualify for the playoffs but that fourth-place team will have to go down to Lane

and play them on their court so this is a big, big game for us."

According to Wegner, the Cougars match up well with the Storm. "They're bigger but we're quicker," added Wegner. "We're a better shooting team, too."

Tonight's game tips off at 8 p.m.

NBA: Players sport new teams for 50-game season



Internet Graphic
Scottie Pippen signs with Houston.

The end of the NBA lockout brings with it the start of the off-season. This has brought about a flurry of trades and free agent signings during training camp, as teams have only a little over two weeks to both assemble their roster and get into playing shape. This shortened training period seems to have brought about an immediate and fairly large amount of player movement.

The strangest move to me this off-season is the Bulls trade of Scottie Pippen to the Houston Rockets. Pippen, who was chosen as one of the top 50 players in NBA history last season, was traded to the Rockets for virtually nothing. The Bulls received 3rd year forward Roy Roger from Houston (who acquired him this year in a trade with Toronto) and a future second round draft pick.

The reason Pippen was virtually given away was that the Bulls are in a "rebuilding period," according to team management.

They wanted only players who are low salaried and who are in the last year of their contract this season. This way they will have loads of money under the cap to make a big free agent run next off-season.

I'm not sure they were thinking too well with this reasoning, however.

I mean, what kind of player would really want to sign to a team that

shows thanks to one of the 50 greatest players ever by alienating him into not wanting to come back, and then trades him away for a no name named Roy Rogers, who averaged a whopping 1.3 points per game and 36% shooting last season.

I am sure the Bulls will find free agents next year. The long-term impact of such a pointless trade, however, will affect the franchise for a long time, especially since much better offers for Pippen were on the table (Portland reportedly offered Brain Grant, Jermaine O'Neal, and Isaiah Rider for Pippen, The Lakers reportedly offered Eddie Jones and Elden Campbell for Pippen).

The Minnesota Timberwolves seem to have planned well for this off-season. With the accepted loss of Tom Gugliotta, one of the top free agents available on the market (Gugliotta signed a deal with the Phoenix Suns on Jan. 23), the Timberwolves went out and signed free agent forward Joe Smith to a contract on Friday. Smith was the number one overall selection in 1995 out of Maryland. He was drafted by Golden State, and traded to Philadelphia last season along with Brain Shaw for Jim Jackson and Clarence Weatherspoon, amid speculation that he would not re-sign with Golden State.

The signing of Smith gives Minnesota a big, athletic player who can both score and rebound (he averaged 16.2 PPG and 6.0 RPG last sea-

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