

Clackamas takes over first place

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Staff Writer

Clackamas softball [21-5, 27-10] ended the regular season with a powerful first place standing and a shot at the Northwest Athletic Association Community Colleges (NWAACC) title.

Grays Harbor [10-12, 15-22] hosted Clackamas in Aberdeen, Washington on May 9. Clackamas' Mel Warthen pitched a good game.

The team made seven hits which resulted in five runs. Katie Brewster had a two for three performance at the plate.

"The combination of good hitting and pitching contributed to the win for Clackamas," said Assistant Coach Denise Nasuta. Clackamas defeated Grays Harbor 5-0.

Laura Casper pitched the second game and only gave up two hits to the Chokers. In the fourth inning Clackamas scored six runs behind dominating hitting and pitching in a 9-1 victory.

"Our bats were on fire, and there were contributions by all players," said Nasuta.

On May 8, Clackamas hosted Olympic College [4-17, 9-25] at Canby High School. The game was moved from Clackamas due to muddy fields.

According to Nasuta the first game had no key plays, but featured solid hitting, catching, and pitching.

The second game started with Warthen pitching the first half and DuPree the second. Nasuta said that the outcome was in doubt, but they knew they had a chance at victory.

"Olympic is a team you should beat, but they can surprise you," said Nasuta.

In the top of the sixth, two runs were scored by Olympic.

"They made it interesting for us," said Nasuta.

Olympic scored another run and was ahead of Clackamas until the bottom of the first inning. Clackamas frustrated Olympic with 12 runs this inning. Jessica Rowley hit one over the fence for her second homerun of the season as she had three RBI's this game.

Rowley's bat came alive.

"She's averaging three hits per game now. I hope it stays that way," said Nasuta.

Cecily Burton had a three for four hitting game. Clackamas scored another run in the fourth, defeating Olympic 13-2.

Lower Columbia College [LCC] [15-5, 29-11] hosted Clackamas in Longview, Washington on May 7. The first game was taken out from under Clackamas with a 4-3 loss. In the top of the seventh, Kirsten Richards hit a home run, a first for her. Clackamas, however, was unable to get anyone else on base. According to Nasuta, overall Clackamas hit the pitches that came to them.

The second game was blue ribbon. Cortney DuPree only gave up two hits while pitching. Clackamas rebounded from the first game loss



JOHN THORBURN / Clackamas Print

Summer Conroy takes a swing against the Mt. Hood Saints, who are currently in a tie for first place with the Cougars.

really well, added Nasuta.

"We knew we had to win this game," said Nasuta.

There were eight hits, which resulted in five runs in the fourth inning. Clackamas then took advantage and stole some bases.

"When we needed a good play we made it happen," said Nasuta.

The teamwork was an important part of the game.

"You have to work together to win and we did," said Denise Nasuta.

There were three double plays during the game,

showing a lot of teamwork. The final play of the game to clinch Clackamas' win was a double play. Clackamas won 5-0.

Clackamas came a long way for their shot at the NWAAC title and now with a first place standing in the league it's within their reach.

"We are on the road and shutting out the other teams... It just shows that we are ready to play tough ball at the tournament, but our goal is still ahead of us," said Fiskum.

Khosravi: Stoudamire is the difference in the series

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bounds, more second chance scoring, more passing lanes, and more driving lanes to the basket.

When Phoenix's defense keyed in on the front court in the paint, they left Portland's three point shooters open for the killing.

The key that ties this offen-

sive player movement together is ball movement.

The catalyst that made the Blazers' offense run Monday night was point guard Damon Stoudamire and his dynamic passing.

With Phoenix paying special attention to Rider when he was on the court, Stoudamire was able to find the passing touch that has been eluding him since

the lockout ended.

Stoudamire was executing plays brilliantly all night long. He made crisp, clean passes that were the product of his superb court vision and his ability to see the plays unfold.

Stoudamire didn't force a play all night. When there wasn't a proper passing lane available, he would use his quickness to help create one.

The result was 13 assists and only 2 turnovers.

Portland's front court has been playing well all season long; the games in which Portland has struggled have been the games in which the Portland's back court has not played well.

Now that the back court is finally gelling together, Portland finally possesses their full

range of weapons all at once.

The passing of Damon Stoudamire and the rest of the back court play that carried the Blazers to victory on Monday night. And it will be the passing of Damon Stoudamire and the play of the rest of back court that will carry Portland to round two and beyond.

Game 3 is set for a 6:30 tip-off tonight on TBS.

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