

Women's Basketball

Final home game could be biggest

JOHN THORBURN

Editor-in-Chief

It's a big week in Southern Region women's basketball.

Weak teams will fall and give rise to the great ones.

Clackamas controls its own destiny. Already guaranteed at least a fourth-place finish and a playoff berth, the Cougars are hoping to steal the third-place spot away from the Southwestern Oregon Lakers.

The Lakers, who defeated Clackamas on Jan. 22nd, play host to the Cougars this Saturday in Coos Bay. If Clackamas wins, they'll play the second-place finisher for a seed into the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges [NWAACC] tournament next month.

If the Cougars lose, however, they'll have to defeat both the region champion as well as the winner of the second-place vs. third-place game to qualify for the tournament.

Before Clackamas travels to Coos Bay this weekend, it will play its final home game of the season against Chemeketa tonight.

Chemeketa is tied with Umpqua for first place.

A win over the visiting Storm will put the team from Salem in that second place spot.

"We pretty much can control our own destiny," said Clackamas Head Coach Jim Martineau. "It's a familiar scene. We've been in this situation

before in the past couple of years."

Last year, Clackamas played Chemeketa in the final game of the regular season and lost. Five days later, the Storm ended the Cougars' season for good with a playoff victory in favor of the Storm.

Clackamas has the opportunity to avenge those losses.

"It seems like every year," noted Martineau, "it's Clackamas and Chemeketa playing for the second spot to the tournament. Tonight's game really doesn't mean a thing if we don't win on Saturday."

A Cougar loss on Saturday will likely pit the team against Umpqua—the team believed by many to be the best squad in the Northwest.

Clackamas lost to Umpqua 71-58 last Saturday in Roseburg.

"We played a very tough game," said Martineau. "I don't think we've played this hard all season. Our defense was excellent—it was a defensive battle by both teams—I was really proud of our effort."

The Timberwomen pulled down 23 offensive rebounds as four players scored in double figures.

Clackamas was led by Amanda Lee's 14 points and Mary Murphy's

11. Offensively, the Cougars turned the ball over 26 times.

Last Wednesday, Martineau's squad blew open a close game with Mt. Hood in the second half to earn a 75-53 victory.

Mercedes Juarez led a group of hot-handed shooters with 15 points. Lee and Michelle Thueson scored 13 points each while Trina Rogers recorded 10.

Clackamas out-rebounded the Saints by 14, 47-33.

"Overall, we played a good ball game," noted Martineau. "We played pretty good defense and we shot the

ball fairly well."

Saints guard Angie Green rattled off 15 points in the first half to keep the visitors in the game but was held scoreless after the break.

"This was a game we should have won and we did," said Martineau. "It really put us in the position that we're in right now."

"We lost to Umpqua but I think because we played so well, we've got a lot of confidence right now which is good heading into this week's games. It's going to be an exciting week of basketball."

It's going to be an exciting week of basketball.

Jim Martineau
Head Coach



JOHN THORBURN / Clackamas Print

Sophomore Kirsten Richards shoots over Mt. Hood Annie Hesler in the Cougars' 75-53 win. Richards and three other sophomores play their final home game in a Clackamas uniform against the Chemeketa Storm tonight. A win against the defending conference champions would shake down the league heading into region playoffs next week.

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