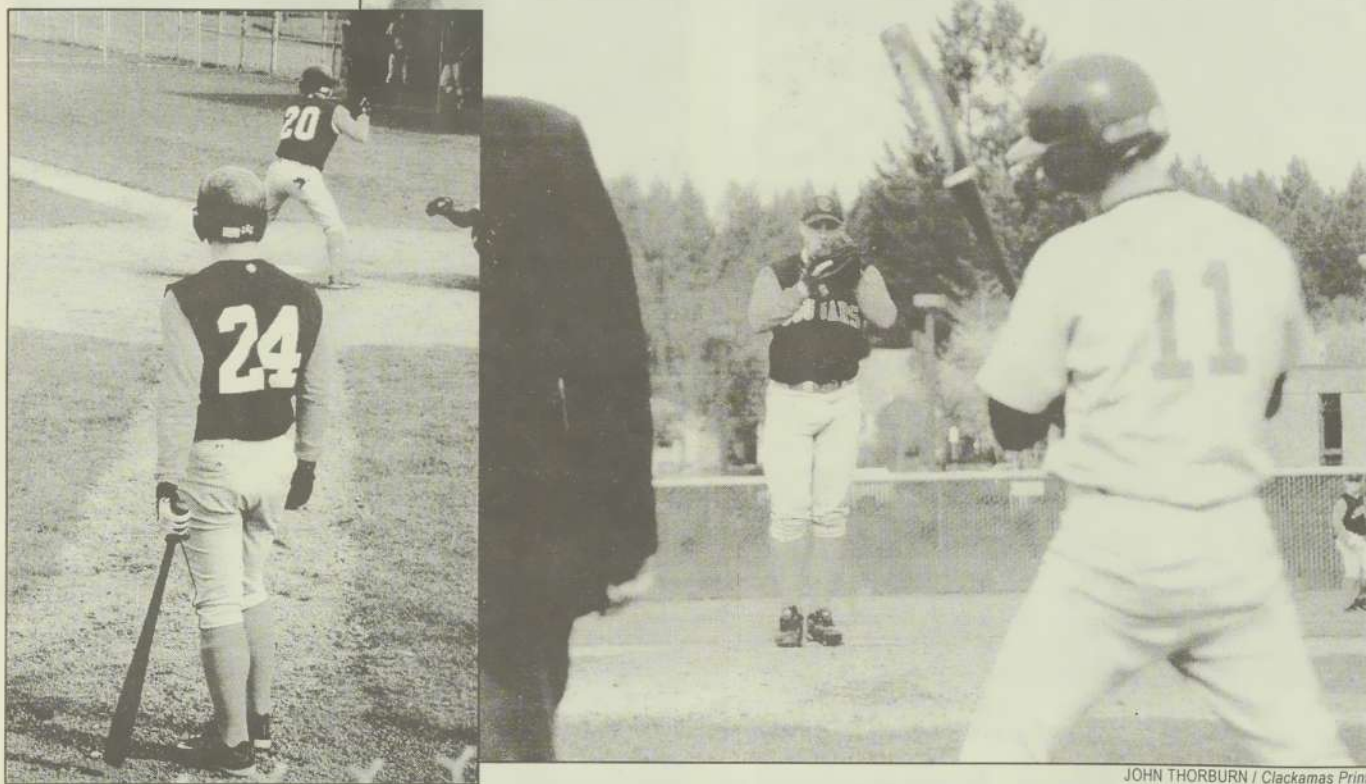


Schedule

BASEBALL: Saturday, vs. Chemeketa, 1 p.m.

SOFTBALL: Today, vs. SWOCC, 2 p.m.

TRACK: Saturday, Mt. Hood Relays, 10:30 a.m.



JOHN THORBURN / Clackamas Print

[Far left] Todd Boyle waits his turn at the plate while #20 Cliff Johnson hits away.
[Left] Ryan Oliver stares down a Linfield batter in a game last week.

Hungry bats pace Cougars to victory

JOHN THORBURN

Editor-in-Chief

Spring is a time of blooming. It's a time for development, a time for growth.

For the Clackamas baseball team, growth and development has come along at a rapid pace this season as the Cougars find themselves with a 2-0 record in league play and an 11-6 record overall.

With half of the squad's starting lineup usually freshmen, and an entire infield comprised of first-year players, Clackamas is riding a high of thundering performances at the plate and precision defense in the field.

"The club's playing really well," said Clackamas Head Coach Robin Robinson. "We've got some good sophomores that are doing tremendous things and some young kids that are learning the game real fast. They're kind of being mentored by

some of these older kids and they're just falling in line the right way."

Coach Robinson couldn't ask for a better time for his players to start working together. In the middle of the team's longest homestand, the Cougars need wins at home if they hope to survive the talented Southern Region schedule and move on to the playoffs. Robinson's squad has held its ground.

Last Saturday, Clackamas posted two wins to open up their league schedule against a strong Southwestern Oregon squad.

Leading the team with a .405 average at the plate, sophomore Ryan Boyle has been on a tear with team-leading numbers in doubles and runs batted in [RBI].

"Ryan Boyle is just crushing the ball and he's been very sick," noted Robinson. "He came in the other day and was 2-2, then went home

with a 102 [degree] fever. A week ago, he did the same thing. Against Linfield he was 3-4 and one of the coaches said 'God, you just don't look good' and he said 'Oh coach, I feel awful. I've been sick all night.' So he went home again that day with about a 101 [degree] fever. He was still 3-4 for the day so if we ever get him healthy he might really go off."

Another Boyle has stepped up as a leader for the Cougars—Todd Boyle, a sophomore centerfielder, is hitting .357 and leads the club in hits [20], runs scored [17], home runs [3] and stolen bases [11]. Not only is he feared at the plate, he anchors a strong Clackamas defense.

"Todd is really playing the defense well covering miles and miles of range out there," said Robinson. "He's already made some great plays."

With Will Swisow and Chris

Silva hitting .333 and .323, respectively, the Cougars have a potent attack at the plate. The only question that remains to be answered is pitching.

With a strong staff returning from last year's squad, Robinson expected his pitchers to be steady on the mound. A week into the league schedule, the big guns haven't been smoking too much.

"We have seven guys that are pretty good," noted Robinson. "Another guy, we don't really know yet. One day he comes out and looks like he could be all-world and then the next day he could throw with either hand and he'd do just as well.

"The other guys are not number one pitchers in the league," continued Robinson. "They're not guys that are going to go out and burn people down. But they're guys that get outs and win ballgames.

"Everyday we go out, I know we're going to hit the ball, I know we're going to play great defense. But pitching, nobody's being consistent enough. Nobody's being the bulldog that's dominating the game and that's what we're still waiting for."

As a team, Clackamas' earned run average [ERA] is 3.92. The team's walk to strikeout ratio is 76:101.

Ron Landolt has the best ERA on the team at 1.88. He holds a 3-1 record with two saves. Greg Palmer, a draft pick of the Toronto Blue Jays out of high school, stands at 3-0 with a 2.66 ERA. He has 16 strikeouts. Aaron Shanks has also picked up three wins and one loss. He has recorded 14 strikeouts with a 3.60 ERA.

This Saturday, Clackamas hosts Chemeketa in a doubleheader that starts at 1 p.m. before playing on the road until the end of April.

Softball squad stands its ground at home

JOHN THORBURN

Editor-in-Chief

It doesn't take very long to figure out how good you are in women's college softball.

For the Clackamas team, it couldn't wait to see just what it was made of.

Traveling to Arizona to take on some of the stiffest competition in the Northwest, the Cougars flexed their muscles a bit going 2-1-1 at the Pima CC Tournament in Tucson.

"We had a really successful spring break," said Clackamas Head Coach Paul Fiskum.

One of the two wins came against the University of Northern Colorado—a team that had twice beaten Central Arizona—a junior college that had previously won five of six national titles in recent years.

In the 3-2 win, the Colorado school ran into a brick wall at the plate four times in separate tag

plays in which Cougar catcher Julia Driggers stood her ground.

"That's the only game that I can remember that we've had four tag play outs at the plate," noted Fiskum. "Julia did a fantastic job."

After a successful spring break trip, the Cougars returned home to the reality of Northwest weather playing Olympic College in Bremerton, WA amidst 40 degree weather.

The cold wasn't as kind to the squad as the warm Arizona sun.

In the team's season opener, Olympic stole a win from Clackamas 3-2 in nine innings.

"I give all the credit in the world to Olympic," noted Fiskum. "They hit the ball off of Mel [Warthen] as well as anybody this season, which surprised me because they've never been a power in the league. We made some good plays behind Mel but unfortunately the winning run got on on just a horrible call but that's what happens when you

stay close. We just didn't score the runs that we needed to."

Lori Paradis and Driggers were both 2-4 at the plate in the loss.

In the second half of the double header, Paradis and her .333 batting average was 2-4 with two runs driven in. Melissa Cedillo was also 2-4 with two runs scored.

"Last year, Melissa hit down in the order," noted Fiskum. "We decided to move her to the #2 spot and she's just really responded well. She's one of our leading hitters so far."

The Cougars won the game 8-6. This past weekend, Clackamas opened up a two-week homestand with four wins over Chemeketa and Mt. Hood.

Against the Chemeketa Storm, Darby Needham and Melanie Warthen combined for 3-1 and 6-1 victories on Friday afternoon.

In the first game, Cedillo picked up two hits and scored twice. In the second game, Jessica

Farnsworth also recorded two hits while seven other Cougars had one hit each. Jessica Rowley had an RBI single.

Against Mt. Hood on Saturday, Needham and Warthen picked up 3-0 and 4-0 wins. Vanessa Applegate was 2-3 scoring twice in the first game while Summer Conroy was 2-3 with a single and a double and one run scored.

"Mel had a two-hitter on Friday and a four-hitter on Saturday," noted Fiskum. "It's sure nice to have someone go throw shutouts and you don't even feel surprised. She's having a heck of a year so far."

Warthen's earned run average is 0.82.

Unofficially, the Cougars are 5-1 in league play and 7-2-1 overall. The conference doesn't recognize ties, however, so the overall record is officially listed at 7-2 overall.

Clackamas hosts Southwestern Oregon in a doubleheader today at 2 p.m.

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