

Cougars leap into first place

Talented hitters lead squad to best start in years

MANDY GOOD
Sports Editor

The Clackamas baseball team is off to a hot start—they are leading the league 4-1 and are 15-6 overall.

Clackamas, Lane and Linn Benton are the top three teams in the league, and each team will play each other in the coming week. According to Head Coach Robinson, by next Tuesday the squad will see where they stand in the league.

Last week, the team played two games on its home field.

Tuesday, the team played Mt. Hood and was defeated by a score of 5-7.

On Saturday, Robinson's team played Chemeketa in a game that was full of entertainment with a Cougar win of 8-7 in 11 innings.

"Our top hitters are still Ryan Boyle, Todd Boyle, Mike Armstrong and Ryan Oliver; those are the guys that have hit the best in the past two weeks," noted Robinson. "As far as player to player the kids are getting along pretty well, they are comfortable with each other and they are starting to be confident in each other which is crucial."

"Of our 15 wins, I bet that we have won at least eight or 10 of them in the last inning or two," added Robinson. "That is a good sign—that we are good and that we can trust that it is going to happen. In baseball, that is a big thing, to believe in each other."

According to Robinson, you can go out inning after inning and never get anyone on base and all of a sudden in one inning it all happens. The key, according to Robinson, is to be patient enough and to trust that even if the first three hitters don't get it done, the next



JOHN THORBURN / Clackamas Print

Jason Farrimond takes a big swing at the ball but misses in a game two weeks ago. Farrimond and the Cougars have plenty to be happy about as they sit at the top of the league standings with a 15-6 overall record.

players are good enough to get it done.

"One of the biggest things in baseball is for the players to start believing in each other—that someone will get it done eventually," noted Robinson. "We are getting there, we're getting really close."

"On Saturday [in the 8-7 win over Chemeketa], we were down till the last innings of the game," continued Robinson. "We finally won the game with two outs and guys on second and third base with a base hit. That is a great baseball situation. Chris Silva got

the big base hit there," said Robinson smiling.

Clackamas started off this week with tough games against Mt. Hood yesterday afternoon.

Results were not available at press time.

Top pitcher Aaron Shanks who is 3-0 was slated to pitch against the Saints. According to Robinson he is the best pitcher statistically, so he is the pitcher that will lead the way in a tough game.

Robinson feels in order to look at a win in the NWAACC championships that the pitching staff will have to step up.

"We are getting better and we are getting healthier and I think that we are going to get better on the mound. We are still winning games because we are still hitting well and playing good defense right now," said Robinson.

The Cougars take on Lane this Saturday in Eugene before heading to Albany to take on the Linn-Benton Roadrunners next Tuesday.

Clackamas returns to their home field on April 29.

We are getting better and we are getting healthier

... Robin Robinson
Head Coach

Clackamas baseball stays true to America's game

It is America's game.

For the players, it's the smell of the grass, the crack of the bat, the scent of a leather glove. It's the lacing of the spikes, the buttoning of the uniform—the thrill of the game.

tion.

Those young boys who grew up watching and playing baseball were the lucky ones—for this is America's game.

The Clackamas baseball players understand this. If you're not familiar with community college



John Thorburn
Editor-in-Chief

From the Editor's desk...

For fans, it's the dog at the ballpark, it's anticipating that final strikeout, the sight of watching a player round the bases and touch home after hitting one out. It's doing "the wave" as it circles the stadium, it's having your dad teach you how to keep score in the bleacher seats—the thrill of the game.

America's game is like no other. It is unmatched in its mystique, there are no more loyal fans anywhere else.

Towns have gained fame because of their teams.

Books have been written.

Movies have been filmed.

For decades, fathers have told their sons bedtime stories late at night. They've talked about this game. They've talked about their heroes.

Playing catch with your dad is a ritual every spring across the na-

baseball, you should check it out.

It's pure baseball.

More often than not, the pitching isn't strong enough to completely dominate a game and not very many individual hitters stand out either.

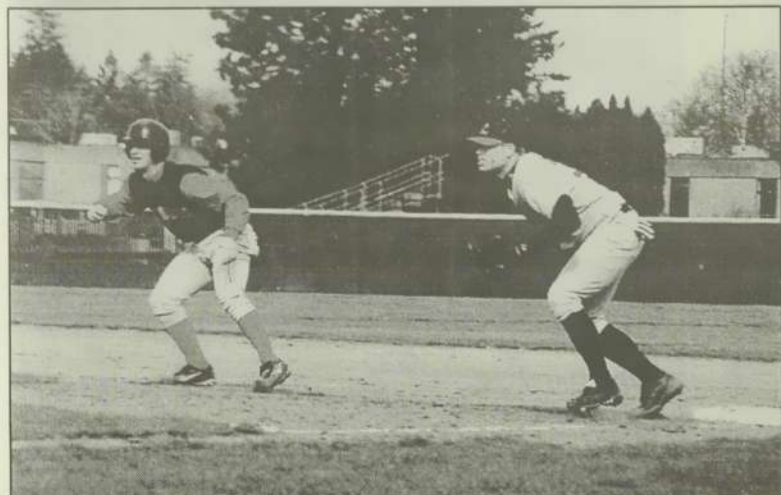
It's a team game—the squeeze bunts, the sacrifice flies, the great infield work.

Community college baseball is the style of baseball that was played when the sport first began. There are no Griffey-esque or Nolan Ryan-esque players.

It's baseball at its finest. These are not players being paid by the millions, but rather just struggling to extend their careers a few innings longer.

Like any other athletes, they've invested their lives in a sport that they love.

It's the love of *this* game that makes them special.



JOHN THORBURN / Clackamas Print

Will Schwisow leads off from first base against Linfield two weeks ago. Baserunning has been a key to victory for the Cougars this season.