

Cougars look to rebound after rough week

JOHN THORBURN
Editor-in-Chief

The Clackamas softball team is still in second place.

It wasn't a good week, though.

The Cougars won only two of six games in three doubleheaders, in a week that Clackamas Head Coach Paul Fiskum is calling, "not the best week for us by any stretch of the imagination."

The culmination of the week was a two-game sweep of the team by Lower Columbia last Saturday.

Misty Velke, a transfer student from a Division-I school in California, continued her mastery of the entire Northwest earning both wins, 6-1, 5-1. At the top level of college softball last season, she posted an impressive 24-5 record.

"She's the best pitcher this conference has ever seen," noted Fiskum. "She's just unbelievable. She's strong, she's not cocky—you just have to admire a player like that. Facing 60 mile an hour pitches from 40 feet is like facing Nolan Ryan."

In the first game, Clackamas managed only three hits off of the sophomore right-hander. The Cougars' Melanie Warthen gave

up six runs on five hits. Vanessa Applegate picked up two of the team's three hits.

In the second game, Melissa Borde picked up the 5-1 loss.

"It's the walks that are scoring runs for the other teams right now," noted Fiskum. "We're hitting the ball well and we're fielding the ball well. The walks are just coming back to haunt us."

Melissa Cedillo rattled off two hits and one RBI in three at bats. The Cougars were again outthit 8-5.

After finishing second to the Red Devils at the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges [NWAACC] Crossover Tournament two weekends ago, the squad started the week off with a split against Mt. Hood at Delta Park in Portland.

In the opener, Clackamas poured on six runs in a 6-2 victory over the host Saints.

Jessica Rowley burst onto the stat sheets with a 2-for-4 performance at the plate. She drove in two RBIs. Lori Paradis picked up two hits and a RBI while Borde had two hits as well. All three Cougars scored in the game.

On the mound, Warthen faced 26 batters giving up eight hits for the win.

In the second half of the two-

game afternoon, Laura Casper, a recent addition to the team and standout last season, saw her second action of the spring. She faced nine Saint hitters in three innings giving up four runs on four hits and four walks. She entered the game after Darby Needham reinjured her hip flexor in the first inning. Needham, who injured the muscle a month ago, was sidelined all last season due to a back injury.

"I feel really bad for Darby," said Fiskum. "She's worked really hard coming off of an injury last year and now she's having a nagging injury that's totally unrelated. She's having a great year on the mound."

The redshirt freshman has a 6-1 record.

The Cougars only mustered two runs on four hits. Kirsten Richards picked up the only RBI with a 1-for-3 game at the plate. Applegate and Sue Johnson each scored.

Last Thursday, Clackamas took on the Linfield junior varsity team

in a doubleheader at home.

In the first game, Clackamas jumped all over the four-year school with an 8-0 win in six innings.

Borde picked up a win only walking one and giving up four hits in her first shutout of the year.

A slew of Cougar hitters lit up the scoreboard.

Paradis, Rowley and Johnson each had 2-for-3 games with the bat. Johnson drove in two runs while Paradis and Rowley scored

twice. Jessica Farnsworth knocked in one run and scored once while picking up a triple.

In the second half of the doubleheader, Fiskum put Casper on the mound again. She pitched four good innings, according to the head coach, but was out there longer than she should have been after just returning to the team a week ago. She faced 19 batters walking only two and allowing seven hits. Four earned runs were credited to her, as well.

As Casper left the game with the bases loaded and one out, Fiskum gave the nod to centerfielder Farnsworth to pick up where her teammate left off.

"It was a non-league game," noted Fiskum with a smile. "We wanted to shake things up and try something new. Jessica pitched up through her junior year in high school."

The sophomore outfielder pitched very well, according to Fiskum. She threw a strikeout to end the inning not allowing a run to score. In her second inning, however, she picked up two-earned runs on three walks, before being replaced by Borde. Farnsworth was credited with the 8-7 loss.

"Jessica's college career pitching record is now at 0-1," joked the veteran coach.

At the plate, she was 1-for-3 with one run scored. Applegate also scored and drove in one run with two hits.

As a team, Clackamas is batting .321. The squad's earned-run average is 2.48. Warthen's ERA is 1.44 with a 13-2 record in 97.3 innings. Comparatively, Farnsworth is 0-1 with an ERA of 14.00 in one inning pitched. Borde is 1-3 despite an impressive 2.71 ERA.

It wasn't our best week of the season by any stretch of the imagination.

Paul Fiskum
Head Coach

Team continues to struggle

MANDY GOOD
Sports Editor

The Clackamas baseball team played three games last week winning only one.

On Tuesday, the Cougars played one game against Linn-Benton and were defeated 9-1.

Saturday, the team played two tight games against Chemeketa, but walked away with only one win.

"At Chemeketa we played pretty well; we ended up splitting—we lost the first one in 14 innings," said Assistant Coach Allen Coyle. "It was a long game and a tough one. We lost 1-0 and it was the last to bat for them. It was tough and we played very well; we just didn't get the breaks that game, but we played with a lot of heart."

According to Coyle, they were both very close games.

Chemeketa and Clackamas are only about a game apart in standings.

The pitching played a large role in the performance against Chemeketa in the first game on Saturday.

"We pitched very well against Chemeketa," Coyle continued. "It was a nice surprise. Freshman pitcher Aaron Shanks (left hander) pitched the first ten innings of the first game; he struck out nine and walked one, and Ron Landolt came in and picked up the loss but he also pitched very well but had a couple errors. That is how we ended up losing the game, but he pitched very good as well."

"Aaron is a good pitcher but he hasn't been the big game pitcher. He has pitched us some big games

but he has not been the big guy. We think that he can be; he continues to get better and better and we think that by next year, if not at the end of this season, he will be the best pitcher in the league."

In the second game of the day, the Cougars came back and won after losing a tough first game. The team attributed the win to its pitching and hitting.

"Clayton Scofield started that game and he pitched very well," noted Coyle. "He picked up his first win of the season. He has been kind of the tough luck loser. This time he got the breaks and he got the offense that we need, which was just two runs, and we did well. He did not give up a run 'till the last inning. Then again Ron Landolt came in and he shut them down with bases loaded and we won the game. So it was great."

Cliff Johnson, the team's catcher, was the star hitter of the week. He hit two in the first game and then hit both RBI's—the only runs—of the second game.

According to Coyle, he has been the hottest hitter.

"Before the Linn-Benton game, he (Johnson) had a 10-game hitting streak, which is pretty good; and most of the time he has two hits in a game," explained Coyle. "It really is tough to do—in this league a four game hitting streak is good, so 10 is really good. He has been really solid for us and has continued to improve behind the plate."

Clackamas will have one away game this week at Linn-Benton on Tuesday. Then the squad will return to play at home on Saturday against Mt. Hood.

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