

Cougars finish schedule with two homestands

Out of the playoffs, baseball team looks to dent Linn-Benton and Lane's records before ending spring schedule

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Sports Editor

The Clackamas baseball team has gone back to basics and it seems to have helped.

The newly implemented Cougar strategy is simplicity; which includes basic drills in practice. According to Assistant Coach Allan Coyle, the strategy has given the team more confidence and the team is beginning to win games again.

The squad has climbed half way out of its three-week slump.

Head Coach Robin Robinson's team played four games in the last week and walked away with two wins.

If the first game of the week was an indication of the way the week was going to go, then the Cougars could have been in for another long, deflating week.

Aaron Shanks (3-4), left-handed pitcher, ended up picking up the first loss of the week.

"We got down early, we ended up battling back, but we just couldn't catch up and we ended up losing 7-5," explained Coyle.

The team then traveled to Coos Bay to play Southwestern Oregon (SWOCC) in a series of three games. In the first game, Clayton Scofield injured his shoulder while pitching and will be unable to play for the rest of the season.

"We won the first game 9-8, and we were doing pretty well. We were up 8-2 for a little while, and Clayton was cruising along and doing really well till he injured his shoulder; then we did not do so well, so they ended up catching up. Then we won it in the top of the ninth, and Landolt got the win there." Coyle recounted. "We had a couple big hitters in that game— Ryan Oliver hit 3-4 and he had 2 RBI's and Matt Cooksey hit 2-5 and he had 4 RBI's."

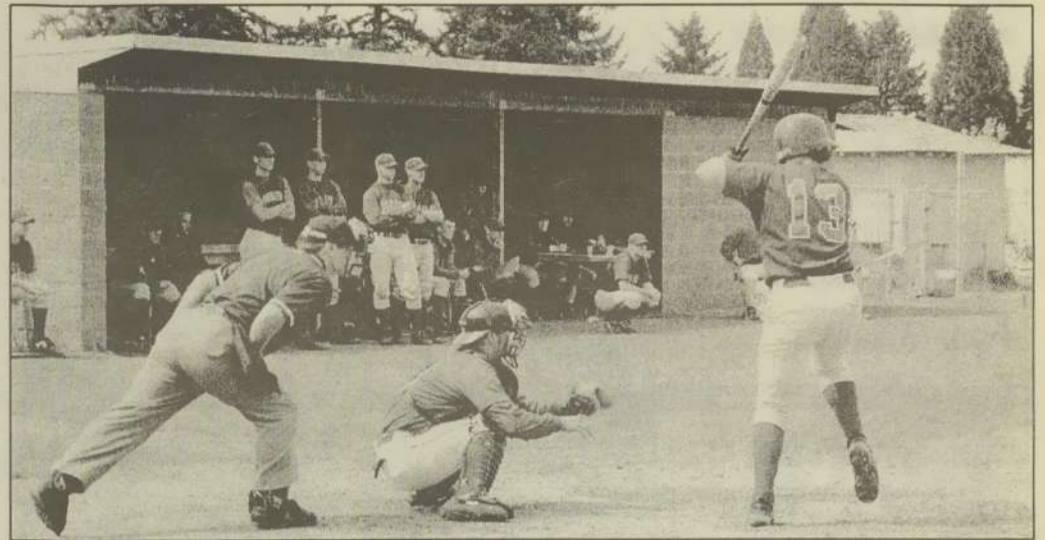
"In the second game, Palmer started and he did okay; he was solid and almost spectacular, and we ended up winning that one 7-5; Randall pitched again in that game and took the save," said Coyle. "We had some big hitters in that game Ryan Boyle and Cliff Johnson and each of the guys hit 3-4 with 2 RBI's."

According to Coyle, the reason the team came out of the week with two wins is that they are playing a little bit harder, the pitching stayed solid and

the team played a lot of big innings.

"The key to winning is to have a shot near the end and to have your starting pitcher go about six innings, and we did. We ended up getting the hits in the first two games and then the third game at SWOCC we didn't and we ended up losing the game," said Coyle.

Despite losing the third and final game against SWOCC, the



JOHN THORBURN / Clackamas Print

Ryan Oliver waits for the pitch in a game at home two weeks ago.

team delivered good game performances.

"The third and final game of the series, we did very well. We probably pitched the best of the three games," noted Coyle. "But we ended up losing. Ryan Oliver pitched that game, he threw a three-hitter and we lost 2-0."

The team is looking better than they have in the prior weeks. Last week Coyle said that the team's morale would need to improve in order to win games; then the team came out of the week with a couple of wins. So the team must have their confidence back. The team is going to need confidence and plenty of morale

with the week that they have ahead.

"We are building a little more confidence; we are building up some steam going into this week, which is good because we are playing Lane three times and they are leading the teams and then we are chasing Linn-Benton," explained Coyle.

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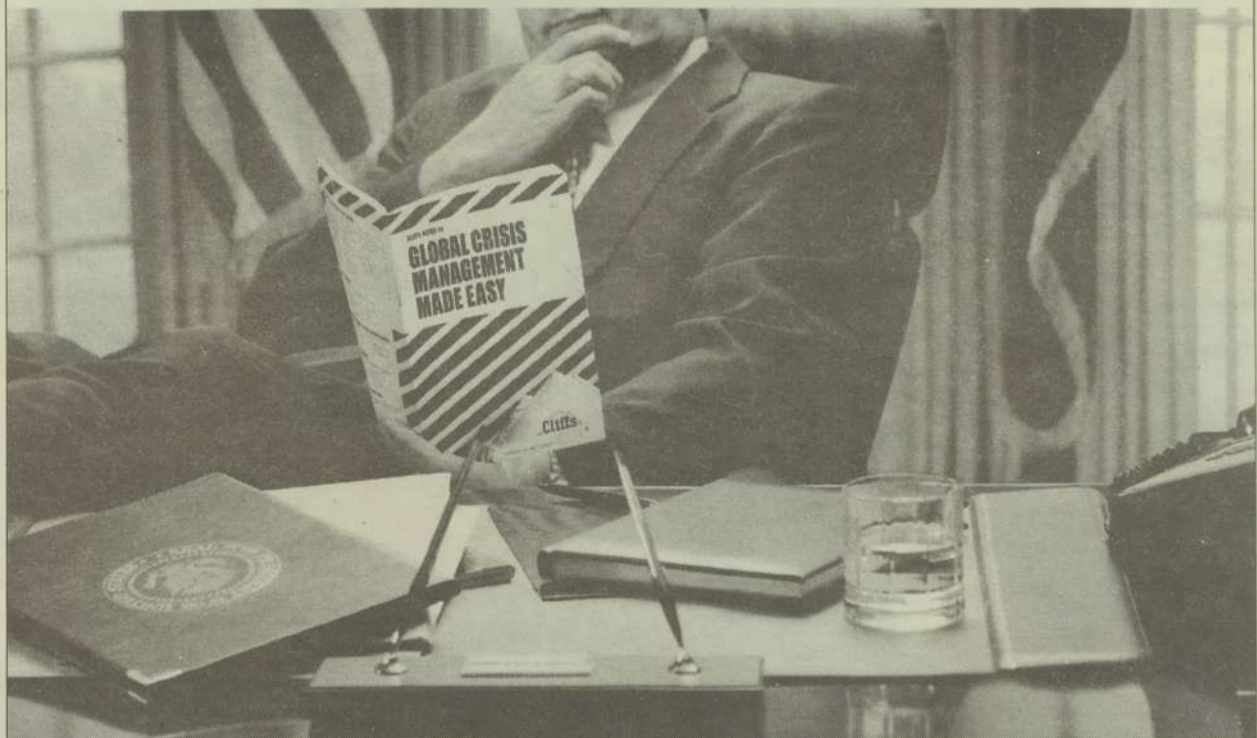
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