

Cougars excel in tournament

NICK BARRON
Staff Writer

The Cougars volleyball team continued their winning ways this weekend in Spokane, Washington, as they placed fourth out of 12 teams in the Spokane Crossover.

Tournament play began Friday, with the teams participating in the Crossover being placed in four pools of three each. Clackamas' first opponent was North Idaho, a team that the Cougars tore apart in three games. Next up for the Cougars were the Trailblazers of Centralia College, who posed no threat to Clackamas, as the Cougars swept all three games in the match. The victory gave the Cougars first place in their opening round pool, and advanced them to the second pool, against Shoreline and Linn-Benton.

Clackamas faced Shoreline in the first match of the second pool, and finished off the Dolphins in three games. With the defeat of Shoreline, that left only Linn-Benton standing in the Cougar's way for the championship bracket. Linn-Benton fell prey to the Cougars attack in three games, assuring the Cougars at least fourth in the Crossover.



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Clackamas' volleyball team takes time for a photo at a tournament in Walla Walla.

The Cougars faced a tough challenge in their first match in the championship bracket, as they faced Ricks College, a team that ranks among the top volleyball teams in the nation. Clackamas lost the match against the eventual champions from Ricks, yet the Cougars were the only team to take a game away from Ricks. After the loss to Ricks, the Cougars faced Mount Hood Community College, a school that Clackamas knows well. Throughout the match Clackamas fought hard, but in

the end Mount Hood were the victors in a match that went all five games. The loss to Ricks and Mount Hood, coupled by Spokane's defeat of Mount Hood, placed the Cougars fourth in the tournament.

After the tournament, Cougars' coach Kathie Woods had nothing but praise for her team. "We are playing better than ever, and are taking the perfect steps toward the NWAACC (Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges) Championships." According to Coach Woods, Clackamas is

"playing better than any other NWAACC team."

All-tournament honors went to Sarah Entenman, who had 112 assists to her credit, along with 34 digs for the Crossover. Another benefit of Entenman's superior play in the tournament is her being named NWAACC Southern Region Defensive Player of the Week. Lori Free finished the weekend with 61 kills, followed by Corinne Lawrence with 41. Free also led the team with 72 digs, while Raine Miller came in second on the team with 71 digs.

Clackamas' excellent performance in the Spokane Crossover gives the Cougar's an over-all record to 29-14, and places them among some of the elite NWAACC teams. As the crucial part of the season nears, the Cougars seem to be at the top of their game, as they have lost only two of their last six matches. Some of the teams the Cougars have beaten recently were schools that Clackamas had struggled against earlier in the season.

In summing up Clackamas' performance over the past week, Coach Woods commended her team. "The girls are willing to work hard...and I couldn't be happier."

Today Clackamas travels to Salem to take on the Chemeketa Storm, a game in which pride will be more on the line than standings. Chemeketa is two wins better in the league standings than the Cougars, a gap that Clackamas cannot close, but a victory over the Storm would boost the Cougar morale even more. If the Cougars can sustain the momentum they built over the last two weeks, they will be the only ones who can limit what they can accomplish in the postseason.



Major League Baseball in Portland?

By Nick Barron

Recently I was driving on I-205 when an 18-wheeler decided that a seven-foot space was enough room to fit in and therefore cut me off. Normally I would have been on my horn and told the driver what I thought of his mother, but on the back of this particular trailer was an advertisement for an organization that is working to bring Major League Baseball to Portland. When I first read it, I thought it sounded like a good idea, something that if I found myself with a few hundred million dollars, I just might try myself. Yet the more I have thought about it, the less this idea makes any sense to me at all.

In a time in which two unspecified major league teams could possibly become non-existent, there is no way Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig and the owners would approve a new franchise for Portland. The reasons for such an idea are few, if not ludicrous, and the arguments against are many and strong.

I am sure some people in the Portland area would like to have a major league team call Oregon home, but then again, I bet Scappoose, Michigan, would like one too. Major League Baseball is not only a sport but a billion-dollar industry, and the pure economics of the issue do not support a team in Portland. Even a

metropolitan area such as Minneapolis-St. Paul, with nearly three million people, cannot support a major league team. Portland claims 1.5 million people living here, a number that is good enough for a minor league baseball team.

Sure there are baseball fans here, but in order for a major league team to be successful on

In a state that...would rather hug a tree than a Major League Baseball player...

the field, it must bring fans through the turnstiles to generate revenue. There are two major ways this can happen: A team can be located in such a large metropolitan area that enough people will always show up or will have a die-hard group of fans that idolizes its team. The Green Bay Packers are a perfect example of this, as the city of Green Bay contains only 97,789 residents (www.ohwy.com), yet draws in larger crowds to its football


games than many larger cities.

In order for a major league team to be enticed here, it must have a place to play, and I can assure you that PGE Park is not going to do it. So then that would mean a new, larger baseball stadium must be built, costing more millions. The newest baseball stadium in the major leagues is Miller Park in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and the cost of building that venue was just under \$400 million. This money would only become available if the taxpayers of Oregon approve some tax bill that would funnel money into a new stadium for a new major league team. In a state that makes sure it has enough money to spend on lanes for bicycles, and people would rather hug a tree than a Major League Baseball player, a tax bill such as this would not become reality.

So to the few of you who wish the Portland Trail Blazers wasn't the only major sports franchise in this beautiful city, your dreams will probably remain just that. As Major League Baseball debates collapsing two teams and the economy in Oregon ranks as one of the worse in the United States, placing a major league team here does not seem reasonable.

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