

Men's basketball scores perfect week



SALENA DE LA CRUZ / Clackamas Print

Clackamas' Russ "Air" Schnieder flies to the basket in the Cougars' Feb. 20 romp over the Panthers of Portland Community College. Schnieder ended the night with 19 points, three rebounds and five steals.

NICK BARRON
Business Manager

Clackamas' men's basketball team will take a two-game winning streak to Mount Hood Community College on Feb. 27, after feasting on Portland Community College and Linn-Benton.

The Cougar men beat PCC in their first meeting of the season and had no problem in dealing with the Panthers the second time around on Feb. 20, defeating the Southern Division foes 109-89. The first 20 minutes of the game featured a fired-up Panther squad, with Portland tying the Cougars at 36-36. Clackamas' Lawson Struve put the Cougars ahead for good with a three-point shot that boosted the home team to a 39-36 lead, which they would not surrender for the remainder of the match.

Cougar sophomore, Struve, took over the game, dropping in 20 points and grabbing 12 rebounds. Matt Tabisz and Russ Schneider were major contributors as well, finishing with 19 points each. Mat Tondreau struggled to score, but captured 10 rebounds in the game.

Linn-Benton hosted the Cougars on Feb. 23, who promptly beat the Roadrunners by a score of 102-92. Michael Kuebler finished the night with 27 points, seven rebounds and five assists. It was Struve, once again, who put on a stellar performance, scoring 25 points on 73 percent field goal shooting. Conference assist leader Marvin Noble fed the Cougar offense with 10 assists in the rout. Clackamas was nearly perfect from the charity stripe, knocking down 14 of 15 free throws.

Both victories, combined with Lane's loss to Chemeketa on Feb. 23, place the Cougars in sole possession of second

place in the Southern Division. Southwestern Oregon continues to hold onto first place, despite a loss on Feb. 20.

The Lakers of Southwestern and the Cougars both have one regular-season game left before the Championships (Mar. 8-11). The only scenario that would see Clackamas winning their league is a Southwestern loss to Linn-Benton on Feb. 27, and a Cougar victory on the same night at Mount Hood. In that event, both teams would play on Mar. 2 for a tiebreaker, since both teams would have split their season series at one game apiece.

Although the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges Championship Tournament looms in the near future, the Clackamas coach is not allowing his team to drift too far into the future.

"We're just trying to focus on the game Wednesday. It's important that we win, to protect our number-two seed," Wegner said.

Currently, the Cougars hold a one-game margin the Southern Division over Lane for the second seed, which will probably face Lower Columbia in the tournament's opening round. Wegner's team has beaten the Red Devils twice this year.

"We're focused on Mount Hood right now. We know that we're in the NWAACCs, (and) our long-range goal is to go there and play as well as we can. But the step-by-step process is to make sure, right now, today, we have a good practice. And tomorrow we have a good practice. And Wednesday we play well (against Mount Hood)," explains Wegner.

"We're starting to jell a lot better as a team," Tabisz declared, almost as a warning to the rest of the NWAACC.

Coach Wegner reiterated that thought by saying this: "I feel like we're playing a little

better now. We've got the lineup a little more set. We've got the rotations a little more down. We went through some kind of changes the last few weeks, but things are back to normal. And I think we're focused, and I thought we played pretty well the last couple of games."

Clackamas is 23-5 on the season, which has to make Cougar opponents squeamish if the team believes it is just now coming together. Within the next two weeks, Clackamas' season will either become one for the scrapbook, or the trash can.

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SALENA DE LA CRUZ / Clackamas Print

Cougar guard Marvin Noble sets up for a three-pointer in Clackamas' 109-89 victory.

Pitchers, catchers hope to carry baseball team

ELENA BORYSKA
Sports Editor

The Cougar baseball team will open up its 2002 season on the road at Pendleton to take on Blue Mountain Community College this Saturday, March 2. Although they couldn't practice outside as much as Blue Mountain, Head Coach Robin Robinson is still hopeful about his team's chances.

"This Saturday will be our challenge to see what we're really like, and we're playing a team... (which has been) outside practicing for the last five weeks, and we've been outside about four days total," said Robinson. "We have a little disadvantage, but I feel like we've got better talent than they do, so we ought to be able to go over there and be suc-

cessful anyway."

Last season, the Cougars finished with an overall record of 10-27, and a league record of 5-20. The 2001 team was competitive and had many close games, but also had a lot of average players.

"We had no depth catching and no depth on the mound," said Robinson. "This year we feel very solid."

For catchers, the Cougars have two who they feel are good in freshmen Nik Mason and Beau Holstad, along with two others who could do the

job.

The team looks good potentially in pitching, beginning the season with more depth than CCC has had in three or four years. But still, the pitching is young and unproven.

The tentative starters are the freshmen: Ty Combs, from Redmond High School, Josh Gaylord from Wilson, Jordan Denny from The Dalles, Chris

Runyon from Parkrose; and sophomore Brandon Gleich, who will fit into the picture as a starter or reliever. Freshman Chris Hess is a good Cougar pitcher and will start in the out-

field and also come in to relieve/close.

Some of the returning sophomores will be making some adjustments in fielding positions this year. Sophomore Matt Paulsen, one of Clackamas' best pitchers, will start at third base and come in to relieve/close. Tom Henderson will move over from third base to first base. Colin Griffin will shift over from second base to short stop, and Scott Hunter will make the move from right field to center field.

With all of these adjustments, the Cougars will hopefully be able to do a good job of representing Clackamas while playing in the tough Southern Region.

To reach Elena Boryska e-mail MightyMouse030@hotmail.com or drop by B-104.

"This year we feel very solid."

Robin Robinson
Head Baseball Coach

Cougar Baseball

March 2
@ Blue Mountain
C.C.
1:00 p.m.

March 9
@ Lower
Columbia
12:00 p.m.

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