

Women basketballers shooting for NWAACCs

ELENA BORYSKA
Sports Editor

In the final league game of the year, the women's basketball team humiliated Mt. Hood at home, slamming them down with a final score of 83-36. This was victory number eight for the Cougars, in a winning streak which began all the way back on Jan. 30.

The Cougars were greatly helped in this victory by their impressive defense, which held Mt. Hood to a measly 14 points in the second half. Kayla Steen led her fellow Cougars with 18 points and seven assists, Melissa Gibson was behind her with 16 points and five rebounds, Regina Joo had 12 points and five assists, while Jennie Kooch scored eight and grabbed nine boards.

This win helped the women to finish the season with a 12-2 record in league, and a 24-4 standing overall. The Cougars moved up on the Coaches' Poll, from the number three spot, to number two. Umpqua is directly above them, holding strong at number one. Since Umpqua lost their last game of the season, they tied with the Cougars for first place, with the two teams now sharing the title of Southern Region Champion.

"We thought for sure that...Linn-Benton loss was going to keep us from getting it (the title), but we got a little help when we needed it," said Head Coach Jim Martineau. "Anytime you go 12-2 in our Southern Region it's... very, very good."

Going into the NWAACCs, the Cougars will be the number two seed from the Southern Region due to a number which determines the placing in the event of a tie, and will be facing Clark in the first round. The last time these two teams



SALENA DE LA CRUZ / Clackamas Press

Kayla Steen dribbles the ball against a Mt. Hood player in what was her last regular season game in a Cougar uniform. Steen and the rest of the Clackamas basketball team finished the season with a 12-2 league record, including their most recent victory at Mt. Hood. They will be heading up to Washington March 8-11 to compete in the NWAACC tournament.

played each other was before Christmas. It was, according to Martineau, one of the worst Cougar efforts of the year. But he says his team wants to get a chance to play them again and is looking forward to it.

One of the only things that Martineau is worried about is his team staying healthy for the tournament.

"If we can get up there and get through the first round, and

stay healthy, I think we've got a good chance," said Martineau. "I really feel if we play hard and are ready... to play every game, we're going to be in good shape. And we've done that the last eight or nine league games. I'm not worried about us playing hard. The girls are focused, they're ready to go."

Besides the Cougar's chances up at the tournament, Martineau

also thinks that Umpqua and Lane, which was the team to hand Umpqua their latest loss, are very strong contenders for the NWAACC title. Clackamas was 3-1 against these two teams, losing only to Umpqua back on Jan. 16. It will require a strong team to be able to win the four in a row it takes to be NWAACC champion, but Clackamas has already won a tournament with four wins this season, winning

the Grossmont Tournament in December. Martineau is hopeful about his team's chances in the tournament.

"If you go up there and win four straight games...you've obviously got to play well, but you've got to have some breaks and you've got to have a little luck on your side."

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Baseball team starts season, splits a double header at Blue Mountain

ELENA BORYSKA
Sports Editor

The Clackamas baseball team rattled the bats to score 11 runs in 13 innings to begin the 2002 season. The double header was played on March 2 against Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton, and the Cougars won one of the two games.

The Cougar's defense in the first game helped secure a 4-2 lead going into the bottom of the seventh inning, but the Cougars allowed Blue Mountain to come back and win the game with a final score of 5-4.

Jordan Denny was the starting pitcher for the first game, going three innings and throwing six strikeouts, with Brandon Ferguson and Matt Paulsen coming in to try to finish the job. Ferguson allowed one run to

score, while Paulsen let the other four slip past.

In game two, the Cougars turned on their offense, slamming out seven runs on nine hits, and following through with what Head Coach Robin Robinson called "exceptional defense." The game ended with a 7-5 victory by the Cougars.

Sophomore Tom Henderson stole the show, finishing the day with four hits and four RBI's, after a bases-loaded double that scored three.

"He hit the ball hard all day," said Robinson.

Gavin Stephens had a double and a triple and scored two runs for Clackamas, and Paul Monroe and Paulsen each stole two bases. Clackamas swiped a total of nine bases for the day, six of them coming in the second half of the double header.

Robinson was pleased with the overall performance of his team but knows that the pitching must get better, as they struck out a total of 15, but handed out 17 walks.

Robinson says that defense is one of the Cougars' strengths but that they still need more field time to develop their "tremendous defensive abilities."

They scored 11 runs off 16 hits including a triple, five doubles and three balls hit off of the fence.

But some things that the Cougars need to work on are bunting, running the bases better and not striking out so much.

The next stop for Clackamas is a double header at Lower Columbia at Longview, Wash. on March 9.

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Cougar Athletics:

Men's & Women's Basketball

NWAACC Tournament, March 8-11 at

Kennewick, Washington

Baseball

March 9 at Lower Columbia

Softball

March 8-9 Tournament at Treasure Valley Community College