

## Softball defense stands strong

DAISY BAIN  
A&E Editor

Cougar women's softball holds second place in the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges conference so far this season with an 8-2 record, losing only to Lower Columbia Community College, which is undefeated with eight wins.

"We had two great days and one day in the middle that wasn't so good," said Coach Paul Fiskum.

The women played a tripleheader for the first time in Cougar history on Saturday, April 6. It was one of their best days yet, according to Fiskum.

"We were very pleased," said Fiskum. All three games were against Centralia Community College, a team Fiskum said wasn't as bad as the Cougars made them out to look. It was a complete shutout;

The total score for all three games was 35-0. "We could do no wrong," he said.

All three pitchers gave an awesome performance allowing only five hits the entire day.

"Our pitching is very strong. I don't think anybody who has the three-deep quality of pitchers that we have," said Fiskum. "It was a great recovery from Friday's games."

Friday was a tough day for Cougar softball. Lower Columbia, defending league champions, took control, winning both games 2-0 and 5-1.

"We lost a tough game," said Fiskum. "She was able to shut us out, leaving nine runners on base in game one. We just couldn't get the base hits when we needed it."

Game two really showed an example of losing focus at the plate, said Fiskum. Lower Columbia threw at a slower speed and the Cougars were swinging at junk pitches.

"We didn't throw our best either," said Fiskum. "We talked at length about what we did wrong, and we are learning from our experience."

Tuesday, April 2, was a good day for the Cougars as well. Game one against Chemeketa Community College was a 4-0 victory for Clackamas.

"We had a great pitching performance by Vanessa (Holm)," said Fiskum. Holm allowed six singles and one walk, and threw six strikeouts for the shutout.

In game two the women kept it going, said Fiskum. Miranda Gillaspie threw a one hit shut out, allowing only one walk and also throwing six strikeouts.

"Our defense could be the key for us this year," said Fiskum. "We also took care of

them with our bats."

In the third inning, with two runs on base, Nikki Staley hit her first collegiate home run over the left-field fence, and the Cougars won 8-0. "It was a great day for the Cougars," said Fiskum.

During spring break, the ladies played in Arizona. A doubleheader against Pima Community College was a split: 8-0 for Pima and a 3-0 win for Clackamas.

"The first game was horrible. We came out not ready to play," said Fiskum. Clackamas had four errors.

"We hit the ball hard and right at them," Fiskum said.

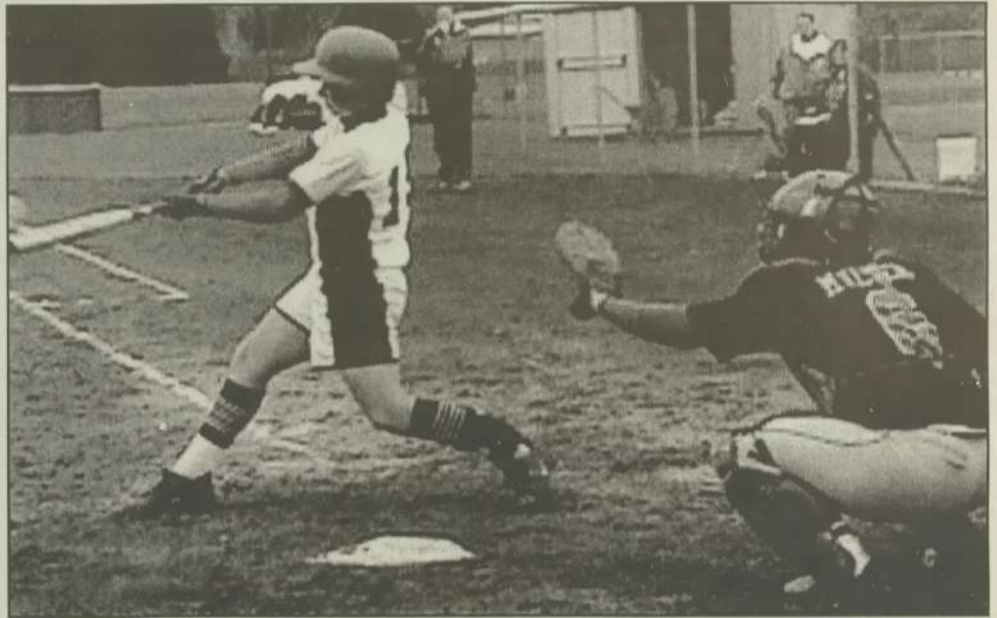
Another doubleheader was played against Chandler-Gilbert Community College, ending with another split, an 8-4 loss and a 3-1 win.

The Cougars played Mt. Hood for the league opener on Monday, March 29, leading the

season off with a 5-4 victory.

They went on to play South Puget Sound on March 30, winning both games with a combined game score of 12-1. Casey Lapp threw her best game of the year that day, according to Fiskum. Lapp pitched five innings allowing two hits, one walk and threw seven strikeouts.

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SALENA DE LA CRUZ / Clackamas Print

The Cougars played a tripleheader against Centralia at home on Saturday, April 6. It was the first tripleheader in Cougar history and the Cougars came out on top of all three games with a total of 35-0.

### Softball players of the week



#### Nikki Staley

Staley plays third base for the Cougars and hits third in the lineup. "She's a very tough out," says Fiskum. "As the pitches get tough, so does she. In the field, if she doesn't play error free softball, she plays close to it."

#### Vanessa Holm

Holm was selected by Coach Fiskum because "she is one of the hardest workers on the team."

According to Fiskum, "She pitched extremely well in Arizona during spring break. She was really hot, early," he said.



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