

# Just can't beat 'em

DAISY BAIN  
A & E Editor

The softball team took on Lower Columbia Community College again last Friday, losing for the third time on home ground.

Ksandra Sims of Lower Columbia pitched a great game. "She's a great pitcher," said Coach Paul Fiskum. "We have to give her credit." According to the latest Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges softball statistics, Sims has thrown six wins, no losses and allowed an average of only 0.55 runs per nine innings pitched.

"She throws hard," said Fiskum about Sims. The Cougars struck out 13 times. "That's hard to take."

"We didn't hit the ball at all," said Fiskum, accounting for the 2-0 loss. "We would swing hard and miss, but I am not discouraged at all. The bats are going to come around," he said.

Fiskum refuses to only concentrate on the loss. "We had a great pitching performance by Miranda Gillaspie," said Fiskum. She allowed five hits, two of which were bunts in seven innings.

"We also played great defensively," said Fiskum. "With no outs, there was a runner on first and third base, they hit a fly ball to right field. (Lindsay) VanBramer caught it and threw the ball home for the out. It was a very, very nice play."

"We haven't had very many errors at all" in 11 league games, said Fiskum. "Defense is the key to our game." Fiskum hopes to give LCC a loss the next time they come to Clackamas. The Cougars are 0-3 with Lower Columbia and 8-3 for the season.

The women played a double-header against Southwestern Oregon Community College on Tuesday; results were unavailable at press time. They will compete with them again in Coos Bay on Saturday, April 20.



SALENA DE LA CRUZ/Clackamas Print

**Nikki Staley, previous player of the week, prepares to field a ground ball from her third base position. Staley is batting .380 with 11 runs scored and five doubles this season. According to Fiskum, in the game against LCC, her and the rest of the team played great defense and produced an error free game, although it was their third loss at home.**

## Softball player of the week

### Miranda Gillaspie

Gillaspie plays first base and pitcher for the Cougars. She has thrown a total of four wins and three losses so far this season. All four wins were shutouts.

"She threw an outstanding ball game against the team who is in the number one standing in the NWAACC conference," said Fiskum.

According to the 2002 NWAACC softball statistics she has only allowed an average of 1.34 earned runs per nine innings pitched, putting her in the ninth position in the conference.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

## Waking up from the nightmare of the NBA



### From the Bleachers

Nick Barron  
Staff Writer

Tonight the last chapter will begin on the National Basketball Association's regular season. The Trail Blazers play host to the Houston Rockets at the Rose Garden this evening, meaning that the nightmare is nearly concluded.

With the final buzzer of tonight's game, the NBA playoffs loom just around the corner, slated to begin this weekend. Once those playoffs begin, I am forced to endure only two more months of lackadaisical basketball. Just ten more weeks of being inundated with sleep-inducing highlights on *SportsCenter*, and I am safe from the over-hyped



INTERNET PHOTO

world of the NBA until October.

When the NBA regular season begins, the leaves are changing color and the pigskin is flying throughout National Football League cities across the nation, giving me another option to the pathetic product that NBA commissioner David Stern trots out onto the court. But once the Super Bowl concludes, I have to choose between the National Hockey League and the NBA for my major sports entertainment. Usually, I spoon-feed myself a little bit of both sports, but next year I think I'll follow curling.

I understand why Oregonians love the NBA. For one, the games get them out of the rain and give them something to do in the middle of the winter. And I don't hold it against people in the Northwest who pledge allegiance to the Trail Blazers.

Of course, my favorite sport, baseball, comes under criticism for being slow and boring. Perhaps the games aren't as active as those in

the NBA, but there is more to baseball than meets the eye. In order to truly love baseball and enjoy watching an entire game, one has to use the brain to understand what components go into every pitch and every swing.

**...in the NBA, we don't have to deal with make-believe hatred between participants, it is real and right there for our little kids to enjoy.**

But it seems that our country is sliding further into an ignorant abyss, and the NBA has benefited from our stupidity. Of course it is entertainment when millionaire seven-foot grown men swing punches at each other, or when they toss a basketball into the stands out of frustration. We watch in anxious anticipation and feel se-

cure in the fact that those players who bring street violence onto the court for the world to see will be fined, and, coupled with the fact that they score in the double digits for the home team, we deem it OK.

That is what the World Wrestling Federation is for, and that is why their violence is fake and scripted. But in the NBA, we don't have to deal with make-believe hatred between participants, it is real and right there for our little kids to enjoy. I can't wait for the day my child tells me that he wants to get angry and curse like Allen Iverson, all the while slinging fists like the Tasmanian Devil.

So now I see the light at the end of the tunnel. All I have to do is deal with the NBA for a little longer. Don't worry about me, though, I will make it; I do every year. I'm just wondering how I will get to sleep at night once I don't have NBA highlights on ESPN.

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## Cougar SIDELINES

### Softball

Thursday, April 18  
**@ CHEMEKETA**  
Wallace Marine Park, Salem  
3:30pm

Saturday/Sunday  
April 20/21  
**@ CROSSOVER TOURNAMENT**  
Wallace Marine Park, Salem  
TBA

Tuesday, April 23  
**S. PUGET SOUND**  
2pm



### Baseball

Saturday, April 20  
**@ SW OREGON**  
1pm

Tuesday, April 23  
**MT. HOOD**  
1pm

Saturday, April 27  
**LANE**  
1pm

Tuesday, April 30  
**@ MT. HOOD**  
1pm



### Track

Saturday, April 20  
**COUGAR INVITE**  
10am

