

Cougar SIDELINES

Softball

Thursday, April 25
@ **MT. HOOD**
TBA

Saturday, April 27
S. PUGET SOUND
Noon

Tuesday, April 30
LOWER COLUMBIA
3pm

Friday, May 3
@ **CHEMEKETA**
2pm



Baseball

Saturday, April 27
LANE
1pm

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

Saturday, May 4
@ **LANE**
1pm

Tuesday, May 7
@ **LINN-BENTON**
1pm



Track

Saturday, April 27
OREGON INVITATIONAL @ University of Oregon



Stop the commentary: I want to be a fan



From the
Bleachers

Nick Barron
Staff Writer

The questions never cease. An issue of Sports Illustrated doesn't get published without its pages offering up another so-called thought-provoking query. The sports sections of newspapers constantly compare present-day teams and players with those in the history books.

Were the 1980s Lakers better than the present day squad of Bryant and O'Neal? What would Joe DiMaggio hit today against the stretched talent of Major League pitchers?

Most sports thinkers always say that the older team, or the older player, is the superior one. But my answer has always been, who cares?

I remember when I was a teenager, when the only thing that mattered to my adolescent mind was getting a Sports Illustrated every week, and seeing an SI cover that declared the death of the National Football League.

Oh, the horror! There I was, a budding young man, and suddenly my favorite publication had uttered a time of death for one of my favorite pro leagues. The accompanying article spoke of how the NFL was nothing like it used to be, with players just getting stronger, not better. Ticket prices were exorbitant and television ratings were falling faster than John Madden out of an airplane.

While Sports Illustrated made some good points, I realized that my generation would never be safe from over-analytical sports writers and talking heads. From that point on, I knew that the sports I loved and cherished would be dissected on a continual basis in an effort to rob me of my passion for the world of athletics.

I understand that Major League ballparks are smaller than they used to

be, and perhaps the baseballs are wound tighter. Yes, it is a fact that NFL players are stronger in the present, forcing them to also be slower. Of course the NBA is riddled with over-hyped high schoolers, stripping the league of its storied talent.

But I cannot change these things, and even if I could, I am not sure that I would want to. Because when I was seven years old, and the St. Louis Cardinals lost the World Series to the Minnesota Twins, I didn't care that expansion had forced my team to use pitchers who would not have been in the Majors twenty years ago.

I was merely a fan then, and at times I want to exist as just a fan. Even though I do my fair share of analysis and critiquing, it bothers me when people compare today's athletics with those of the past.

Perhaps it is therapy for middle-aged sports writers who are lost in memories of yesteryear, but they are robbing me of my time to enjoy all that professional sports have to offer. There will only be one baseball season when I am 21, just as there was one Super Bowl winner when I was 19.

That team was the St. Louis Rams, the first team from that city to capture

the Lombardi Trophy, but the victory for me was bittersweet. This was because some morons on ESPN told me that the formerly hapless Rams only won the Super Bowl because management used the salary cap to its advantage, allowing them to turn the team around in just one year.

Just when you think your team is finally going to get some respect, the sports commentators explain, in excruciating over-analysis, how they won, stripping the joy of victory from a fan.

It is not fair to have overweight blabbermouths who remember when Hank Aaron topped Babe Ruth's home run record destroy my experience as a fan. I plead to all sports writers and all commentators and play-by-players, please do not take away my chance at rooting for a game, just as you did when you were young.

So let's stop with the questions and the analysis. Let Joe DiMaggio and Ty Cobb rest in history, for they had their time. And just as you had your chance to be an ignorant young fan, allow me the same privilege.

To reach Nick Barron e-mail barronoru@hotmail.com or drop by B-104

Softball team slides into second

DAISY BAIN
A&E Editor

The women put two more wins under their belts after a doubleheader Friday and strengthened their second place standing in the Southern Region with a 10-3 record for the season.

Clackamas was ready to play all week, but their games were rained out Tuesday through Thursday. Mount Hood Community College, which was tied for second place until they met up with the Cougars, lost 7-2 in Gresham Friday afternoon.

"Everyone came ready after waiting so long to play," said Coach Paul Fiskum. "We handled them nicely. We really hit the ball well." The Cougars scored seven runs off 12 hits.

Freshman Miranda Gillaspie threw 12 strikeouts, a "high for the year," according to Fiskum. She allowed two runs on five hits. Clackamas played close to what seems to be their traditional error-free game, ending up with only one error. "But it didn't hurt us," said Fiskum.

"It was a great performance against a really good team," said Fiskum.

Game two was "one of the more interesting games I've ever coached," said Fiskum. It was an up and down game from inning to inning. "We didn't play the usual defense; our bats saved the day for us."

Going into the bottom of the third, Mt. Hood was up by three. Clackamas cracked six hits to bring three runners in to tie the game. "It wasn't any one big hit, it was everybody," said Fiskum. In the top of the fourth, Mt. Hood re-

claimed their lead 5-3. The Cougars retaliated and shortened the gap to one. In the top of the fifth inning, Vanessa Holm relieved Gillaspie at the mound, shutting out Mt. Hood for the rest of the game.

"We had one of the most dramatic hits in history in the bottom of the sixth inning," said Fiskum. Brooke Comstock, hit a single to left, Nikki Staley, sophomore, hit a sacrifice bunt, advancing Comstock to second.

Then, Carla Lillis, freshman, hit the longest home run Clackamas has ever had on the softball field. It hit the scoreboard, which is about 15 feet behind the fence. "It hit the board hard. You could hear it clank," said Fiskum. The Cougars won the game 6-5.

Over the weekend, the Cougars played in a tournament in Salem, but didn't place, finishing with three wins and two losses. In game one Saturday, the Cougars played Green River Community College, which is third in their league in the North. Holm, who is leading in wins right now for the Cougars, threw seven strikeouts, winning the game 3-1.

Game two was against South Puget Sound Community College.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY JACK OSTLUND

Shortstop Erin Murphy reaches for a thrown ball during a recent game. The Cougars won two very important games this week and now possess the second-place spot in the Southern Region.

Gillaspie threw her fifth shutout of the year, winning 3-0. Sunday, the Cougars played the only team they have been unable to defeat so far this year, Lower Columbia Community College. "We played a very excellent game," said Fiskum. The game was tied 2-2 through most of the game until Lower Columbia scored two runs in the seventh, giving a tragic 4-2 loss to the Cougars.

On Sunday afternoon, the Cougars went against Centralia Community College. Holm threw another shutout. The Cougars scored 10 runs on eight base hits.

The last game of the tournament was "the worst performance of the season," according to Fiskum. It was a 14-1 loss against Walla Walla Community College, which is in second place in the East. "They hit on her (Gillaspie) hard. Everything that could have gone wrong did. We just ran out of gas."

The Cougars played South Puget Sound Community College Tuesday; statistics were not available at press time.

To reach Daisy Bain e-mail Daisyppower2@yahoo.com or drop by B-104.

Softball Player of the week:

Erin Murphy, sophomore, is a shortstop from LaSalle High School. She had seven successful hits out of 18 at bats last week. You can look for # 20 on the field Thursday, April 25, when the Cougars play Mt. Hood Community College, the time TBA.

PHOTO BY ISIAH CREELE / Clackamas Print

