

Three softball all-stars return for 2003 season

FRANK JORDAN

News Editor

The Clackamas softball team just finished an outstanding season with a runner-up finish in the Northwest Athletic Association of Community College's Southern Division standings, and a second place finish at the NWAACC tournament.

Although the Cougars lose five sophomores who are moving on to bigger and better things, Clackamas will return a solid nucleus that hopes to give the rest of the NWAACC a run for their money in 2003.

Among the returnees is Miranda Gillaspie from Redmond, Morgan Huffstetter from LaSalle, Lindsay VanBramer from Westview, Kelsey Bisbing from Aloha and Brea Makin from Canby.

Gillaspie, Huffstetter and VanBramer were named to the NWAACC all-tournament first team, while Huffstetter and Bisbing were named to the

Southern Division first team during the season.

"All of these girls had outstanding seasons and some of the girls that didn't receive all-star selections were also very critical to our success this season," said Head Coach Paul Fiskum. "Players like Carla Lillis, who had an all-league year for us at catcher, but didn't receive any recognition for her efforts."

Second baseman Brooke Comstock, who was second on the team with 29 runs scored and led the team with 11 sacrifice hits, will be back to patrol the middle infield for the Cougar defense. "Brooke is our unofficial captain of the infield, the glue that holds the defense together," commented Fiskum. "She is also one of the most inspirational players on our team. She is my favorite 'big-mouth,' for her ability to raise the spirits of her teammates and doing it all of the time."

Fiskum says that his recruiting goals for the off-season include finding another third baseman, another catcher and more pitching to help Gillaspie in 2003.

"We have many proven performers returning, but we recognize our needs and we have to go fill those needs. If we get the kind of players we are looking for, then more power to us. But if we don't, then we will always go after the best athletes available."

One of the more interesting pickups for next season is Melissa Gibson, who is a current Clackamas student. Gibson was a second-team All-NWAACC basketball player this season, and has expressed to Fiskum a desire to play softball next season. Gibson was a first team all-state selection in softball her senior year at Redmond High School, and came to Clackamas to play basketball. Softball, however, had never left her blood.

"Melissa is a very gifted, very talented athlete. We know that basketball is her first love, but she would make a fine addition to our lineup," Fiskum said. "We will probably use her in the outfield; she is very strong and very fast."

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drop by B-104.



Kayla Steen, far left, is a two-time Southern Region MVP and will become a Duck next year. Lena Grant, bottom right, has signed with PSU and Jennie Kooch, top right, is heading to Oregon Institute of Technology. All three have 'full-ride' scholarships.

Salena De La Cruz/The Clackamas Print

Steen, Grant, Kooch head to next level

Kayla Steen came to Clackamas as a slick shooting guard from St. Mary's Academy of Portland.

But did anyone know she would be this good?

At St. Mary's she once made 10 three-pointers in one game—a state record—a good indication that she would dominate the NWAACC's Southern Division for two consecutive years.

This year at Clackamas, Steen, a 5-8 guard, averaged 22.3 points, 6.9 rebounds, and 7.2 assists per game. She led the Cougars to eighth place in the NWAACC

tournament.

Next year, you can see her on TV when she joins the WNIT championship University of Oregon basketball team.

Lena Grant was a tremendous talent for the Cougars this past season. Grant will be taking her 12.0 points and 6.8 rebounds per game to Portland State for the 2003 season.

Jennie Kooch averaged 7.0 rebounds per game last season with Clackamas and will be heading to Oregon Institute of Technology next year.

— compiled by J.J. Pearson

All-Sports Picnic

WHO: All 2001-2002 Cougar Athletes, Coaches, and Administrators

WHERE: Outside lower level Randall Hall

WHEN: Thursday, June 6 from 4-6 p.m.

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