

## Cougar Sports Calendar

Now with more real Cougar!

### Men's Basketball

Friday-Monday,  
March 7-10  
NWAACC  
CHAMPIONSHIPS  
at Pasco, Wash.

### Women's Basketball

Friday-Monday,  
March 7-10  
NWAACC  
CHAMPIONSHIPS  
at Pasco, Wash.

### Baseball

Note: All games are double headers except tournaments.

Saturday, March 8  
Columbia Basin  
College  
(DH)  
at The Dalles, Ore.  
@ 10 a.m.

Sunday, March 9  
Pierce CC  
(DH)  
at The Dalles, Ore.  
@ 10 a.m.

### Track

Saturday, March 8  
Mt. Hood Open  
at Gresham, Ore.

## Cougs enter postseason as South's top seed

Tina Tate  
Staff Writer

After a slow start to the season, the Cougars dramatically intensified their level of play and were rewarded this past week with a league championship, albeit shared with Mt. Hood CC (10-4 league, 14-10 overall) and Lane CC (10-4, 20-6).

In addition, the Cougars' record (10-4, 19-8) was strong enough to stake sole claim to the Southern Region's first seed going into the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges postseason tournament. Clackamas' first game will be against Seattle CC (8-8, 14-13) on March 7 at 10 p.m. in the Tri-Cities Coliseum in Pasco, Wash.

"These guys really showed a lot of resiliency," said Head Coach Cliff Wegner. "They were 2-2 early in league, they lost their first home game, they were in about four different junctures in this season where one loss would have ended a chance at a championship; and they won when they weren't supposed to win, and they won when they were supposed to win, and I think it's been an amazing job. I'm really proud of them."

The final Coaches' Poll, released March 2, picked Green River CC (14-2, 17-9) to win the NWAACC championship. Lane, the Southern Region's third seed, and Mt. Hood, its second, are anticipated to finish



PETE FORD Clackamas Print

Evan Kieling, Clackamas' leading scorer, gets some air as he dunks against Mt. Hood. Clackamas finished the season in a three-way tie for first with Mt. Hood and Lane.

sixth and seventh, respectively. Clackamas was not ranked, nor was the South's fourth entrant, Southwestern Oregon CC (8-6, 16-10).

Clackamas won third place at the NWAACCs last year after finishing runner-up in league. Clackamas last won the tournament in 1994.

"We'd like to bring back the trophy, and I feel like the tournament is wide-open this year," said Wegner. "I feel good because we are capable of playing the four games in a row. We have the depth and we have the shooting, and I think that a lot of people are scared to play us because we

can shoot you out of a game. And if we're on, we can beat anybody."

The Cougars closed out the regular season with an 84-76 loss to Chemeketa CC (5-9, 11-15) last Wednesday, ending a six-game winning streak.

"(Chemeketa) played very well that night, and we didn't play very well," said Wegner. "We had a miserable night shooting the ball from the field. We were even miserable from the free throw line, and if this team has one outstanding attribute it's shooting. That's the one thing this team does really, really well."

Evan Kieling led the Cougars

with 23 points, nine rebounds, three steals and three blocks. Brandon Gill contributed 16 points, six rebounds and six steals. Chris Hutcherson added nine points, three rebounds and three assists to the total. However, the rest of the team was cold from the field as they combined for a 17 percent shooting performance.

"I knew Chemeketa would be very motivated; they always are," said Wegner. "I think it's been six straight years that we've split, and we've always won here and they've always won there. So I always know it's going to be a tough game."

## Stretch run catapults Lady Cougars into first place

Tina Tate  
Staff Writer

The Lady Cougars will enter the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges postseason tournament as the Southern Region's third seed after an impressive six game winning streak boosted them from fourth place into a four-way tie for first.

Clackamas (11-3 league, 22-5 overall) will open the NWAACC tournament against Everett CC (13-3, 20-7) at 8 a.m. on March 7 in the Tri-Cities Coliseum in Pasco, Wash.

This is the second straight year that the Lady Cougars have won the league; they took seventh place at the NWAACCs last year.

Co-champions Chemeketa CC (11-3, 24-4), Lane CC (11-3, 22-7) and Umpqua CC (11-3, 20-8) will enter the tournament seeded first, second and fourth, respectively.

The final Coaches' Poll, released March 2, predicts Big Bend CC (13-1, 25-2) to win the NWAACC championship, followed by Chemeketa, Lane, Clackamas and Umpqua.

"The keys to success are going to be...getting off to a good start and winning that first game, and just playing the way we've played the last six or seven games," said Head Coach Jim Martineau. "Our offense has been up and down a little bit, but our defense has been very solid, so our half-court defense is going to be a big key for us...If we play well and get a few breaks, we've got a pretty good chance at it."

The four-way tie forced a seeding game between Clackamas and Lane on Friday night for a chance to enter the NWAACC tournament as the

Southern Region's first seed. Numerous lead changes forced a down-to-the-wire nail-biter, but, avenging a one-point loss from just six days earlier, Lane returned the favor and handed Clackamas a 68-67 loss and the third seed.

Fans were kept on the edges of their seats down to the final play as the two teams exchanged the advantage. With 2:30 remaining, Clackamas went ahead 63-62 on a successful one-and-one transaction by Morgan Hayes (eight points, 10 rebounds), but that would prove to be the team's last lead. Lane went on a 4-0 run before Brienne Thurn (13 points) scored on

Chemeketa to a 28.8 percent shooting performance from the field, including a 1-20 effort from behind the arc.

"We played probably our best defensive effort of the year," said Martineau. "We did a good job knowing their personnel."

Erickson was the game's leading scorer with 16 points; she also had 11 rebounds. Hayes had 12 rebounds and 10 points. Melissa Gibson and Ashley Storms each had 10 points and two steals. Smith contributed 10 rebounds, six points and six assists.

"We played probably our best defensive effort of the year."

Jim Martineau  
Head Coach  
Women's basketball

a put-back to bring the Lady Cougars within one with eight seconds remaining, 66-65. Clackamas was forced to foul on the inbound pass and the Titans closed the door with two successful free throws.

Cappie Smith led Clackamas with 16 points and five assists. Somer Erickson collected 15 points and two blocked shots.

Clackamas finished its league season on a high note last Wednesday with a 59-53 victory over Chemeketa.

In its sixth straight win, Clackamas played tenacious defense to force the higher-ranked

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