

Men's ball: NWAACC tourney wide open

Frank Jordan
THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

The Clackamas men's basketball team split their final two regular season games last week, losing to division champion Mt. Hood CC and defeating Lane CC, both games on the road.

Wednesday, the Cougars hung tough with the Saints from Mt. Hood before falling 72-62 in Gresham. Clackamas was led by sophomore wing Ammon Bemis, who scored 19 points and grabbed eight rebounds. Alex Swerzbin followed with 18 points while Cole Kieling chipped in eight points and nine rebounds to lead the Cougars off the glass.

Mt. Hood led 35-33 at halftime and maintained a slim lead throughout the second half. The Saints needed the win to stay in a tie with Chemeketa CC for the top spot in the Southern Division of the NWAACC. Mt. Hood and Chemeketa had a playoff Monday night in Salem to determine the number one seed from the division in the NWAACC tournament and the Saints defeated Chemeketa 88-74 to take the top seed from the South.

"Ammon Bemis and Cole Kieling both played strong games for us at Mt. Hood; their efforts helped keep the game close," said Head Coach Clif Wegner. "Mt. Hood is a good team, but we stayed with them all the way to the end. We look forward to seeing them in Kennewick [at the NWAACC tournament]."

In the regular season finale Saturday in Eugene, the Cougars got 27 points from guard Brandon Gill to lead the

Cougars to a 92-83 victory over Lane.

"We had a good, close game at Lane. They were determined and had to win to prolong their season," said Wegner. "We made good plays at crunch time to take care of business."

Bemis followed Gill in the scorebook with 17 points and a team-high seven rebounds. Swerzbin also had 17 points and dished out six assists, while freshman post Wes Jensen scored 13 off the bench for the Cougars.

Clackamas will open NWAACC tournament play on Friday, Feb. 27, taking on Walla Walla CC, the number two seed from the Eastern Division. The game begins at 6 p.m. at the tournament site, the Tri-Cities Coliseum in Kennewick, Wash.

"Walla Walla is a team similar to us; they play an up-tempo style," said Wegner. "They are a tough and physical man-to-man team. It should be a good indicator on how well our team plays throughout the tournament."

The NWAACC tournament runs from Friday through Monday, March 1 in Kennewick. Tickets are available through the Cougar athletic department in Randall Hall's lower level.

"The men's tournament is wide open this year; there is no super, dominant type of team," Wegner said. "There are legitimately six to eight teams that have a shot at winning the championship. Every season, our goal is to win the league, make the postseason and place at the NWAACCs. Now, we want to accomplish two out of the three."

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Clif Wegner
Men's Basketball Coach



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Freshman post Josh Spirlin (33) looks for the pass as sophomore point guard Alex Swerzbin elevates over the defense during 72-62 loss at Mt. Hood CC on Feb. 18.

ESPN programming goes over the top with abominable shows

Nic Delzell
SPORTS EDITOR

I was kickin' it at home late Saturday night when I tried to find Blazer highlights. All I wanted to know was who won the dang ball game and all I could get was the National Spelling Bee on ESPN, and on ESPN2 all I could come up with was poker.

So here I am late at night, not wanting to take the energy to go deal with my dial-up Internet and the only channel that is running any kind of real sports coverage is CNN's "Headline News." Finally, I get a two-second glimpse of the Blazer game and I find myself somewhat relieved—Blazer victory by twenty, gangsta!

Then I got to thinking, why does ESPN, "the worldwide leader in sports," cover a card game?

Come on y'all, I know I'm not the only one who has beef with cards on TV. Where is the action, where is the entertainment, where is the sport in cards? Don't answer if you disagree, just keep reading.

I then sacrificed all hope of get-

ting a good night's sleep and I went to ESPN.com to do some research. I found that ESPN runs a myriad of other so-called sports programs.

Jumping on the reality TV bandwagon, they run the programs, "Beg, Borrow and Deal" and "Dream Job."

"Beg, Borrow and Deal" is a show where contestants literally beg, borrow and deal their way across the country earning sports prizes along the way. If I was a sucka then this might be entertaining.

Then there's "Dream Job," where contestants vie to earn a year-long contract to be an anchor on "Sportscenter." Hopefully they make the winner cover the "World Series of Poker." And don't even get me started on the whole World Series and Poker connection; trust me, bodies and tables will fly.

In addition to reality television, ESPN hits us with three talk shows: "Pardon The Interruption (PTI)," "Rome is Burning" and "Around the Horn." PTI is great, no beef there. Jim Rome is punk, who likes to get punked and "Around the Horn" is just atrocious.

As my search continued, my stomach felt even worse when I found out that ESPN had a football soap opera entitled "Playmakers." I have seen this one a few times, but I gave up when the lead character started smoking crack during football games. If I

went on about this show we might have another curse-word controversy.

ESPN needs to do a little more thinking and a little less drinking. Even if I was crunkier than crunk could be on Crunkday, I wouldn't really watch anything on ESPN, other than "Sportscenter," NBA

coverage and the occasional "Strong Man Competition."

I just want ESPN to go back to the days before Stuart Scott became a television wordsmith.

Out, gone, peace, bye-bye and I may never watch the trick box again (that's TV, fo' y'all squares).

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INTERNET PHOTO

Stuart Scott and Rich Isen get down during an episode of ESPN's "Sportscenter."