

Softball big-hitting the competition



NIC DELZELL CLACKAMAS PRINT

Sophomore Angie Roberti (14) blasts a shot during game two of the Cougars' doubleheader against Pierce College on April 10. The Cougars won both games by scores of 15-0 and 9-0. They are now 9-1 in the NWAACC Southern Division play, winning 10 of their first 14 games.

Frank Jordan THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

The Clackamas softball team has enjoyed some success in the early part of the 2004 season, winning 10 of their first 14 games, including a 9-1 start in the Southern Division of the NWAACC.

The Cougars opened the season over spring break by dropping three of four games against California opponents. The lone win came against Diablo Valley Junior College as freshman Chelsea Koch tossed a no-hitter in her college debut as Clackamas won 3-0.

"We had a good trip. Although we came up a little short in a couple of games, we played well," said Head Coach Paul Fiskum. "Koch pitched a great game in her debut, and we got a solid effort from the whole

team."

Clackamas opened NWAACC play by sweeping Chemeketa CC and Southwestern Oregon CC to go 5-2 on the season. In the second game against SWOCC, sophomore Carleen Lessard was on her way to a victory when she injured her shoulder on the mound. Freshman Holly Marlow came on in relief for Lessard and pitched the rest of the game in the 2-0 Cougar win.

"Obviously it was a huge blow to us to lose Carleen. She was an all-league performer last season and was well on her way to becoming our ace. Her shoulder just popped," said Fiskum. "We have already lost Bricanne Thurn to knee surgery, so our pitching staff is getting thin. All I can say is that our two freshman [Koch and Marlow] have stepped up and pitched really, really well."

Clackamas took on Mt. Hood

CC in Gresham next and split a doubleheader with the Saints, keeping CCC and MHCC tied for first in the Southern Division standings. Koch threw a two-hitter and Marlow closed out the victory in game one after inheriting two base runners in the seventh by getting three consecutive outs to preserve the CCC victory.

Mt. Hood struck back in game two, overcoming an early 1-0 Cougar lead by scoring four runs in the bottom of the first and holding their lead for a 4-1 Mt. Hood victory.

"Mt. Hood's first four batters in the first all came around to score, helped out by some sloppy fielding by us and a couple of questionable calls by the umps," said Fiskum. "Holly [Marlow] pitched a good ball game after the first inning and we settled down for the rest of the game. Unfortunately, we couldn't get

anything going on offense and we took the loss."

The Cougars took on Grays Harbor CC and Pierce College last weekend on the Cougar diamond and swept both opponents by wide margins.

Friday, Koch and Marlow each tossed one-hitters, each striking out eight batters as Clackamas swept the Chokers from Grays Harbor by scores of 10-0 and 8-0. Kim Kraxberger, a sophomore from Canby, provided the highlight of the day by slamming a three-run homer in the bottom of the fifth inning of game one to end the 10-0 rout.

Saturday, Kraxberger got the Cougars off to a roaring start by crushing a pitch from the Pierce College pitcher for a grand slam home run in the bottom of the first, setting the tone for the day as CCC cruised past the Raiders by scores of 15-0 and 9-0.

Koch tossed a one-hitter with four strikeouts in game one while Marlow threw a perfect game in game two, striking out seven Raiders along the way.

"We had a good weekend with the bats and our pitching staff threw very well. The important thing about the weekend is that everybody on the roster got to play some meaningful time," Fiskum said. "Grays Harbor and Pierce are not very good, but we had to hand it to them, they were very competitive. They didn't give an inch in any of the games."

The Cougars took on Chemeketa yesterday; results were not available at press time. Clackamas plays at South Pug Sound CC on Friday and at five time defending NWAACC champion Lower Columbia College on Saturday in Longview, Wash. in key Southern Division showdown.

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