

Softballers catch fifth place at Crossover



NIC DELZELL CLACKAMAS PRINT

Cougar softballer Kayce Ernst grips the grain and steps up to the plate during a recent home game. The Cougars took home fifth place at the NWAACC Crossover Tourney.

Frank Jordan

THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

The Clackamas softball team took fifth place last weekend at the NWAACC Crossover Tournament in Salem, defeating Treasure Valley CC, Southwestern Oregon CC and the College of the Siskiyous.

The Cougars came out flat in the opening game of the tourney and lost to lightly-regarded Blue Mountain CC by a score of 3-2. BMCC got a two-run home run and an RBI double in the second inning and held on for the win.

"That pitcher for Blue Mountain was as good as we have seen all year," said Head Coach Paul Fiskum. "She had an outstanding rise ball and it kept us off-balance all game. We may have taken them lightly; I don't know. But they played great and we didn't, plain and simple."

Clackamas bounced back in game two, getting a one-hit, eight strikeout performance from Holly Marlow and an RBI single from Kayce Ernst in a 1-0 win over Treasure Valley CC from Ontario, Ore.

"All of our hits against TVCC were foul balls," said Fiskum, laughing. "Our level of focus was much better between the first game and the second. We really came back mentally. The TVCC pitcher was completely different than the pitcher we faced from Blue Mountain. The TVCC pitcher moved the ball around quite a bit and we had a hard time adjusting. But we got just enough to win."

The Cougar bats came alive in game three Sunday morning, with Cijay Koanui going 3-4 at the plate with two runs scored, two RBI and two stolen bases and Nicole Obrist going 2-4 as Clackamas defeated Southwestern Oregon CC 7-2.

Marlow started the game, going four innings, and picked up her second win of the tournament. Chelsea Koch pitched two innings in relief for the Cougars.

In the consolation final afternoon, Clackamas got an outstanding pitching effort from Marlow to defeat the College of the Siskiyous by a score of 1-0.

Marlow got off to a shaky start, however, as she hit the first batter of the game, then an RBI single for a 1-0 lead. Marlow only allowed one more run on two hits after the first inning and overpowered her opponent by striking out a record 14 hitters in the final inning game.

"Holly [Marlow] just dominated after the first. She gave up one early, but struck out the side first to end the rally," said Fiskum. "When her changeup is on, it's so good. She had a terrific ending, getting all three wins for the season by throwing really well right through the end."

Obrist led the offense, going 2-4 with a run scored and two RBI while Kim Kraxberger went 1-3 and Makenzie Marinca went 1-3 with an RBI advantage of her playing time, going 2-3 with an RBI.

"Makenzie took advantage of the opportunity to play and she performed really well, both at the plate and in the field. A real effort at a time when we needed it," Fiskum said. "Nicole [Obrist] had a great, great season. She got some timely hits for us and she played great defensive baseball, making a pair of sliding catches in center field during the game that were outstanding. The effort all around by the team was a good weekend."

The Cougars got right back to work in Southern Division play with a 4-1 win over Chemeketa in Coos Bay on Friday against Southwestern Oregon. Results were not available for the game on Friday with a home game against South Puget Sound Community College with the first pitch scheduled for 3 p.m. at the Cougar softball diamond. Saturday, the team will travel to Salem to play Chemeketa CC.

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