

Cougars rout PCC, fall down south



Jeff Sorensen Clackamas Print

The Clackamas women's basketball team is all smiles during last Wednesday's win over Portland CC. (Top, from left to right) Beth Rossos, Kayla Ohlman, Kory Waterland, Kasie Elliot, and Lindsey Boekman. The Lady basketballers were victorious 79-49. LaToya Hill led the way for the Cougars with 18 points and nine rebounds; Schmitz added 15 points and 11 rebounds. Last Saturday, the Cougars lost a close game down south as they fell to league leader Lane CC 77-73. Hill lead the way scoring 21 points. Rochelle Reeves busted out with 18 points. (Below, left) Reeves (22) looks to her teammate during the win over PCC. (Below, right) The PCC defender (50) boxes out Schmitz during the Elliot free throw.



Sad year in Rip City, fans mourn

Mike McCormack
The Clackamas Print

A not-so-distant five seasons ago, Portland was playing for a chance to go the NBA Finals; and now they are on the verge of falling 10 games below .500 and missing the playoffs for a second consecutive season.

As of Monday, the Trail Blazers stood alone in fourth place of the Northwest Division with a dismal record of 15-24. This is the first season of being a Blazer fan where I can honestly say they have no shot for the playoffs. On Dec. 22, the Blazers showed some life to improve to one game over .500.

Then the turn of unfortunate events started.

The team lost Darius Miles and Shareef Abdur-Rahim to injuries and all of a sudden the team couldn't buy a win. Since that game, the Blazers have managed looked like the L.A. Clippers of old by winning only three of their last 16 games.

In their latest loss Monday, the Minnesota Timberwolves came to town and put the beat-down on Portland. The Blazers had their chances on multiple occasions, but were never able to get over the hump en route to losing their sixth straight game.

There have been some bright spots during this time of despair for

the Trail Blazers.

In a recent loss to the New Orleans Hornets Damon Stoudamire scored a career high 54 points and became the first player in NBA history to score 50 or more points without a single rebound. That record is proof enough that this season is going to have its highs and lows throughout its entirety.

Nick Van Exel has also shown some life in his game as of late, showing that three-point range that the Blazers originally signed him for. In a game against the Philadelphia 76ers, Van Exel was able to lead Portland to a victory by way of hitting eight three-pointers and helping snap a five game losing streak.

When leading scorer Zach Randolph went down a few games back, Portland found a diamond in the rough with former Minnesota Gopher Joel Przybilla. The 7-foot-1-inch center is quickly becoming a fan favorite in the City of Roses by providing great enthusiasm and work ethic to anchor the front court. Last Tuesday, Przybilla had a career night, scoring 17 points and adding 22 rebounds, 10 offensive, in the team's loss to the Kings.

With all the injuries occurring as of late, Portland Head Coach Maurice Cheeks has been able to use different starting lineups in the games, but one player has shown me more effort than anyone.

Taking over at small forward

nearly two weeks ago, Ruben Patterson has been the igniter to the effort that has been noticed by fans all around Portland. Patterson isn't the most controlled player on the court, but with his ADHD-like efforts, he has shown that there are some players who still come out and give 100 percent at all times. I love watching Ruben run the floor after a steal; he dribbles with his head down and doesn't worry about the consequences. If all the Blazers showed the kind of enthusiasm Patterson shows, the team might not be in the hole they are in heading into the second half of the season.

With all this losing going on, I am glad that there are still Blazer believers out there who notice that some players still want to win. To those of you who've given up on the Blazers, I don't want you to be on the team's side.

A true fan sticks with their squad when times are bad. If a team can't get support from their fans, where else can they turn? To all those who have applauded their recent efforts, stick with the 'Zers; they will bring you happiness again, and when they do win an NBA championship you can say you were there through the rough years. Funny how fast a fan can turn on a team when things aren't going right; it's too bad that "fair-weather fandom" is slowly becoming an epidemic here in the Pacific Northwest.

