

Cougar hoops triumph over LBCC

Women's B-ball wins two more, nipping at Lane, Umpqua's heels

Frank Jordan
The Clackamas Print

The Clackamas women's basketball team put up two more wins last week to keep pace with Lane CC and Umpqua CC in the Southern Division standings, defeating Linn-Benton twice in one close and one not-so-close game.

"We played better than the week before, but we had our moments during the games against Linn-Benton," said Head Coach Jim Martineau. "In Albany, we

played very well at times, and here at home, we probably had the best half we have had in a long time."

Wednesday in Albany, Clackamas jumped out to a 35-30 halftime lead over the Lady Roadrunners, then used a 6-0 run to start the second half to run out to an 11-point lead. Then the Cougars went almost six minutes without a point, allowing LBCC to come back and take a lead.

The game went back and forth after that, with neither team holding more than a four-point lead throughout the second half. An

LBCC player missed a three-point attempt at the buzzer that would have given her team a win, but the Cougars held on for the 59-57 win.

LaToya Hill led the Cougar attack with 19 points, eight rebounds, five steals and three blocked shots. Vanessa Schmitz added 12 points and seven rebounds, Rochelle Reeves had 11 points and L'Trece Prewitt grabbed a team-high 12 boards.

Saturday, the Cougars applied the lessons learned in Albany and blew out Linn-Benton in the Randall gym by a score of 70-52

in a game that wasn't even that close.

The Lady Cougars jumped out to a 17-point halftime lead, 38-21, and never let up in the second stanza. Hill led the Cougars with 18 points and eight assists, while Reeves buried four three-pointers en route to 16 points. Kellie Morey nailed 6-10 from the floor for 15 points, while Schmitz led the team off the glass with nine rebounds. CCC shot 39 percent for the game and held the Lady Roadrunners to 33 percent from the floor. The Cougars also blocked four LBCC shots and

had 14 steals.

"It was one of our better overall efforts in a while, that is for sure," said Martineau. "We came back and played well. LaToya [Hill] got us started with 10 quick points and Rochelle [Reeves] kept it up in the second half to spark the team. A great team effort."

Tonight, the Lady Cougars go down to Salem to take on the Lady Chiefs of Chemeketa CC in a game with a 5:30 p.m. tip-off and Saturday, Clackamas will host the Lane CC Lady Titans in the Randall Hall gym. The tip-off is scheduled for 4 p.m.

Men's ball makes it a double, look to face division leaders

Frank Jordan
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The Clackamas Cougar men's squad took care of Linn-Benton CC twice in a home-and-home series last week, blowing out the Roadrunners in Albany and squeaking by LBCC at home on Saturday.

Last Wednesday, the Cougars went down to Albany and destroyed Linn-Benton by a score of 98-56. Wes Jensen paced the Cougs with 30 points, along with nine rebounds, five assists and two steals. Clackamas only dressed eight players for the game, as injuries and illness have depleted the team. The Cougars took charge

early and used solid offense movement to open up a 16-point halftime lead at 41-25.

The Cougars never let up on this night and finished the game shooting a school-record 76 percent from the floor, including 12-16 behind the three-point arc. Clackamas also posted a season-high in assists with 37. Brian Freeman had 21 points, 12 boards and four assists. Matt Sanders came through with 20 points and 13 assists, while Micah Mooney added 12 points and five assists.

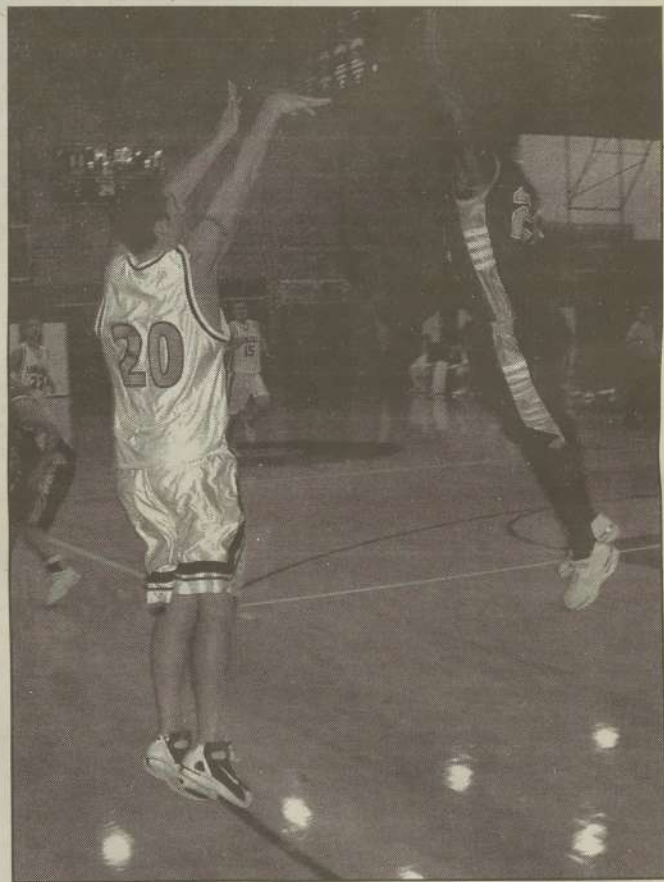
Saturday, Clackamas and LBCC played the rematch in the Randall gym and although a very different Roadrunner team showed up, the Cougars held on for a 78-75 victory.

CCC led 39-31 at the half, led by the 13 points and seven assists from Matt Sanders. Linn-Benton managed to keep within shouting distance the remainder of the game and even held the lead for a brief time with three minutes left, but Sanders took control and scored the last nine points of the game for Clackamas to hand the Cougars the victory.

Sanders had a season-high 26 points and handed out nine assists to pace CCC. Jensen added 16 points and seven rebounds, while Mooney had 16 points, five boards and three steals in the win. Freeman contributed a double-double with 13 points and 12 rebounds.

CCC shot 45 percent for the game, including 46 percent behind the arc. Clackamas also won the rebound battle by a count of 46-36 and had 25 assists as a team.

Tonight, Clackamas travels down I-5 to Salem to take on division-leading Chemeketa CC. Game time is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on the Chemeketa campus. Saturday, the Cougars will host Lane CC in the Randall Hall gym with a tip-off at 6 p.m. The Cougars are in a position to wrap up their sixth consecutive trip to the NWAACC tournament, only needing one more win to secure that berth.



Jeff Sorensen Clackamas Print

Freshman guard Micah Mooney (20) fires off a three-point shot in a recent Clackamas victory over Umpqua CC.

Wrestling prepares for season grand finale

Jeff Sorensen
The Clackamas Print

High in the mountains of northeastern California, the Bizz Johnson Trail runs along an old railroad where, earlier this year, Wrestling Coach Mike Haluska decided to play a little prank on his team.

"It was early in the year and I was mad at [them]," said Haluska, who saw their dual against Lassen Community College in Susanville, CA as an opportunity for some sightseeing and a little "motivational training" down the 6.2-mile historic trail.

"I [told them,] 'You got to watch out for the cougars,'" Haluska laughed. "The Lassen coach told them there were bears, too." This motivated the team to run the entire trail in 48 minutes, a record time for the team all season.

But all that running and training the wrestlers have been doing all season has been for the NJCAA regional tournament this weekend. Winners move on to compete nationally, and Haluska is keeping a positive outlook on his team's future in wrestling.

"It was a hard season ... we've had a lot of injuries," Haluska said, "[but] I think we had more guys working hard and improving than we ever have."

Haluska feels his team has some serious damage potential for next year, admitting that approximately 28 of his wrestlers are expected to return next year. For this coming weekend, however, several of the current wrestlers are working through injuries and preparing for

the climax of the season.

Tim Cook, for example, continues to nurse a shoulder injury he suffered early in the season, but is expected to return to the mat in time to join his teammates at regionals.

Octavio Mendoza has also been proving his talent in the room as of late, and Haluska is hoping he can tap some of Mendoza's talent in time for the tournament.

"There are less than five kids I've ever had wrestle for me that have as much talent as [Mendoza]," said Haluska, who expects that if Mendoza continues to work hard to refine that talent, he may have a shot at nationals some day.

Finally, 141-lbs. Shane Slover will be competing in arguably the toughest bracket this weekend, and Haluska knows that Slover has been working hard to stand up to the challenge, focusing on his training and suffering through the duals all season in order to keep his focus on the main prize.

"He said those are the worst days of the season," said Haluska, quoting Slover's feelings about the regular season meets, "because 'I only get to wrestle for seven minutes.'" Haluska then added, "Nobody's going to be able to say, 'Just think if Slover had tried a little harder.'"

The wrestlers have been working all season, and this weekend they finally see if their work will pay off. Haluska says his team has come a long way this year, and with thanks to Assistant Coaches Lloyd Martindale and Nate Sullivan, and trainer Tony Guyette, Haluska and his "Railroad Runners" are moving into their final tournament, full steam ahead.

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