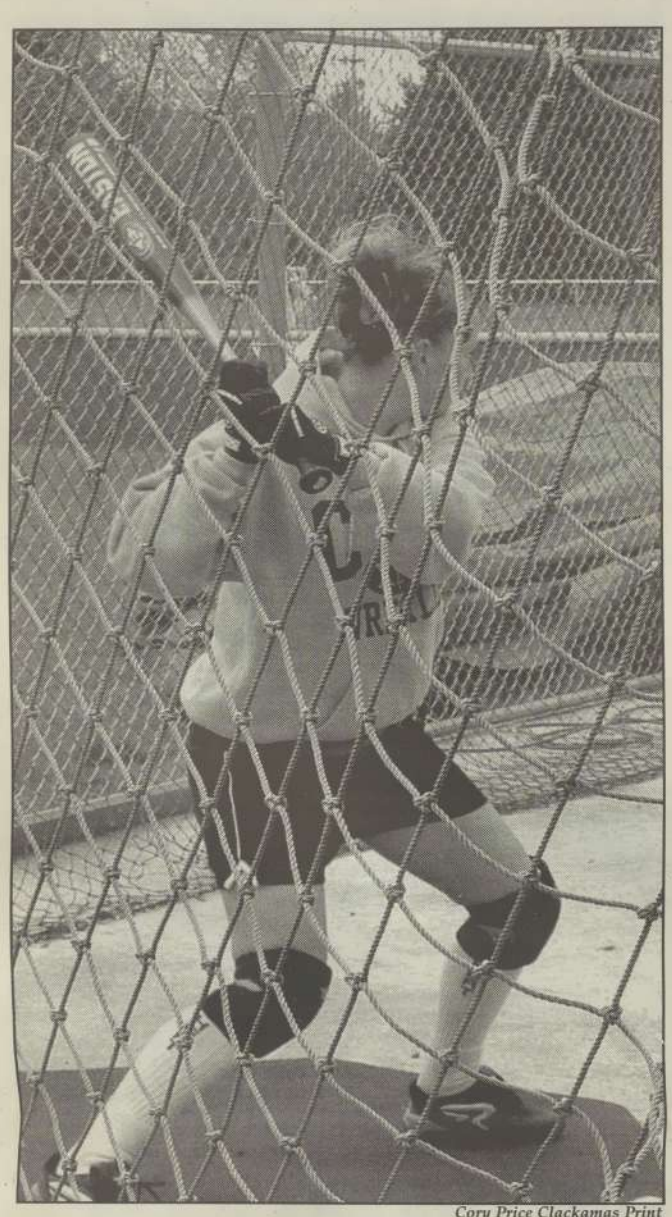
Cougars softball hits league play



Cory Price Clackamas Print

Due to Oregon's April showers the softball team has been forced to practice more than they'd like. Tuesday's game was postponed.

Frank Jordan
The Clackamas Print

The Clackamas softball team has had its series of ups and downs in the early part of the 2005 season, sporting a 9-7 record so far. The Lady Cougars split a doubleheader with Southwestern Oregon CC last Saturday, losing a heartbreaker in game one by a score of 3-2 and coming back to win game two 9-3.

Holly Marlow was sailing along with a no-hitter in game one through six innings and CCC led 2-0 going to the last SWOCC at-bat in the seventh. Unfortunately, the clouds parted just in time for the Lakers as their first hitter lofted a lazy fly ball to the outfield that the Cougar outfielder lost in the sun. The next hitter walked, putting runners on first and second, then the next hitter hit a little squibber that landed between the pitcher and the second baseman, ruining both Marlow's no-hitter and shutout, cutting the Cougar lead to 2-1.

> ***"The key for us this season is that we have a great attitude and we have worked extremely hard."***
>
> **Paul Fiskum**
> *Softball Head Coach*

The game ended as a SWOCC hitter lined a shot to shortstop, who threw out the runner at first, but the runner at third broke for the plate. The Cougar first baseman threw wildly to home, allowing the runners at third and, eventually, the runner at second to score the game-winning run.

"It was a bang-bang play, and we just made one bad throw," said Head Coach Paul Fiskum. "SWOCC had only one solid hit, but they took advantage of our miscues and they won."

Clackamas shook off the bad loss in game one and blew away SWOCC in game two, shutting out the Lakers until the last two innings in a 9-3 win. Erin Snyder and Anna Alcala each had three singles to lead the Cougar offense, while Alcala drove in three runs. Chelsea Koch had a solid game on the mound, allowing only five hits in picking up the win.

"We came back after the ugly finish in game one and gave a very solid effort in game two," said Fiskum. "I was concerned that we might suffer a major letdown after it, but the girls came back and put it behind them. I was proud of them."

April 5, the Cougars traveled to Tacoma, Wash. to take on the Pierce College Lady Raiders and Clackamas treated their hosts very rudely in a 21-0, 12-1 sweep of the doubleheader.

"Pierce was pretty much of a doormat last year, only winning one game all season, but they recently played Lower Columbia [College, the six-time defending NWAACC champion] very tough, losing two close ballgames, and I told the girls not to let up one bit," said Fiskum, "and the girls responded. We played o our most complete offe games of the year in game and we fought through inning of adversity in two, then turned it on to going away."

The biggest of offensive stars in Tacoma catcher Kelly Stratton, freshman from Longv Wash. hit two mammoth runs to lead the Cougar the plate. She hit a three homer into a strong head in the first inning of game then came back in game hitting an equally impre grand slam home run, al the first inning, to get Cougars rolling to an easy win.

"The key for us season is that we have a attitude and we have wo extremely hard. The only shortcomings have on defense, but we are wor on those," said Fiskum. have pitched very well an very consistent offensi We have had great bal up and down the lineup. [Snyder] is batting .500, team is hitting .366 on season. Caitlin Ooley l the team with a very 19 RBI, and Cijay Ko has been our most consis hitting .451 and having s 14 bases. We are very ple from top to bottom so far."

The Cougars travel Olympia, Wash. to take South Puget Sound CC Tuesday in a doublehe beginning at 2 p.m. A 22, Clackamas plays Mt. H CC in Gresham beginni 3 p.m., before coming h to take on South Puget S CC on Saturday, April beginning at 3 p.m. on Cougar softball diamond.

Blazers disappoint fans with another lackluster seaso

Mike Guidice
The Clackamas Print

The 2004-2005 season has been a series of unfortunate events for the Blazers who are counting on youth to rejuvinate the Rose City

As the 2004-05 NBA season winds to a close for the Portland Trailblazers, one thing has become evident, and no, I'm not referring to the fact that Shawn Kemp is still alive and smoking crack.

It's that the team is in a rebuilding state, looking towards the future, not really too concerned about the present. The Blazers, of course, deny the idea that they are throwing games and not performing to their full ability in order to land a higher draft pick.

The Trailblazers' season started off with reason to be optimistic. As is the case with all Blazer teams of recent, the squad was loaded with stars. Too many quality players and not enough positions and minutes quickly led to unhappiness and turmoil within the organization.

However, this was just the beginning, as the season would ultimately prove to be consummate good guy Maurice Cheeks' last; he was fired and the team also experienced countless off - court problems and various run- ins with the law. All-in-all, it is a disheartening season for true Blazers fans to watch.

As the team looks towards next season, they're once again optimistic and encouraged by some things they have seen in the final garbage games of the season.

The emergence of players such as heralded point guard Sebastian Telfair, the former high school phenom, is something to note. Although still experiencing inconsistent play, one can't help but to be intrigued at the idea of the flashy guard running the team's offense in years to come.

Fellow Blazers draft pick Viktor Khryapa has also shown glimpses of greatness, as well as budding star Travis Outlaw. With the addition of a solid lottery pick, a player that can contribute immediately, the Blazers have hope for, if nothing else, an exciting team to watch next year.

It is still unknown what the future of many of the team's star players will be, whether they will be back with the team, or relegated to a more diminished role on the bench. Many questions swirl around Damon Stoudamire and if his time with the organization is up, even after gaining back the respect he had once lost.

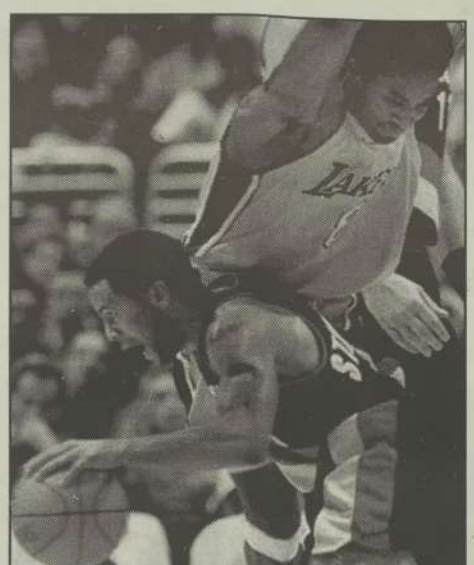
Other huge question marks are the health of Zach Randolph; what the team will do with Shareef Abdur-Rahim, and how Darius Miles will play next year, fresh off signing his fat new contract extension?

I remain adamant about some things concerning the team and the direction in which it's headed. I feel that Joel Przybilla has proven to be the starting center of the future.

I also believe that the Blazers somehow, someway need to find a way to dump Randolph and keep Abdur-Rahim. I have enough respect for Darius' game whereas I can overlook his off-court antics and sometimes lethargic play during games.

I have faith that Sebastian is our point guard for the future, but I would also like to see Damon stick around and teach Telfair the game.

If the Blazers can land an impact player in the draft and somehow hire a new head coach that is respected by the team and can truly get through to the players, I have a glimmer of hope that the Rose Garden can be resurrected, and fans just might have reason enough to return.



Internet Photo courtesy of Greenwichschool

Damon Stoudamire attempts to drive past the Lakers' Kobe Bryant Stoudamire is averaging 16 points per game along with 5.6 assists. His Trailblaz future is uncertain, b his heart and dedication have made h a fan favorit once again i Portland. Th is Stoudamire eighth season with Portland

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