

Wrestling: hard work, hustle

Matthew Olsen

The Clackamas Print

Looking to finish the season well, the Cougar wrestling team practices often and relies on teamwork to bring out their best.

Suffering from early season setbacks, including losing wrestler Luis Cisneros to a broken leg, the team has rebounded and pulled together. After trading victories with Southwest Oregon and Menlo College, the team is eager to finish the season with individual and team wins.

The team took six members to a 10 member team to their meet against Pacific University on Friday, Jan. 27. Being ranked 10th in the NJCAA, the Cougars had good prospects.

Winning five of their six matches, the MVP of the dual was Joe Vela who bested a season-long rival. Earlier this season Vela lost to the Pacific wrestler three times, but on Friday his training paid off and he won 10-7. The incomplete team couldn't pull out the win, and lost 30-20.

On Feb. 4 the team is competing in the Northwest Classic in Forest Grove to prepare themselves for the Regional in Astoria Bay on Feb. 11.

"If we wrestle to our potential we can win," Coach Mike Haluska said of their chances at the regional.

"My goal has always been to have 10 students become All-American," said Haluska. To achieve this goal, all 10 members of the regional tournament team would have to place in the top four.

"I'd love to have the whole team make it," Haluska said.

Both Bryan Cantrell and Shane Slover bear high praise from their coach.

Of Cantrell, Haluska boasts, "I truly believe he's going to win the [regional] tournament."

Cantrell was a redshirt freshman of last year, but went to the Fila Junior Nationals and placed eighth in Greco-Roman style.

"I find the harder I work, the more luck I have," said Cantrell. He hopes to repeat his success this year at nationals and achieve All-American status.

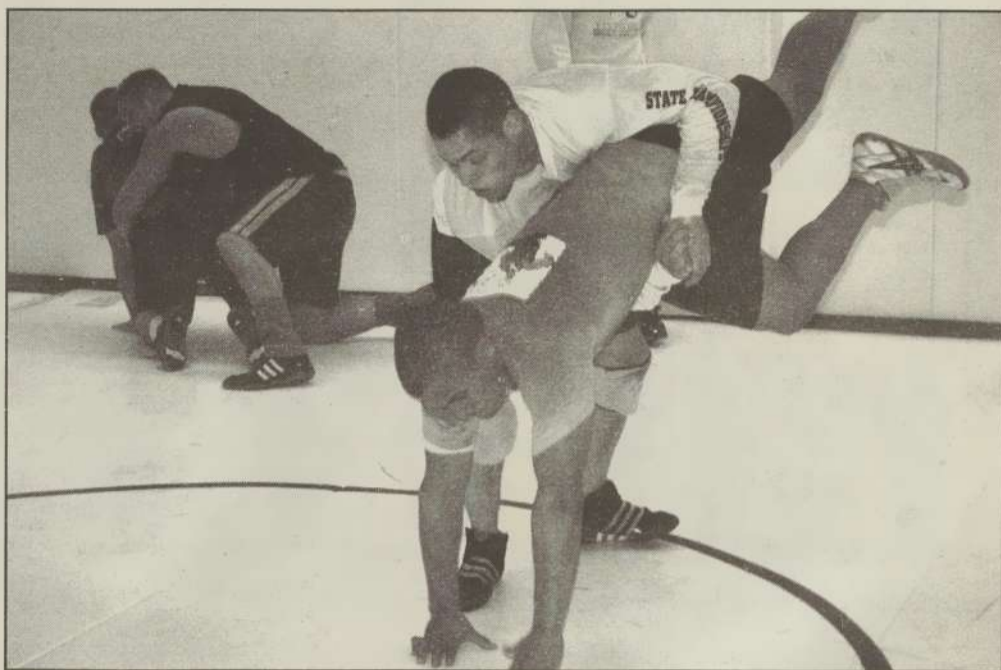
Slover is admired by his team and coach for his fierce drive.

"I train as hard as I can," said Slover. When asked about the regional, Slover smiled and said

"I'm not much of a talker." Haluska puts it well though, "He's got a mindset that refuses to lose ... he wants it real bad."

"If I could have a team like this every year, I'd coach for nothing!" Haluska exclaims.

A highlight of the season included the very close loss to Northern Idaho -which was ranked number one in the nation- by a mere two points. "We showed that we can com-



Andy Zehrung Clackamas Print

Cougar wrestlers Alex Bubba and Sammy Schmitz performing various takedowns during practice in Randall. The team is working around the clock in preparation for the season's end.

pete with them," Haluska said.

The greatest asset for the Cougars wrestling team is not the individuals, but the teamwork that exists.

"Our team has become a lot closer ... we help each other out." Said team member Seth Roy.

Hunt, Reeves continue to lead way

Frank Jordan

The Clackamas Print

The Clackamas women's basketball team improved its division-leading record to 6-0 with wins over Umpqua CC and Linn-Benton CC this past week.

The Cougars traveled to Astoria last Wednesday and put five starters in double figures for the first time this season in defeating the Timberwomen 90-

"We played very well offensively the whole game, but our defensive effort was the key to victory," said Head Coach Kellie Morey. "Umpqua only shot 33 percent for the game and everyone had a hand in the win."

Umpqua started the game in zone defense but Clackamas forward Kellyn Cooper scored some easy baskets in the first half to help break up the zone. Then the Cougars got hot on the outside as LaToya Hill and Charday Hunt hit some big jumpers to help Clackamas to a 14-point halftime lead, 45-32.

Umpqua made a run early in the second half to cut the Cougar lead to six with 14 minutes to play, but the Cougars went on a 12-0 run to enlarge their lead to 18 and they coasted the rest of the way enroute to the 24-point victory.

Hunt led the offense with a 23-point, 11-rebound night. Sophomore Rochelle Reeves hit five three-pointers on the way to 20 points, while Cooper ended the game with a double-double, 16 points and 13 rebounds.

Hill nearly got a triple-double with 14 points, nine rebounds and a game-high nine assists, and Kellie Morey finished the game with 13 points.

The Cougars traveled to Albany Saturday to take on the Lady Roadrunners from Linn-Benton and Clackamas overcame some early jitters to roar to an easy 84-52 win.

"I was a little concerned going into the (LBCC) game because of our big win over Umpqua, and it showed as Linn-Benton jumped out to an 8-0 lead after four minutes," said Martineau. "But the girls settled down and we

hit some shots to basically take over the game. Nothing much seems to faze our team and this team is very sure of what they are about."

The Cougars played solid defense after the early bad start and they controlled the game from then on. They held the Roadrunners to 32 percent shooting for the game and played well enough offensively for the blow-out win.

Reeves hit four three-pointers and shot 10-20 overall to lead the Cougars with 24 points. Morey followed with a solid 18-point, five-rebound effort, while Hill had her usual great all-around game with 13 points, seven rebounds and eight assists.

Hunt had 12 points and seven rebounds, Cooper had nine points and seven rebounds and Monique Tribble chipped in eight points off the bench.

"It was a good night all-around. Everyone got a chance to play some meaningful minutes and everyone played well," said Martineau. "Rochelle [Reeves] shot the ball well, especially in the first half, and it seemed to get us going in the right direction. I was very pleased with the effort by everyone on Saturday."

The Cougars will play host to the Mt. Hood CC Lady Saints tonight at 5:30 p.m. in the Randall Hall gym to close out the first half of the Southern Division schedule. Clackamas will travel to Eugene on Saturday to take on the second-place Lady Titans from Lane CC in a game which could have a big impact on the rest of the season. Clackamas defeated Lane 92-80 on Jan. 14 to hand Lane their only loss of the season so far. Saturday's game is scheduled for a 4 p.m. start in Eugene.

Blazers' inconsistencies leave fans at a loss for words, Chalupas

Mike Guidice

Sports Editor

The Portland Trailblazers enigmatic season is nearing the halfway point as fans are left only with questions and uncertainties, as is the team itself. The Blazers have had a roller coaster of a season, experiencing various ups and downs.

The inconsistencies have led to frustration, but the young team has not given up on new coach Nate McMillan. Despite a handful of blow-out losses by more than 30 points, the team has displayed resiliency throughout the year. They have bounced back and performed solidly against some of the league's elite teams, notching wins against Memphis, Cleveland and New Jersey, while playing the Pistons down to the wire.

The team is clearly in a rebuilding mode, featuring such young talents as Sebastian Telfair, Travis Outlaw and Martell Webster. The problem with this is that players and fans alike want to win now and not develop players who are straight out of high school. The real key is that the team possesses some veterans that can contribute to the squad. The team's 132 million dollar nucleus of Zach Randolph and Darius Miles has experienced a significant amount of adversity this season, as they have both been battling knee injuries.

Randolph seems to have fully recovered from his off-season surgery but still doesn't seem to have the spring in his legs necessary for him to finish strongly inside. He also still struggles to play defense and

often takes ill-advised outside shots.

Miles meanwhile has been inactive since the beginning of December, when he tweaked his right knee and was placed on the injured list. He is expected to return to the lineup sometime shortly after the Feb. 19 All-Star game.

However, there have been some bright spots, most notably guards Steve Blake and Juan Dixon.

Blake has solidified himself as the team's starting point guard, while Telfair has struggled with an injury and turnovers. Blake consistently makes big plays but in a way that is fundamentally sound and not flashy; low risk and high reward.

Dixon may be the team's solution at shooting guard, with Martell Webster being demoted to the National Basketball Developmental League; he's taken the reigns of the position and ran with it, sinking satiny-smooth shots almost effortlessly.

When all is said and done and the Trailblazer's 2005-06 season has concluded, it's hard to say what the results will be.

The number eight seed seems to be wishful thinking but in sports anything is possible.

When Miles comes back after the All-Star break he has the ability to inject the team with a dose of energy that could hypothetically lead to more wins than losses in the second half, or at least an increase in Chalupa distribution.

This is yet to be seen though, and all that Trailblazers' fans can do is be patient and keep supporting the team, McMillan can coach, so don't lose hope.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

