

Cougars clinch Southern



Elizabeth Hitz Clackamas Print

Point guard JR Morgan attacks the rim as he goes in for a contested layup vs. Southwestern Oregon CC on Saturday. Morgan had 12 points in 12 minutes of play.

Mike Guidice

Sports Editor

After a week that saw them defeat both Mt. Hood CC and Southwestern Oregon CC, the polls awarded Clackamas on Monday, anointing them as the number one team in the NWAACC.

Last Wednesday, the Cougars played at Mt. Hood, beating them by a final score of 86-79. In a close game, David Cemin simply put the team on his back in the second half, as he led all players with 34 points. Cemin also had eight boards and seven dimes.

"Cemin had a sensational second half; he finished inside, got to the free-throw line, shot from deep... he really saved us," Coach Cliff Wegner said of his sophomore guard.

Other clutch contributions included Maurice Ross' 10 assists and five free-throws in crunch time to seal the win. The versatile Steven Vaughan added 15 points and 10 rebounds. Brian Freeman had his usual dominant game inside, registering yet another double-double with 14 points and 15 boards.

Clackamas was victorious despite a valiant effort from Hood, getting a hard-fought victory in a pressure-packed situation.

"It was a tough ballgame; they're a tough team and came ready to play," Wegner added.

Saturday, the team returned home to play Southwestern Oregon CC in what was expected to be another tough battle. It wasn't as close as initially expected as Clackamas routed their

opponent by a score of 108-85.

Despite a sizeable height disadvantage, the Cougs were able to completely dominate SWOCC on the boards, finishing with a season-high 64. Once again, big man Freeman had a stellar performance, scoring 25 points and ripping down 21 rebounds.

"Brian was a man inside; it seemed like he got every defensive rebound," Coach Wegner said.

Going into the contest, the team knew that their opponent was susceptible to giving up rebounds, especially on the offensive end, so Clackamas capitalized like only a great team can.

Headlining along with Freeman was fellow big man Vaughan, who finished the game with 27 points and 10 boards.

The victory assured Clackamas the Southern Region title and the number one seed going into the NWAACC tournament next month.

Tonight, the Cougars travel to Salem to take on rival Chemeketa CC, where they look to add to their momentum and keep the winning streak alive. After that, they finish the regular season against the cellar-dwellers of the league with games vs. Lane (at home on Saturday at 6 p.m.) and at Portland CC on the 21st.

The significance of wrapping up the conference and securing the number one seed early is not lost on Coach Wegner.

"We're in a nice position entering the last couple games. We've taken care of business and can rest some players and start focusing and preparing for the tournament."



Mike Guidice

Sports Editor

The Good:

The Blazers have already surpassed their win total from last season, and it's not even the All-Star break yet! The team is showing steady improvement almost every game and is developing nicely.

Brandon Roy has continued his campaign for Rookie of the Year, consistently hitting shots in the clutch, while LaMarcus Aldridge is really beginning to assert himself in the post. Here's to hoping the Blazers can move Jamaal Mcgloire, in turn, opening up more PT for Aldridge.

Sergio Rodriguez, the team's young foreign flavor at point guard, also has been a very pleasant surprise. Once he returns from his injury after the All-Star break, he should be given all the backup minutes at guard behind the incumbent team catalyst, J Jack.

The Bad:

Citing a "dysfunctional situation," the Chargers, on Monday, fired Head Coach Marty Schottenheimer. Schottenheimer was given the boot despite having led the team to an NFL best record of 14-2.

I'm sorry, are you kidding me? I don't care how tense things got between Marty and the management; how can you release a coach after he completely turned the team around? Sure, they came up short in the playoffs, but they were playing the postseason-savvy Patriots after all, and Tom Brady isn't exactly a slouch. If the Chargers underachieve next year, look out San Diego; there may be a mutiny.

In college basketball, the Ducks choked in the second half and lost to Arizona on Saturday. I am tired of seeing them get pounded inside by almost everyone. The Ducks can stroke it from long range all game, but if the team continues to get dominated in the post, giving up countless rebounds and second chance points to their opposition, they will inevitably fail.

Memo to Emie Kent: RECRUIT A BIG MAN! Ray Schafer and Joevan Catron just aren't cutting it. In fact, I'd almost rather deal with Ivan "the terrible" Johnson and Ian Crosswhite. Never did I think I would long for the days of Robert Johnson and Chris Christoffersen. Seriously, it's that bad.

The Ugly:

The bitter beer face that Gilbert Arenas could be seen making on the bench as the Blazers put a whooping on his team, holding him to nine points in the process. This was made even worse by the fact that Arenas had been promising to drop 50 on the Blazers ever since he was left off the USA Olympic squad. Arenas' beef was directed at Blazers Head Coach Nate McMillan, who is part of the USA team's coaching staff. Arenas took it personally and felt that he needed to exact some revenge on the McMillan-led Blazers, attempting to prove everyone wrong for not including him on the American roster.

Word of advice, Gil: Next time you plan on dropping half a hundred on someone, you should keep it to yourself. No one likes to hear such proclamations made against their team. It's interpreted as a blatant sign of disrespect.

Other unattractive things worth noting include: The Pro Bowl, and Drew Brees' nasty, dislocated elbow that he sustained during it. I understand the allure of Hawaii, but the Pro Bowl itself a joke, something similar to Scott Pollard on the cover of GQ.

Women use stingy D, clutch shooting to win

Frank Jordan

The Clackamas Print

The Clackamas women's basketball team used solid defense and timely shooting to defeat Mt. Hood CC and Southwestern Oregon CC in their games last week.

Last Wednesday in Gresham, Mt. Hood used a slow, methodical offense to try to slow down the Cougars, and their strategy backfired as Clackamas forced 28 turnovers and held the

Saints to 26 percent shooting in CCC's 49-34 victory.

"It was probably our best defensive performance of the season," said Head Coach Jim Martineau. "We forced Mt. Hood to run down the shot clock on almost every possession, and forced them to either take a poor shot or we came up with a turnover. All of the girls did a great job on defense during the game."

Vanessa Schmitz set the tone early, scoring 14 of her 16 points in the first half to lead the Cougars. Schmitz also grabbed seven rebounds, dished out four assists and had three steals. Kellyn Cooper backed Schmitz with 14 points and a team-high 12 rebounds.

Clackamas only shot 30 percent for the game, including only 3-19 from three-point range, and were out-rebounded 49-42 by the Saints. Mt. Hood was led by Sammie Nordstrom, who had 14 points and 14 boards.

Saturday, Clackamas hosted the last-place Southwestern Oregon Lady Lakers and the Cougars sent their

opponent back to Coos Bay with a lopsided 84-28 loss.

Sarah Lindley shot 10-17 from the floor enroute to a game-high 22 points, while Rachel Copeland followed with 21 points, including five first-half threes, when the Cougars jumped out to a 46-12 halftime cushion. Cooper had 16 points on 7-17 shooting, and Schmitz had 10 points. Cooper and Schmitz each grabbed 11 rebounds to pace the Cougars off the glass.

Clackamas forced 36 turnovers, including 23 steals, and held SWOCC to 22 percent shooting. Amelia Johnson led the Lady Lakers with 11 points as SWOCC fell to 0-11 in the division and 1-21 overall.

"SWOCC is not very good, and we did a pretty good job of not embarrassing them," said Martineau. "We played very well defensively and shot the ball pretty well. Sarah, Rachel and Kellyn all shot well, especially Rachel in the first half (5-6 on three-pointers). All-in-all, it was a nice night."

A big week awaits the Cougars as they take on third-place Chemeketa CC in Salem tonight at 5:30 p.m. The Cougars are all alone in second place in the Southern Division standings at 9-2, while the Lady Chiefs are 8-3.

Saturday, Clackamas will host first-place Lane CC in the final home game of the season. Lane is 11-0 in the division, and a victory over the Lady Titans would give the Cougars momentum heading into the NWAACC tournament, March 1 through 4, in Kennewick, Wash.

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Wrestling Results:

Six Clackamas wrestlers qualified for the National JUCO Athletic Association National Championship Tournament on Feb. 23 and 24 in Rochester, Minn. The Cougars placed third as a team in the NJCAA Region 18 tournament held last weekend in Yakima, Wash.

The following individuals qualified for nationals:

- Brian Jacob (125) took third in his weight class.
- Derrick Bartlemay (141) took third in his weight class.
- Sam Schmitz (149) is the Region Champion for his division.
- Seth Roy (157) took third in his weight class.
- Alex Bubb (165) took third in his weight class.
- John Bates (HWT) is the Region Champion for his division.

Also competing and placing at the regional tournament was Shane Rhoden, who took fifth place at 133 pounds, Luis Cisneros, who was fifth at 174 pounds, and Jim Halicki, who finished fourth at 197 pounds.