

Wrestling holds high hopes of trophy finish

Jon Helmkamp

The Clackamas Print

At the start of the season, Coach Joshua Rhoden and his coaching staff had a meeting with their team to set the groundwork for the upcoming season. Combining the idealized goals of he and his staff with the goals that his team verbalized, Rhoden and his team have their eyes set on a fifth place trophy in the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA).

Rhoden, in his third season as the wrestling head coach, started off his tenure at Clackamas with two very successful seasons.

In his inaugural season, he led the wrestling team to a fifth place finish in the NJCAA National Championships, beating first-ranked North Idaho College in the process for the first time in team history.

Along with the fifth place finish, six members of the team were named to the All-American team. The following season, his team returned to the NJCAAs and ended in a respectable seventh place.

This year, with returning sophomores Kris Spencer and Jace Lewis as team captains, the thought of a trophy finish – finishing in the top six – seems very achievable.

“It was great bringing home a trophy two years ago. We would love to do that again,” said Rhoden.

In their first match of the season, they beat ninth-ranked Southwestern Oregon Community College on Nov. 15 in a blowout, 34-6. Out of the 10 matches, Clackamas only dropped one.

“Our conditioning was way better than theirs and the match-ups were good. They had some tough kids, but we were tougher,” said Lewis.

Their second match of the season was a much more difficult task. Squaring off with fourth-ranked North Idaho College on Nov. 20, Clackamas fell short, losing 21-15.

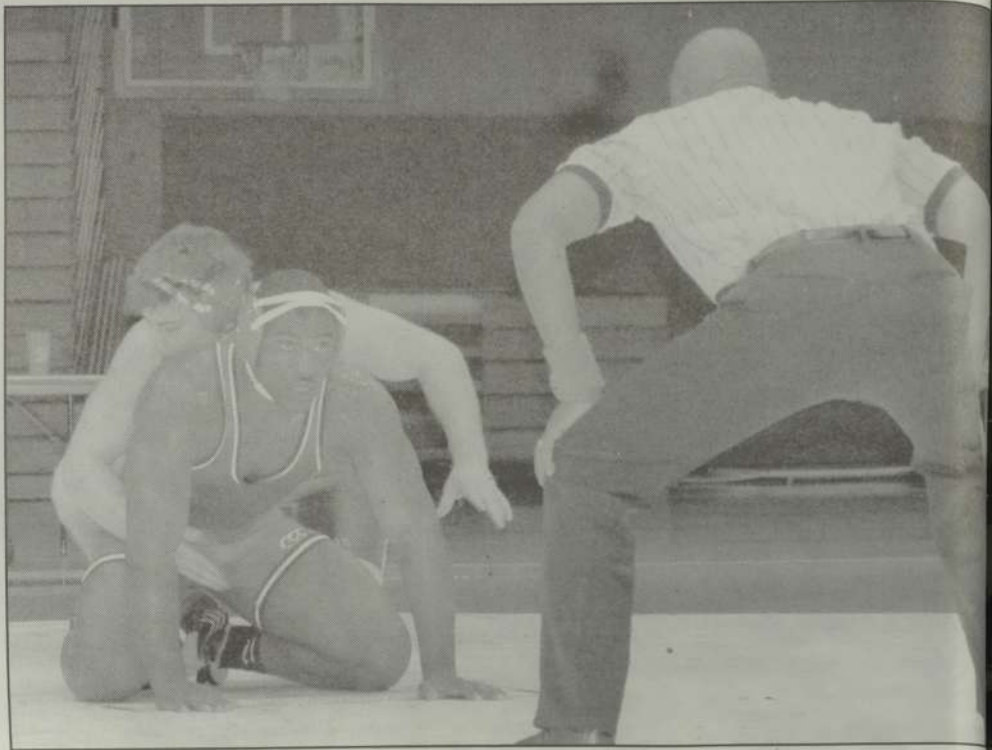
Despite the loss to North Idaho, Rhoden feels good about the position his team is in.

“As a staff we feel really good about where we are. We were frustrated about the loss to North Idaho, but they’re a tough team and we didn’t wrestle our best that day,” said Rhoden.

“We feel confident that we can bounce back and make the adjustments that we need to in order to get back on track for our national goals,” Rhoden

“We feel confident that we can bounce back and make the adjustments that we need to in order to get back on track for our national goals.”

Joshua Rhoden
Wrestling Coach



Megan Shaw Clackamas

Tyrell Fortune (bottom) waits for the referee’s whistle while in the referee’s position. Fortune is third in the country in the 185 pound weight class.

continued.

After the first two matches of the season, the Cougars are ranked eleventh in the country, with four players ranked in the top eight of their respective weight classes. Leading the way is freshman Tyrell Fortune, who is undefeated and ranked third in the 185 pound weight class. Kris Spencer and Josh Miller, sophomores, and Caleb Kociemba, freshman, are each ranked seventh in their respective weight classes.

“Getting a trophy is something that’s attainable for us. If we compete at a high level and stay committed to our goals, I think that we can achieve something really great,” said Rhoden.

Their next match is at Pacific University on Friday Dec. 5, followed by a match the next day at home against Highline Community College.

Recent scores

Men’s Basketball:

Nov. 30 against Everett Community College
Clackamas 107, Everett 79

Women’s Basketball:

Nov. 30 against Umpqua Community College
Clackamas 90, Umpqua 99

Wrestling:

Nov. 20 against North Idaho College
Clackamas 15, North Idaho 15

Baeckel named first team All-American



Contributed by Tracy Swisher

Kristel Baeckel (13) leaps at the net to spike the ball in a match at the NWAACC Championships. Baeckel was named first team All-American for her play this season.

Kristel Baeckel, sophomore, became one of only three volleyball players in the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges to be named first team All-American for the National Junior College Athletic Association Division I for this season.

This year, the NWAACC is naming six players to the All-American teams – three to the first team and three to the second team.

The coaches of every team nominate their potential All-Americans, then the coaches in the American Volleyball Coaches Association vote on the players that will be named to the All-American teams.

Baeckel, along with the other three sophomores on the Cougars volleyball team, will be playing in the NWAACC Sophomore All-Star event Saturday Dec. 6 at Edmonds Community College in Washington. The event is comprised of one Sophomore All-Star team from each region in the NWAACC conference.

The coaches from each region vote on which players will be named to the 12-person team. Taya Clark, Alaura Little and Melita Elliot will be playing in the event along with Baeckel.

Woods will be coaching with Terry McGloughlin, the head coach at Chemeketa Community College.

– compiled by Jon Helmkamp

Calendar of events

Men’s Basketball:

Friday, Dec. 5 @ home against Spokane Community College, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 9 @ home against Linfield Community College, 7 p.m.

Women’s Basketball:

Saturday, Dec. 6 @ Longview, Wash. against Lower Columbia Community College, 6 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 15 @ home against Highline Community College, 6 p.m.

Wrestling:

Friday, Dec. 5 @ Forest Grove, Ore. against Pacific University, 4 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 6 @ home against Highline Community College, 5 p.m.