

Lady Cougars ready for battle

Women's hoops return to NWAACC tournament after finishing season as division champs

By Mark Foster
Sports Editor

It's been four years since the Lady Cougars' last Southern Region championship, and even then it wasn't entirely theirs. This year, they are at the top of the Southern Region but have their sights set on a bigger target: NWAACC Championships.

After going 21-4, the Cougars were able to secure the Southern Region title against Umpqua on Feb. 26 in an overtime game which the Cougs handled winning 88-77. It was one of three games they played over the course of last week they needed in order to ensure their spot at the top.

The first of the three games was played at home against Lane Community College. In this game, sophomore Dayle Powell lit up Lane for 18 in a 77-71 win over the Titans. Sophomore Rylee Peterson also added 11 points, seven rebounds, and four blocks to help lift the Cougars past the Titans.

Sophomore McKenzie Meyer felt that the team really grew as one during this game, she said, "I think that's when we came together as a team most of all season ... it was a turning point for us."

After traveling to Roseburg and winning in overtime Friday night, the team continued on to Coos Bay where they took on Southwest Oregon Community College. Peterson, who led the Cougars with 17 points and 7 rebounds, helped push them past the Lakers en route to a 70-60 win. Peterson thought



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Rylee Peterson dribbles by Lane Community College forward Tiffany Rich during a game on Feb. 20. Peterson scored 11 points and had 7 rebounds in the Cougars' 77-71 victory.

that it was good they won but felt they could have done more. She said, "We won against [Southwest Oregon Community College] but they aren't a horrible team, but we kind of overlooked them. We only won by ten ... we need to

know that we can't let down even though we won."

Powell added, "But it felt really frickin' good to win and we were all really excited."

With the regular season now in the rearview mirror, all of the Lady Cougars focus

has shifted to the NWACC Championships. They will first face Columbia Basin College of Pasco, Wash. Saturday night. Powell used one word to describe how she feels about the game, "Excited."

They have only one chance this season to win a tournament in Long Beach, Wash. where they routed the Hawks 85-73. Even though they handily beat the Hawks, last time Peterson pointed out, "Every game is different. In the NWAACCs, everybody is with a lot more intensity. It's a lot more improved."

Throughout the season, the Cougars have been taking it one game at a time, but with the possibility of four games in a row, they need to prepare themselves as best they can for whatever team or situation they may encounter. Peterson said, "We have been winning one game at a time so it's kind of just a shoot and pray light practice day. Tomorrow and the next days will be more preparation about what we need to do on."

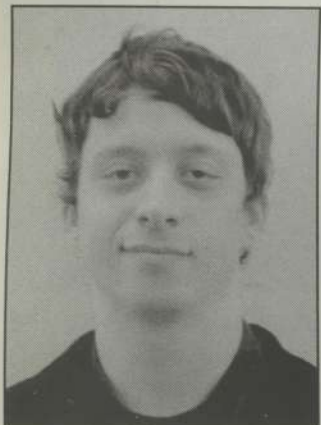
If they get past Clackamas, they will face either Clackamas or Bellevue colleges. Powell and Peterson believe they can win either one of those teams. The situation gets stickier when it comes to the semi-finals. The Cougars have the possibility of facing a Yakima team. Peterson noted that Yakima is a good team. Yakima finished the season with a regional title and an overall record of 25-5.

In the finals they could possibly see league rival Lane leads the season with a 2-1 beating the Cougars in overtime in the NWACC Crossover Tournament. Eugene 73-85.

Throughout the season, the words the team repeated before games were to dominate. Now, that's a battle.

For up to date results on the Cougars and teams visit nwaacc.org

Cougar men attack NWAACC tourney



By Steven Weldon
Associate Sports Editor

Madness is about to begin. It's March, and the Clackamas Cougars men's basketball team is headed back to the NWAACC Championship Tournament in Kennewick, Wash. after finishing second in the Southern Region, marking an astounding eleventh straight appearance in the tournament for the Cougars.

Coming into the season with a target on their backs being the defending NWAACC champions is a difficult thing, but the Cougars stood tall and played basketball the right way, despite small dips in the road.

Sophomore post Chehales Tapscoff stuffed the stat sheet for a second straight year, leading the team in scoring with 25.5 points per game shooting 54 percent from the field, rebounds with 12.7 boards per game and blocks with 1.9 swats per game. Tapscoff was the second leading scorer and rebounder in the entire NWAACC. The most valuable stat to me, though, was his offensive rebounds per game. 5.8, tops in the league at showing his hustle and dedication to getting an extra possession for his team.

Sophomore guard Jeff Dorman also had a breakout year, averaging 20.5 points per game, shooting 41 percent from behind the three-point line. Averaging 2.7 steals per game, his 71 total steals led the league. Dorman also had many clutch moments including a game winning three against Mt. Hood and game winning jump

shot against Portland.

The Cougars were also held up by contributions from sophomore Justin Steinke, who averaged 14 points per game and was fearless when driving to the basket. Freshmen Derrick Hayes and Jasem Dulany chipped in, averaging 8.3 and 6.5 points per game, respectively. Both players had key hands in the success of the team, with Hayes' length and ability to put the ball in the basket or grab a rebound, or Dulany's incredible three-point shooting abilities.

While the Cougars' 23-game home winning streak was stopped by Lower Columbia during the preseason holiday tournament, and the team suffered a heartbreaking loss to Chemeketa at home to open southern region play, the resilient Cougars responded by winning nine out of their next ten games.

Currently 21-5 going into the NWAACC tournament, head coach Cliff Wegner and his Cougars will head to the Tri-Cities ready to take on all challengers. Their first game of the championship tournament is at noon on March 6 against Spokane Community College.

WOMEN'S SOUTHERN REGION STANDINGS

	Region	Win	Overall	
	W-L	PCT	W-L	
Z-Clackamas	12-2	.857	21-4	CHAMPION
X- Lane	11-3	.786	22-4	
X- Umpqua	11-3	.786	20-6	
X- Mt. Hood	10-4	.714	18-8	
SW Oregon	6-8	.429	12-13	
Chemeketa	4-10	.286	6-18	
Linn-Benton	2-12	.143	4-20	
Portland	0-14	.000	2-23	

MEN'S SOUTHERN REGION STANDINGS

	Region	Win	Overall	
	W-L	PCT	W-L	
Z- Chemeketa	12-2	.857	22-2	
X- Clackamas	11-3	.786	21-5	
X- Mt. Hood	10-4	.714	18-6	
X- Linn-Benton	7-7	.500	12-13	
Lane	6-8	.429	10-15	
SW Oregon	5-9	.357	10-16	
Umpqua	3-11	.214	5-20	
Portland	2-12	.143	8-17	

Z-Region Champion
X-Clinched NWAACC Playoff Berth