

STRONG: Cougar captain credited

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Rachel Strong, captain of the Cougar Volleyball team, listens to coach Kathie Woods during practice. Strong was named Southern Region Player of the Week last week by the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges.

Pamela Hollis Clackamas Print

Rachel also plays softball for Clackamas. December 8 is the last day of volleyball and the ball starts before returning to school. During winter break, she works out on her aunt's 10-acre farm, plus she does a lot of other odd jobs she can get her hands on, since balancing her regular job in her already busy schedule is nearly impossible. As a self-proclaimed "tomboy," this job suits her just fine, for now.

Rachel is the only player on the team this year to the volleyball team and she is offering great motivation to her teammates.

This last fall Rachel received her first ever 4.0 grade point average. "That was exciting," she said.

Sports motivate Rachel. She has a schedule she sticks to when she is playing sports, it includes schoolwork. When she isn't playing a sport, she and her mother admit she can slack a little on her homework.

"Sports discipline Rachel," said Renae.

Woods has many good things to say about her returning player. "She's doing a great job, works hard (and) she knows what is important," she said. "She will be successful wherever she decides to do."

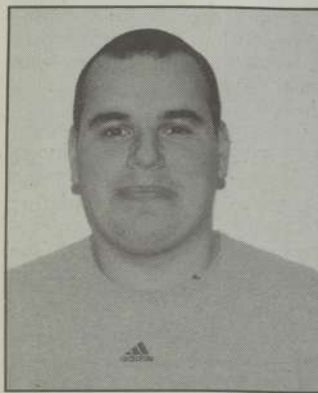
Rachel is a little undecided about where she would like to go when she leaves Clackamas, but she does have a general career goal in mind: something to do with sports, possibly sports medicine or physical therapy with a sports twist.

She is well on her way to getting her AAOT to transfer to another school (she has her eyes on Colorado, Arizona, Montana) and get her bachelor's degree in a sports-related field.

Regardless of where she goes, Rachel doesn't want to give up volleyball or softball just yet; she would like to be a part of her education.

Rachel has had to grow strong, and it shows in the game and in her life.

Sports strengthen superior standing



By Robert Morrison
Sports Editor

Archie Griffin once said, "It's not the size of the dog in the fight, but the size of the fight in the dog." This is one of the most famous sports quotes and it applies to my topic this week: youth sports.

Youth athletes might be small, but they play with the best of them. Youth sports are enjoyed by kids around the world; the

Little League World Series is proof of that. Kids start at a young age and often continue until high school or beyond.

Research shows that kids who participate in sports do better in school and more likely not to drop out of their schooling in the future. Sports, especially youth sports, build character and discipline at a young age that can help prevent problems socially in the rest of the athlete's life.

As a youth referee, I see youth sports from a personal and close up view. Kids that play in my league look forward to their games; they practice hard and learn to be a team as well as an individual. Win or lose, they play as a team and rarely do I see kids come play with a bad attitude. I've seen kids take themselves out of a game so another player could play. Kids want to win but as a team they learn that hard work will pay off.

Even in the most violent areas, a youth sport can be a blessing. Youth sports in some

areas keep kids off the streets and out of trouble. Many times I've heard coaches in my league talk about what a youth team means to their players. The sport makes their kids feel like they belong. During games the kids look like they have no worries.

Youth sports also give kids a goal at a young age that they can aim for on a yearly basis. Most young athletes' goals are to become professionals, but of course not everyone can make it there. Many professional athletes volunteer with youth programs, even though even they didn't play when they were that young. For example, Brian Grant, former Portland Trail Blazer, came to one of our events for youth basketball and spoke about the importance of the youth programs.

With youth programs in full swing, kids are learning to be better people as well as athletes on their way to their goals. If you have kids and want to have them learn a thing or two, check out a youth program near you.

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