

Loss of key players poses challenge, men's basketball faces new season with optimism

By Matt Senn
The Clackamas Print

With the NBA lock-out in total disarray, it looks like a very good chance that there won't be any men's professional basketball season at all this year. For those die-hard Blazer fans, there isn't much hope for live basketball games. Yet hope remains as the Clackamas Cougars basketball season is nearly underway.

"I'm super excited to be a part of a program [that] does a lot of winning," said Taylor Dunn, who transferred to Clackamas Community College from Central Washington. The pre-season started off last Friday, Nov. 18 at 7 p.m. vs. Linfield College JV at home in Randall Hall with the Cougars smashing Linfield JV to the final tally of 88-75.

Dunn lead the Cougars in scoring with 22 points. He will be playing wing or post-position. Dunn has a history of playing basketball and ties to CCC. His older brother Austin Dunn played on the 2009 NWAACC championship team, which Taylor aspires to do this year. Just having won a Southern Region championship last year, the whole team would like to defend their title.

With the season on their heels, the team has been hitting the gym for some very intense practices. During pre-season for all sports, there are many things to consider and Clif Wegner, head coach of the Cougars men's basketball team, is anticipating them.

"We're very excited to get underway," said Wegner.

While he is excited, he also sees points of concern. One of those areas is the loss of key player Max Jacobson. Jacobson shot 70 percent from the floor and averaged 23 points and seven rebounds a game last season at Clackamas before signing with Northern Arizona University.

Along with the loss of Jacobson is shooting guard/small forward Nate Keilholtz, who will be

red-shirting this year due to a recent ACL reconstruction. The surgery takes at least a month to recover from, enough to walk without crutches, not to mention the six to nine months it will be until Keilholtz is back to performing in athletics.

"It's a big loss losing him," said Assistant Coach Jonny Brainard. "Nate was a great rebounder and a very smart player. He brought great off-the-bench energy."

With Keilholtz out for the season and Jacobson playing in Arizona, that leaves the team a little shallow in several positions. "We're a little thin at the point which has been a concern for us, but Josh Lokeno has stepped up and been doing a wonderful job," said Wegner. "It feels like we're getting better. We've seen progress in our areas of focus."

While the team has some areas of concern and even weakness, like the loss of Jacobson and Keilholtz, Wegner, a three time NWAACC coach of the year, has already taken steps to counteract them.

"We recruited some sophomore transfers. Brett Ball and [Dunn] are really good kids who have some college experience to step in. We also have two lettermen posts returning, [sophomores] Andre Dixon and Alex Loul ... so we have some good depth at the post," said Wegner. "We've got some good wing back-ups for [Dunn] who is going to be a key player and Paul Walter who is a starter and co-captain at the other wing."

Even though this team has seen some adversity so early in the season, it is shaping up to be a good year for the Cougars. With five sophomores in the starting lineup, they'll be as experienced as any team they'll face all season. With the range of familiarity, skill and age that the team has, they are already setting their sights on re-claiming their title as defending Southern Region champions and taking another shot at their third NWAACC title since 2009.



John William Howard The Clackamas Print

Clackamas sophomore Andre Dickson looks to score during practice on Nov. 21. Dickson had a game high four steals in last week's season opener versus Linfield College JV.

Local sport organizations rely on Clackamas facilities for games

By Matt Senn
The Clackamas Print

Who are these strange people who are taking over our campus? All over Clackamas Community College there are sports teams made up of youth students that look like they're six. These teams are just a portion of the groups that use our campus.

"We have tons of groups who use our facilities," said Jim Martineau, CCC athletic director. Organizations that are using the campus facilities for many events range from gymnastics or the Relay For Life to adult softball leagues.

You may have seen many of these teams playing softball or other sports on the back fields by Clairmont or a men's soccer team practicing by DeJardin. Maybe you've even seen a youth sports game going on during a Saturday morning.

Some students wonder, "How do I get on to that team? Does the college even have a men's soccer team?" or "Man the college must be desperate for new enrollees." A few of those groups are CCC Associated Student Government, the Three Rivers and Pacific high school leagues, North Clackamas Christian HS, OC Youth Soccer, along with several soccer leagues, the Portland Baseball Club, EOT Girls Basketball Tournaments, Oregon City Chapter of Relay For Life, dance competitions, wrestling clubs, an adult softball league and Clackamas County Miles 4 Mileage walk/run.

In order for these teams to be able to use the campus, they have to go through the athletic department and Assistant

Athletic Director Kayla Steen.

"They contact Kayla, she lets them know what space is available and what the prices are to rent them," said Dotty Coburn, athletic department secretary. Coburn also mentioned that Steen is in charge of scheduling for all the organizations.

During the fall, there are many high school cross country teams that use Clackamas because of the college's central location and because many of these schools don't have an area large enough for cross country. Recently the West Linn and Milwaukie High School teams have used the course.

Many high schools have used Clackamas not only to hold meets, matches and games but also to use the college's facilities for practice purposes. "We have used the tennis courts for practice many times and sometimes we use the gym for basketball practice in November," said Bruce Reece, Oregon City High School Athletic Director.

Other sports like tennis, youth soccer and the various adult leagues will most often happen on the weekends. "[These events happen] all though the year and summer, a lot [of the events] occur on weekends as well," said Martineau.

The college often offers the facilities for use by other organizations as a way to be more involved in the community and as a great recruiting opportunity.

"We get huge benefits [from] having several thousand high school athletes on our campus each year at different events. It definitely helps out with recruiting," said Martineau.

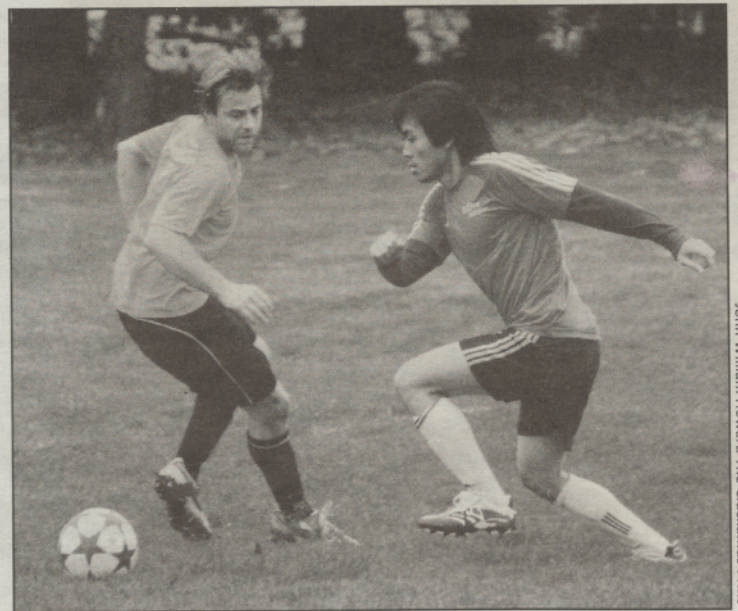
Recruiting and public involvement isn't

the only plus that Clackamas gets out of its athletic facilities. Many of the groups using CCC pay for the gymnasium, field or court they use.

"We do charge for most events mostly to cover the cost associated," said Martineau. "The rates for rental vary depending on several factors: Which facility is needed? Does the event require [overtime] for custodial or campus safety? Does the event require a supervisor from the college? We don't charge the youth soccer league to use

the fields. If it is a charity event, we generally don't charge. If we do charge it would be just to cover the cost of the staff."

The benefits to the college run beyond money and recruiting, they're also a service to the students. You can't join the high school teams (you could try, but your chances are probably pretty slim) but there are adult sports leagues and youth sports clubs that can be found online. You're already at CCC, why not take advantage of it?



John William Howard The Clackamas Print

Dustin Ward (left) of the "One-Touchables" plays against a member of Greater VN in a match held at CCC's soccer field near Roger Rook Hall.