

Clackamas falls from contention for southern championship

By John William Howard
Sports Editor

Dazed, the group silently gathered their things, moving a few paces behind the bench to quietly dress and repack their bags. A few murmured words were said, and families quietly and cautiously approached, wary of the players they had come to see.

After a quick post game talk, head coach Jim Martineau disappeared, leaving the gym before most of his team, who, for the most part, meandered to talk to friends before bolting to their cars and heading home.

The Clackamas women had just lost to Lane in a tightly contested battle, fighting start to finish for a piece of the southern region crown. Clackamas fell 65-58, marking the first time that they had dropped a region game at home all season, and the first home loss since mid December. The home team repeatedly missed chances, shooting just over 50 percent from the free throw line, 16 percent from three point range and 28 percent from the field.

Freshman guard Jenny Johnson was one of the first to leave the disheartened group after having led Clackamas with 15 points in the loss.

"It's frustrating because we work so hard in the whole game and we have the energy, but when it comes down to it we couldn't make shots and that just sucks," said Johnson, who was 0-2 from three point range but hit all of her team high seven free throw attempts. "You put in all that hard work and you don't get the result you want."

In the first half, the hard work was mostly paying off. Down eight at 14-6 after just five minutes of play, Clackamas went on a 13-5 run to tie the game at 19 before taking the lead on a field goal from 6-1 freshman Megan Feldman. From then on, neither team would take a lead larger than three, with the teams swapping the advantage five times in the final eight minutes.

The first half definitely wasn't an offensive showdown, as the Cougars were just 11-36 from

the field and put up just 31 points. Sophomore MaKasha Bizon led the home team with eight points in the first half, which found Clackamas trailing by one going in to halftime.

Typically, when Clackamas has a bad offensive half, they come out for the final 20 minutes and turn it around completely. This time, however, that was not at all the case.

The second half began as close as the first half ended. Johnson tied the game with a three point play at 34, and kept things close a few moments later with a field goal to keep Clackamas within one at 39-38. Those would be the last points that Clackamas would score for almost four minutes, as they watched Lane go on an 11-2 run to take a ten point lead at 50-40.

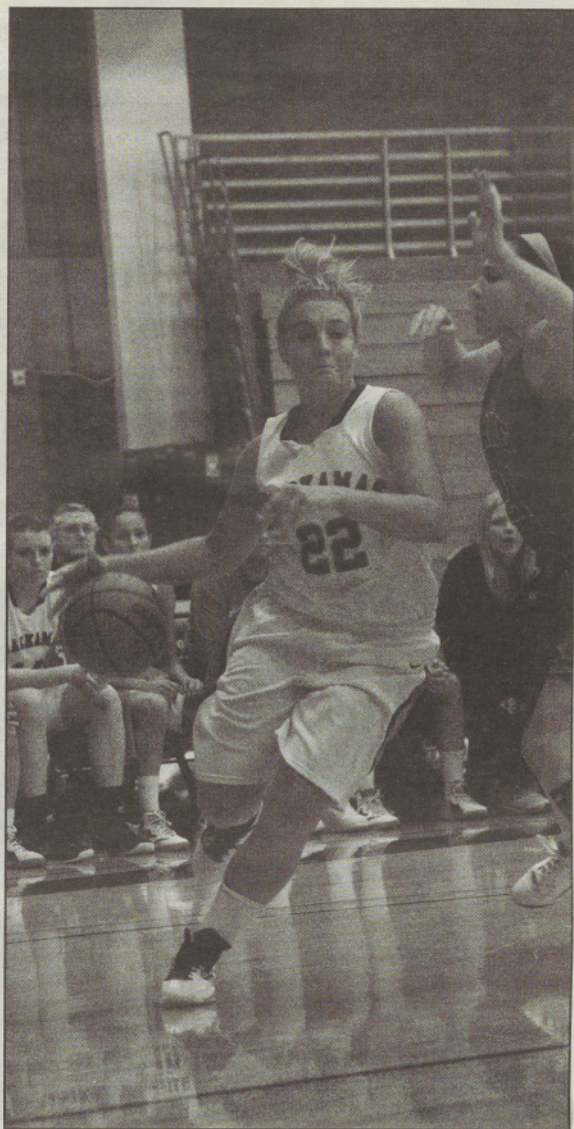
Even then, the home team didn't lie down. They went on a 14-5 run of their own to make it a game again, and despite shooting so poorly, Clackamas still had a chance to win the game. Down one after two Johnson free throws with just under five minutes remaining, the Cougars got a defensive stop and a steal, but couldn't convert, missing a pair of free throws and three field goals while Lane pushed their lead back to seven.

With just two minutes left on the clock, the game was all but over for Clackamas. They didn't hit a single field goal down the stretch, made two costly turnovers and normally composed wing Ashleigh Anderson missed a pair of free throws in the final minute before Clackamas finally laid down and surrendered.

Perhaps the most frustrating part of the loss is that it was close in spite of the Cougars' dismal shooting percentage.

"We're missing all of our shots and we only lost by seven points," said Johnson. "That means we're with them and if we shoot well, we win by 10."

The loss drops Clackamas to a second place tie in the southern region with Chemeketa. With only two games remaining, it is unlikely that Clackamas will be able to climb past Lane for the region championship and will have to fight to win the second seed in the south for the upcoming NWAACC championships.



Freshman guard Ashleigh Anderson drives to the basket in the second half against Lane. Normally a stellar shooter, Anderson was frustrated by the defense and scored only 10 points, going 3-17 from the field and 3-9 from the free throw line.



All photos by John William Howard The Clackamas Print

Brett Ball shoots over the Lane defense last Saturday. Ball had 20 points and 10 rebounds in the game.

Athletics Notebook

Men's Basketball -

Clackamas 84, Lane 71

Taylor Dunn hit four of six three pointers and had 24 points total in Clackamas' win over Lane. The win clinched a playoff spot for the Cougars, who have now won seven of their last eight to move into sole possession of third place in the southern region standings. Brett Ball added 20 points and 10 rebounds for another double-double, his tenth for the season.

Women's Basketball -

Clackamas 64, Mt. Hood 39

Freshman Ashleigh Anderson led the Clackamas blowout with 18 points in just 29 minutes of play for the Cougars, who stayed with Mt. Hood for the first few minutes before absolutely leaving them in the dust for the final three quarters of the game. Sophomore MaKasha Bizon added 14 for Clackamas and Sam McCloud and Jenny Johnson both chipped in 10 points. Clackamas won while shooting just 34.4 percent from the field overall, but held Mt. Hood to just 13 points in the second half.

Kanalz nearing return

Saturday's loss to Lane bore little good news, but it was the first time that many saw sophomore forward Lindsay Kanalz without her bright pink cast. Kanalz broke her hand during the game at home against Mt. Hood on Jan. 18, and is nearly ready to play, but will wait until the NWAACC tournament before stepping on the court again.

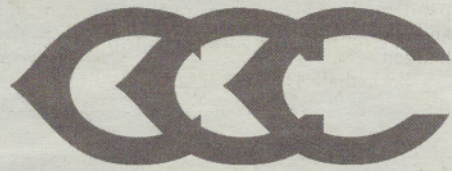
Track and Field -

Sophomore thrower Kate Higgins recently signed with University of Wyoming to participate in track and field on a 75 percent scholarship. Higgins earned All-American honors at the 2011 NWAACC Track and Field championships, taking first place in both discus and hammer throw.



Former Cougar Keisa Monterola is making national headlines at Eastern Washington University, and is now the fourth ranked pole-vaulter in the country at the NCAA Division-I level. Monterola was the 2011 NWAACC pole-vault champion.

- Compiled by John William Howard



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