

Men's basketball falls to Highline

Zak Laster
Ad Manager

Facing their toughest game mentally and physically so far in the season, the Clackamas Cougars fell to the Highline Thunderbirds, 105-89 last Friday.

Starting early in the game, fans could feel a different vibe in the arena. The Cougars were

facing a team that was bigger, faster and stronger than they were, and as the game wore on, the Cougars wore down.

After a spirited first half where the Cougars showed great fight and only trailed by two points, they came out in the second half and had a hard time getting anything going; they were outscored 53-39. After the game, Coach Cliff Wegner was not pleased with their performance, he said.

"We didn't have a good

game shooting the basketball," said Wegner. "I just feel like we never got into a rhythm and had five guys who really played well for any substantial length of time."

The Cougars shot 44.9 percent from the field, compared to Highline who shot 54.4 percent, and were out-rebounded by 13. This is an area the players know they need to improve on.

"We just need better team defense," said sophomore

point guard Spencer Bankofier. "Coach was pissed, but he has a right to be pissed. I mean, we got manhandled on the boards. That was embarrassing."

One of the bright spots of the night was the performance by forward Grant Sitton who finished with 34 points and six rebounds. Being the tallest guy on the team at 6-foot-9, he was tasked with guarding the talented Highline forward Joseph Stroud, who finished with 16 points and 13 rebounds.

"He's a good strong player out there" said sophomore forward Grant Sitton. "We're going back and forward throughout the game,"

Sitton agreed that the defense needs improving. He also commented on his individual performance.

"I'm not satisfied with our defensive aspect of the game," said Sitton. "I'd much rather win a game and score 10 points than score whatever I scored tonight and lose."



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Ezekiel Martin, freshman forward, shoots a free throw in the game against Highline Community College. Martin finished with five points and three rebounds. After falling behind earlier in the game and then coming back strong, the Cougars struggle to rally again, but are out muscled by the Thunderbirds.

Cougars bounce back, choke Grays Harbor

Chris Browarski
The Clackamas Print

The visiting Grays Harbor Chokers were no match for the Clackamas men's basketball team as the Cougars picked up the win 95-79 last Saturday. Defense was the game plan as Clackamas was able to score 28 points off turnovers to gain a lead early in the game.

They did not let go.

Much of the scoring came from forward Brandon Halter, who came on the floor with a seemingly endless supply of energy. Halter scored 27 points and pulled down

12 rebounds for the Cougars in his double-double performance. Running hard on the court, Halter was able to get a lot of good looks at the basket, shooting 53 percent for the night. He also led the team in three-pointers by sinking four balls from beyond the arc.

Guard Spencer Bankofier also had a good night of scoring on mixed opportunities. He was 4/9 for the night, including a three pointer. Bankofier also managed to get sent to the free-throw line and did not miss all night, shooting six out of six foul shots. He scored 15 points and passed four assists in the game.

Clackamas Coach Cliff Wegner controlled the pace of the game

well and called defensive schemes that limited the Chokers' ability to get to the rim. Much of the game was played in zone sets. But after GHC sunk three consecutive three-point shots, Wegner called a timeout to switch to man defense. The adjustment was successful in limiting outside scoring while keeping the interior tightly guarded.

Wegner felt that the previous night's loss against Highline was frustrating and that defense and rebounding was a focus on Saturday's game. He's optimistic about the young team's future, he said. "Putting five freshmen out there can be scary," said Wegner. "[They can] grow up a lot as the season goes on."

Foreword Moe Keita was a huge defensive weapon for the team who challenged the opponents' shots all night. Keita swatted post shots all night with three blocks and robbed the opponents for two steals. He also showcased his offensive ability, scoring 14 points and passing four assists. He even drained a big three near the end of the game with a spot-up jump shot.

"After [Friday's] loss, defense was an emphasis," said Keita. "We have a lot more to learn and have to keep working hard."

The Cougars' effort on the boards gave them a huge advantage in the game as Clackamas out-rebounded GHC 53-36. Clackamas had twice as many offensive rebounds as the opponents that made for 16 second-chance points.

Forward Ezekiel Martin was a huge factor as he was able to box out well and grab 11 rebounds on

the night, five of which on offense. Martin also scored 10 points for a double-double and was able to dish out two assists. He was also active on offense away from the ball and would set several picks that would lead to scores.

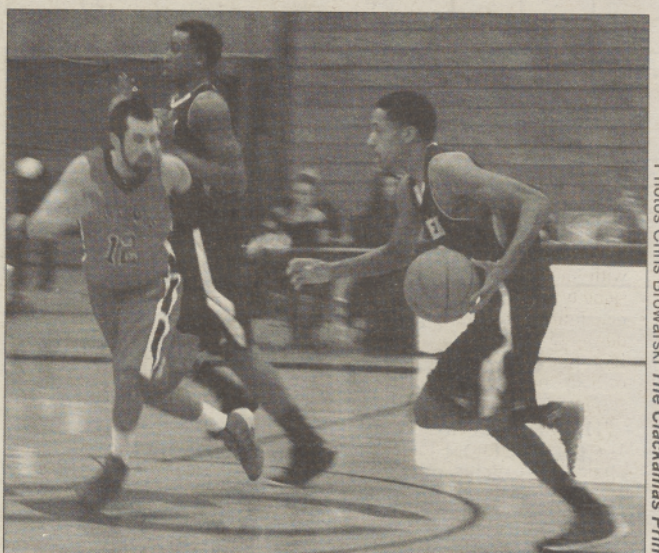
The bleachers in Randall Hall filled up nicely with many Cougars fans, who drowned out the few Chokers supporters in attendance. The crowd cheered loudly for Clackamas' scoring and was especially excited to see blocked shots.

"They're playing really good," said Clackamas fan Tiffany Sloans. "I think they're making lots of shots, they're scoring a lot."

The Cougars advanced to 2-1 on the season with the win. Up next for Clackamas is the Skagit Valley Tournament held in Mt. Veronon, Wash., followed by a return home to face Clark Community College on Dec. 7.



No. 10 freshman point guard Anthony Russell (left) of the Cougars plays defense against the Chokers' guard, Riley Alvord.



No. 12 sophomore point guard Spencer Bankofier fights through a pick set by the Chokers.

Photos Chris Browarski The Clackamas Print

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| Sports CALENDAR Nov. 27-Dec. 3 | WEDNESDAY - 11/27 | THURSDAY - 11/28 | FRIDAY - 11/29 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Women's Basketball: Tourney game vs. George Fox at CCC Randall Hall 1 p.m. • CCC Men's Basketball: Tourney game vs. N.W.I.C at Mt. Vernon, Wash. | SATURDAY - 11/30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Women's Basketball: Tourney game vs. TBA at CCC Randall Hall Time: TBA • CCC Men's Basketball: Tourney game vs. TBA | SUNDAY - 12/1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Women's Basketball: Tourney game vs. TBA • CCC Men's Basketball: Tourney game vs. TBA | MONDAY - 12/2 | TUESDAY - 12/3 |
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