

Cougars claw Panthers in doubleheader

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The Clackamas Print

It was a freezing 25 degrees outside Wednesday night but the Clackamas Cougars heated up Randall Hall as both the men's and women's basketball teams beat the Portland Panthers. The women won 74-60 while the men dominated 108-90. Three pointers were key as both teams garnered momentum from behind the arc to extend their leads.

The women kicked off the night hungry for a win after a tough loss at Lane earlier in the week. The Panthers came to town with a fast and physical play style that frustrated the Cougars offense, forcing early turnovers and pushed for fast break points. PCC held a three point lead at the end of the first half with guard Diamond Bolden ahead in scoring for the Panthers. Bolden collected 25 points by the end of the night, the most from both teams.

Clackamas continued to struggle with the high-paced Panthers early

in the second half and fell behind 10 points. The Cougar women eventually managed to control the pace and come back with a series of team play and three-point shots.

The women made passes to open players inside and racked up 17 assists, seven more than Portland. Points from behind the three-point arc soared in CCC's favor, and were a huge part in the Cougars come-back win. Clackamas sunk nine more shots from outside than PCC.

"They definitely got hot out there" said Coach Jim Martineau about the Cougars' three point shooting in the second half, "that was definitely the difference."

Laci Effenberger was on fire like NBA Jam late in the second half, sinking three consecutive outside shots. She led CCC in scoring with 21 points and facilitated three baskets on assists. Effenberger was also key on defense by forcing turnovers with three steals.

Tori Wilkinson made her presence felt all over the court, picking up 10 points, five rebounds and four assists. She also showed

hustle, saving the ball from going out of bounds, and scored on a give and go, which was one of the prettiest plays of the night.

After the game Wilkinson was just happy to pull through.

"We came out on top and that's all that matters," said Wilkinson.

After the women wrapped up their victory, it was the men's turn to show Portland what Clackamas could do. The Cougars dominated the Panthers all game with Portland unable to come up with a solution for the CCC offense.

Clackamas played a team game with lots of passing to find the open man to take the shot. Everyone seemed to have a hot hand with three players scoring more than 20 points. The team rebounded well on defense grabbing 29 boards, 12 more than PCC.

Tim Lott was a big playmaker with 27 points, 12 of which were scored from outside the arc. He also picked up seven rebounds and two assists on the night. Not far behind in scoring was Brandon Halter who played the second half with a seemingly endless supply of energy.

Halter sunk five three-pointers on his 26-point night.

The Cougars displayed impeccable shot selection, making 38 of 63 shots from the field. In contrast, PCC put up 23 more shots in the game but only shot 32 of 86. Streaks of scoring pushed a big lead for CCC who at one point extended a 13-2 run late in the second half.

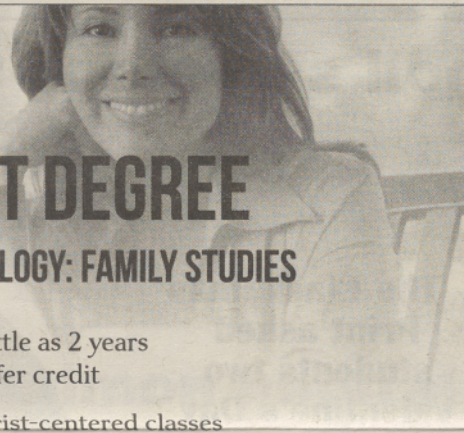
Coach Clif Wegner was very excited when he heard about the team's high shooting percentage.

"Holy cow, 60 percent!" said Wegner. "Good ball movement made for great team play."

Wegner was happy with his

team's outstanding performance as of late, describing it as a great time to be on a five game win streak. The win puts them just one game out of first place.

The men's 6-3 division record ties them for first in the NWAACC South region while the 5-3 women move a half game behind Lane for third place. With four games left in the season, wins are even more important. Both men and women will visit Chemeketa Wednesday to face the Storm. Both Chemeketa teams trail Clackamas by one game in regional standings.




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