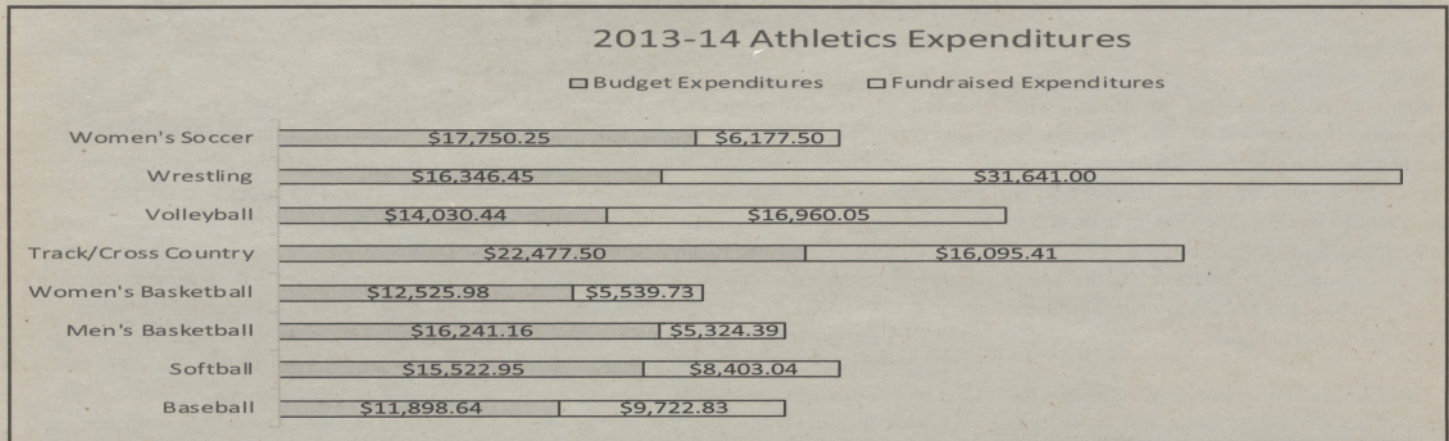


Athletics funds fall short



The graph shows how much was spent on each sports team at CCC. The numbers on the left represent how much was spent out of the college budget, and the numbers on the right represent how much was spent out of fundraised money.

by Blake Thomason

It makes sense for head coach and 2014-15 NJCAA Man of the Year, Josh Rhoden to be less than pleased with the current financial state of his wrestling program – a program that has won several regional titles, a national championship, produced 50 wrestling All-Americans and 59 Academic All-Americans.

"We're a champagne program on a beer budget," said Rhoden.

In an era where championship-caliber programs have money dumped in their laps, the Clackamas Community College wrestling program is making the best of its small budget.

Wrestling is the only sport at CCC not a part of the NWAC. Instead, it belongs to the NJCAA. This means the team recruits and competes nationally, from California to Pennsylvania. Events like the Reno Tournament or San Francisco State Open cost up to \$4,000 to transport, house and feed everyone. The National Duals costs around \$15,000. Because the team is in the NJCAA, it has to travel long distances consistently.

"We pay for our flights because we have to, because no other teams fly," said Rhoden, "which I can kind of get on board with, but at the same time it's like, man, you want to have a program and the way to have a wrestling program is to be a part of the NJCAA. There's no other option. That burden shouldn't fall on me, if you want to have wrestling."

School policy dictates that no flights can be paid

for. Fortunately, Athletic Director Jim Martineau has tried to help the program, agreeing to adjust the budget to cover lodging, meals and transport for the NJCAA Nationals after Rhoden won it in 2011. That would've been an additional \$5,000-\$7,000 each year they qualified.

**"I just want to
frickin' not have
to fundraise
50 grand a year."
– Josh Rhoden**

In order to maintain a top notch program, Rhoden and his staff recruit the whole country. In spite of the fact that they bring in students – the team carries 30-60 wrestlers – and help the college's enrollment numbers, recruiting costs of \$6,000-\$8,000 are paid for without the college's help.

According to the 2013-14 athletics finance data provided by Chris Robuck, Dean of Fiscal Services, the school spent \$16,346 on wrestling. Despite a \$1000 increase, CCC still has the lowest budget in the West Region and about half the budget of the other top teams. To compensate, Rhoden had

to fundraise more than \$30,000 to help pay for recruiting, meals, gear and leftover travel costs, and is meeting with a group to get \$15,000 more.

But it's not just the wrestling program dealing with financial struggles. Volleyball players have to pay for their own gear, and starting this year, track athletes do, too. While the track team may not have to travel as far as the wrestling team, they still incur a lot of travel costs. Much of it has to do with the size of the team and lack of proper facilities.

"Trying to travel 60 people costs a lot of money," said track head coach Keoni McHone. "The other side of it is we can't host any home meets here on campus. Now we're starting to struggle with hosting meets at Oregon City High School. It costs us just to go to a local meet within an hour or two, about \$1,000."

Multiply that by 10-12 meets, and the team far exceeds their budget of roughly \$8,000. The last home meet held at CCC was in 2003. Due to a poorly built, deteriorating and "illegal" (by competition standards) track, CCC has been having home meets at the nearby high school, while still practicing on campus. That won't be possible for much longer.

"We're actually looking for somewhere else to be able to run," said McHone. "That track, we can't run on it anymore. It's not conducive to train on anymore. Last year, two of our fastest sprinters tweaked their ankles practicing on it."

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