

COUGARS TAKE THE FIELD



STORY AND PHOTO BY JONATHAN SANCHEZ
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A bit of cold weather to start the season isn't going to deter the Clackamas Community College softball team. The team is already hard at work preparing for the upcoming season.

After finishing last season 30-9, the team looks to come back stronger than ever. Jessica Buel is returning for her 12th year as the head softball coach at Clackamas.

"I am excited to see what this group can accomplish," said Buel. "Their ceiling is high, and I think it is going to be fun to see how all their hard work has paid off."

This year's team largely consists of freshmen who are looking to leave their mark on the field. Hannah Carr, freshman third baseman said, "I honestly don't believe [a freshman heavy team] has any impact on us as a whole. We all know the game. I don't think any of us look at each other any different."

Carr has been surprised with how well the team gets along.

"Our team this year, right off the bat, created a great chemistry... I've never had teammates who are so upbeat and so good at picking you up on the field," Carr said.

Buel expressed a similar view: "It has actually helped the team to build a close bond with so many new people... It also allowed the coaches to help them develop as we would like. We have a lot more to teach, but we have seen a lot of growth."

Freshman Miranda Jensen has felt more prepared owing to the fact that the coaches have

been trying hard to get close to them.

"They have individual talks with you every couple weeks and ask how you're doing and if you have any concerns," Jensen said. "I think it's really important in being able to be close with your coaches. We also do a lot of game-like situations at practice, so if they do happen in a game, we've seen it before and we're ready for it."

Many of the freshman are excited for this coming season. It comes as no surprise that college softball is a whole different game in comparison to high school.

"At my high school, every day was more laid back, in high school every game was just a game, but in college you take it one game at a time to get to the championship," said Jensen. "Also, a huge thing is, in college, there is a lot less drama."

As one of the new freshman, Carr has already set goals for the upcoming season. "I want to communicate strong on the field and do my job in the batting lineup," Carr said. "I want to also become a stronger and faster player."

After finishing second in the South Region conference, Buel and the CCC softball team has their eyes set on bringing back a championship this year.

"We are hoping to continue to develop throughout the season, and as always, play for a championship," said Buel.

As the season begins to warm up, the team

schedule provided by Clackamas Community College

DAY	DATE	OPPONENT	TIME	LOCATION
Wed	Feb 21	Linfield JV	4pm	McMinnville, OR
Sat-Sun	Feb 24-25	Bellevue College/Everett CC	TBA	Bellevue, WA
Fri	March 2	Walla Walla University	TBA	Walla Walla, WA
Sat	March 3	Blue Mountain CC	12pm	Pendleton, OR
Fri	March 9	Walla Walla CC	3pm	Walla Walla, WA
Sat	March 10	Columbia Basin CC	12pm	Pasco, WA
Tues	March 13	Pacific University JV	5pm	Forest Grove, OR
Sat	March 17	Grays Harbor College	12pm	HOME
Sat	March 24	Lower Columbia College	12pm	Longview, WA
Tues	March 27	Chemeketa CC	3pm	Salem, OR
Fri	March 30	Clark College	3pm	Vancouver, WA
Sat	March 31	Mt Hood CC	12pm	Oregon City, OR
Wed	April 4	Centralia College	3pm	Centralia, WA
Sat	April 6	Southwestern Oregon CC	12pm	Coos Bay, OR
Tues	April 12	Grays Harbor College	3pm	Aberdeen, WA
Sat	April 14	Lower Columbia College	12pm	Oregon City, OR
Fri	April 20	North Idaho College	2pm	Oregon City, OR
Sat/Sun	April 21-22	NWAC Crossover	TBA	Portland, OR (Delta Park)
Sat	April 28	Clark College	3pm	Oregon City, OR
Wed	May 2	Chemeketa CC	3pm	Oregon City, OR
Sat	May 5	Mt Hood CC	12pm	Gresham, OR
Tues	May 8	Centralia College	3pm	HOME
Fri	May 11	Southwestern Oregon CC	3pm	HOME
Fri-Mon	May 18-21	2018 NWAC Championships	TBA	Spokane, WA

** PLEASE NOTE: ALL GAMES ARE DOUBLE-HEADERS EXCEPT TOURNAMENTS

Schedule of Cougars' upcoming season

is ready to take on any competition that comes their way.

"I am super stoked for the season," Jensen said.

The Cougars will take on Grays Harbor for their first conference home game on March 17 at noon.