

WOMEN'S BBALL PREPARES TO TAKE IT ALL

STORY BY JACOB THOMPSON
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Clackamas Community College's women's basketball picked up two big wins to open their 2019-20 campaign. On Wednesday the team knocked off Pacific University's junior varsity team 101-55 and Friday they fought tooth and nail, outlasting Walla Walla Community College 66-61.

The Cougars came out strong and quickly took a 9-2 lead a little over two minutes into the game, but the Warriors were able to shrink Clackamas' lead to 2 before the opening quarter ended, 17-15.

The game was a back-and-forth affair from that point until the 8:34 mark when Walla Walla mounted a 7-0 run to take a 57-48 lead with 5:30 left in the contest. After sophomore post Landy Williams hit a jump shot to make it a 57-50 game, Head Coach Jim Martineau called a timeout and changed the Cougars defensive strategy and Clackamas went back into their aggressive half-court trap. Martineau said foul trouble in the first half led to the Cougars having to abandon the trap for most of the game, but when it counted the team stepped up.

"Tonight, we got two or three turnovers in the fourth quarter when we needed to," Martineau said. "We're making a little run and we're got into the press a little bit. Brooke [Bullock] got a tip, Landy [Williams] got a steal. It was a good defensive battle."

The press led to the pace of the game being accelerated and the Cougars took full advantage of the run-and-gun style. Sophomore post Brooke Bullock took a defensive rebound coast to coast for a layup that trimmed the lead to five and she also had a steal that led to a Walla Walla foul and Bullock knocked in two from the charity stripe to give Clackamas a 59-57 lead with 3:21 left in the game. It was the Cougars first lead since the opening since the 9-minute mark in the final quarter.

Bullock led the Cougars in points with 22, rebounds with 10 and tied for the team lead with three assists; Bullock's great play had Martineau singing her praises after the game.

"She's special, she's a really good one. She's a 5'9" kid that plays like she's 6'1". She gets her hands on everything. It makes us feel we always have a chance when we have her," Martineau said.

After Bullock's free throws, Walla Walla tied the game at 59-59, but on the Warriors' next possession, the sophomore speedster struck again, stealing the Walla Walla pass and blazing past everyone on the court for an uncontested layup with 2:02 left.

Both teams failed to score for the next minute and a half, but Williams was able to end the drought. With one second left on the inbound, the Cougars attempted to inbound the ball to Williams, but she was unable to get a hand on the pass, the ball started rolling deep beyond the three-point line and Williams chased it down.

"At first I didn't know what was on the shot clock until my coaches said to shoot it, so I shot it," Williams said.

The ball was several feet beyond the three-point and Williams heaved a high arcing shot that found nothing but net.

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before sophomore guard Ambreece Gaskins hit two free throws with five seconds left to give the Cougars a five-point lead that would stand, 66-61.

"I think the whole team brought a lot of energy and we really wanted to win," sophomore post Savannah Duarte said about the Cougar's fourth quarter comeback. "We put it together and made it at the end."

Clackamas beefed up their non-conference play this season and Martineau said that between the incoming players and returners, he felt the team could hang with tough competition.

"I wanted to schedule a little tougher because I thought we were going to be a little bit better and you always want to play good teams," Martineau said. "We aren't playing Umpqua at Thanksgiving for the first time in a long time, so I thought we could play Walla Walla because they wanted to come over and they're always good. Then we're going to Longview and Longview's always fun. They have a nice gym and they take care of it so it's fun to go up there. It's a good preseason."

Clackamas will be back in action over the Thanksgiving break as they host Portland Community College, Southwest Community College and Pacific University's junior varsity team for the Clackamas Community College Thanksgiving Tourney which runs Friday Nov. 29 through Sunday Dec. 1.



Kess LaCounte, freshman guard, shoots during a practice on Nov. 25