

## Athletics return to pre-pandemic schedule



CCC women's volleyball team plays their final game of the season versus Chemeketa Community College on Nov. 10. Photo by Anna Hermens.

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Clackamas Community College's sports teams are functioning in a state of near normalcy as they return to competing on their pre-pandemic schedule after more than a year and a half of canceled or delayed seasons and having masks instead of fans.

This is possible now that a percentage of players are vaccinated, and regular COVID-19 surveillance testing is conducted with unvaccinated players.

When the pandemic began in the spring of 2020, sports were canceled. During the 2020-21 school year, a limited number of sports activities took place.

"Last year we were able to return to campus, and we just did conditioning workouts and practices fall and winter terms," said CCC athletic director Jim Martineau. All of CCC's sports teams, with the

exception of wrestling, competed in the spring, regardless of what time of year each sport is typically played. Wrestling competed during winter as normal.

"This year we're at least on a normal timeframe, it feels more normal for us this year because of that," said Martineau.

Fall sports have come to a close and winter sports, such as wrestling and basketball, have begun. Last year, when vaccines were not yet widely available, athletes and coaches had to wear masks while practicing indoors, and teams who did not do COVID-19 surveillance testing, like the volleyball team, also had to wear masks while competing.

This year, athletes are not required to wear masks while practicing or competing, but COVID testing is required for unvaccinated athletes every couple of weeks, or before the team travels or has a competition, if the team is playing indoors.

Martineau also noted that there is "a very high percentage of vaccinated student athletes." Spectators are also allowed this year, as long as they remain masked and complete an online form accessible through a QR code certifying that they don't have symptoms of COVID-19.

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*- Hemani Kalia*

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"We can fit in a couple hundred fans and still social distance, and masks are required based on the state mandate," said Martineau. "Last year, all of us played in front of nobody."

Hemani Kalia, a sophomore on the women's basketball team, expressed excitement for the upcoming season and said, "We've taken the proper precautions as far as vaccinations, regular COVID testing, and overall making smart decisions. This year is feeling pretty normal so far, and we just want to play ball and have fun."