

DIAMOND DREAMS COME TRUE

Clark softball team debuts today — if weather permits

By **TIM PYLE**
Columbian staff writer

Today marks the grand unveiling of the Clark College softball program and the new home field it will share with Hudson's Bay High School on the Bay campus.

On Page B5

■ Clark roster and schedule.

Unless it doesn't.

Then Monday will likely be the day.



STEVEN LANE/The Associated Press

PENGUINS, page B5

The Clark College softball team is preparing for its inaugural season.

Penguins:

From page B1

Such is softball in the Pacific Northwest.

The Penguins, in any event, are simply ecstatic to be playing softball in the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges (NWAACC) — no matter when the weather cooperates and allows the first pitch in program history to officially be thrown.

“I think this is something that Clark County has been waiting for for a long time,”

said coach Lisa Quednow-Bickler, who also is Clark’s athletic director. “We have tons of local kids on the team and lots of support.”



Lisa Quednow-Bickler

Weather-permitting,

the Penguins are scheduled to meet Everett today in a doubleheader with games at noon and 2 p.m.

Opening-day ceremonies start at 11 a.m. First pitches will be thrown by Clark President Dr. R. Wayne Branch, Clark student body president Jesse Ferrell, former Penguins athletic director and baseball coach Claude “Skeet” O’Connell and representatives from team scholarship sponsor Les Schwab Tire Centers.

“It’s going to be a lot of fun, if Mother Nature gets in on the act,” Quednow-Bickler

Clark College softball roster

Name	Position	Year	High School
Janelle Benedict	IF	Fr.	Ridgefield
*Brooke Burton	C/IF	Fr.	Heritage
*Julie Chezem	OF	Fr.	Columbia River
Amy Emerson	IF	Fr.	La Center
Kara Lefebvre	C/OF	Fr.	Skyview
Bailee Mayer	P/IF	Fr.	Mark Morris
Ashley Oltmann	C/OF	Fr.	Battle Ground
Amber Philliber	IF	Fr.	Bethel
*Stephanie Robey	P/OF	Fr.	South Albany (Ore.)
Kelsey Scanlan	C/IF	Fr.	La Center
Aly Schahfer	IF	So.	Mountain View
Katrina Sellberg	OF	So.	Heritage
Erica Shampine	OF	Fr.	Columbia River
Erika Shanahan	IF	Fr.	Mountain View
Candy Smith	OF	Fr.	Independent Baptist
Katie Toedemeier	UT	Fr.	Woodland
*Melissa Winter	P/IF	Fr.	Heritage

* — not eligible until spring term

said.

Clark practiced on its new field Friday, scrimmaging against cohabitant Bay amid intermittent snow flurries.

The Penguins’ first crack at a season opener, Wednesday at South Puget Sound of Olympia, was rained out.

“We’re ready to play, man,” said Kelsey Scanlan, a freshman catcher who was the Trico League co-defensive player of the year last spring for La Center. “I think we have great team chemistry. ... It’s going to be a fun season no matter how it goes.”

Clark is one of 27 NWAACC schools fielding softball teams this spring. The Penguins are part of the South Division, which also includes Lower Columbia of Longview and Oregon community colleges Mount Hood of Gresham,

Clackamas, Chemeketa of Salem and Southwestern Oregon of Coos Bay.

Clark is scheduled to meet each of the teams in its division in doubleheaders on three separate occasions, for a total of six games against each.

LCC, which figures to be the Penguins’ chief rival, had won six consecutive NWAACC titles until Clackamas claimed last year’s crown.

This year’s NWAACC Championships are May 18-20 at Delta Park in Portland, where the top four finishers in each division will convene.

“We have a good team,” said Bailee Mayer, a 2005 Mark Morris graduate who will start the season as Clark’s primary

pitcher. “This is the first year that I’ve been on a team that there hasn’t been any controversy between any of the players. Everybody gets along very well. We’re just going to be a good team.”

Just the fact that the Penguins now have a softball program was enough to lure Mountain View alumna Aly Schahfer back to Vancouver from Aberdeen. She played last year for Grays Harbor of the NWAACC.

“I think it’s really cool,” Schahfer, a sophomore second baseman, said of helping start Clark’s program. “It’s kind of like a mark in history. We get to set the rules, or set like all the little traditions that are going to be carried on through Clark. It’s just big because a lot of people are looking forward to watching us. We’ve just got to set the bar high.”

Clark College softball schedule

(All games doubleheaders unless noted)

Date	Opponent	Time
March 8	at South Puget Sound	ppd., rain
March 11	Everett	Noon
March 17-18	at Preseason Tournament, Pasco	TBA
March 28	Centralia	3 p.m.
April 4	Clackamas	3 p.m.
April 7	at Chemeketa	3 p.m.
April 8	at SW Oregon	Noon
April 11	Mt. Hood	3 p.m.
April 14-15	at NWAACC Crossover, Wenatchee	TBA
April 21	at Lower Columbia	TBA
April 22	at Clackamas	Noon
April 25	Chemeketa	3 p.m.
April 28	at Mt. Hood	3 p.m.
April 29	Lower Columbia	Noon
May 2	at SW Oregon	3 p.m.
May 5	Chemeketa	3 p.m.
May 6	Lower Columbia	Noon
May 9	at Mt. Hood	3 p.m.
May 12	SW Oregon	3 p.m.
May 13	Clackamas	Noon
May 18-20	at NWAACC Championships, Portland	TBA

On the Web: cf.clark.edu/athletics/