

Clark hoops tournament tips off Monday

Penguins hosting annual eight-team event on campus

The Columbian

The Clark College men's basketball team wasn't going to win its Holiday Invitational last season, but then again, no one left Vancouver with a trophy.

Last year's semifinal and final round never happened due to adverse weather in the Vancouver area, so there was no champion. Clark was already in the consolation side of the bracket with two losses when the event was snowed under.

Technically, South Puget Sound is the defending champion, having won the event in 2008.

But SPS isn't in this year's field of eight, so a new champion will be crowned at this year's tournament, which tips off Monday at the O'Connell Center on the Clark College campus.

Host Clark (4-2), which last won its own tournament in 2007 and was runner up in

2008, takes on Umpqua CC (2-6) of Winchester, Ore., at 8 p.m. to cap off a four-game opening-day schedule.

In their last three games, five Clark players are averaging in double figures: Mark Morris grad Austin Bragg (14.5 points per game), Camas grad Dan Anderson (14.3), Fort Vancouver grad Arman Kalan (14), Mountain View grad Lucas Swanson (12) and Skyview grad Durham Roser (11).

The Vancouver Island Mariners (8-3) of Nanaimo, B.C., open the tournament against Seattle CC (1-5) at 2 p.m. Monday.

Then follows a matchup of 2010 NWAACC Championship Tournament teams in Chemeketa (4-4) of Salem, Ore., vs. Big Bend (6-2) of Moses Lake at 4 p.m. Chemeketa finished third in the Clark tournament in 2007 and 2008 and was 2-0 last year.

The evening session tips off at 6 p.m. with Portland CC (3-4) taking on Wenatchee Valley (6-2). Portland has Camas High grad Guy Varsek on its roster. He has played just two games this season, scoring 30 points with 13 rebounds.

If you go

■ **What:** Clark Holiday Invitational men's basketball tournament.

■ **When:** Monday through Wednesday. Games begin at 2 p.m. Monday. Championship game is 4 p.m. Wednesday.

■ **Where:** O'Connell Center on the Clark College main campus in Vancouver.

■ **Teams:** Host Clark College (4-2), Umpqua (2-6), Portland (3-4), Wenatchee Valley (6-2), Chemeketa (4-4), Big Bend (6-2), Seattle (1-5), and Vancouver Island (8-3).

Tuesday's consolation round games are scheduled for noon and 2 p.m. with the championship semifinals at 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.

The final round on Wednesday begins with the fourth-place game at noon, followed by the third-place game at 2 p.m. and the championship at 4 p.m.