

# Clark men fall in title game of holiday tourney

But lessons learned in loss could help Penguins later

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The Clark College men's basketball team didn't lift the championship trophy at its own holiday tournament on Wednesday. But coach Mike Arnold believes the experience will lift the Penguins' game down the road.

Vancouver Island University, a four-year school with a strong basketball tradition, made the decisive run midway through the second half and beat the host Penguins 71-63 in the championship game of the Clark Holiday Invitational at the O'Connell Sports Center.

"We were playing against a very good opponent that has a lot of tournament experience," Arnold said. "We've got to keep it in perspective."

Vancouver Island University is located in Nanaimo, British Columbia. The Mariners are ranked in the top 10 in the Canadian Colleges Athletic Association, the lower of two divisions for college sports in Canada.

This year's Clark team is mostly freshmen, so playing against players with several years of college ball behind them was a challenge.

After the Penguins (6-3) ran off nine quick points in transition to lead 44-41 with 9:53 to go in the game, the Mariners (10-1) responded. Andrew Kaban scored seven of his game-high

## Game recap

VANCOUVER ISL. 71, CLARK 63

■ **MVP:** VIU's Andrew Kaban scored 29 points in the final and was named the MVP of the Clark Holiday Invitational.

■ **What's next:** Clark (6-3) opens NWAACC play at Centralia on Monday.

29 points in a nine-point spurt that put VIU ahead to stay.

Lucas Swanson, a freshman from Mountain View High School, scored 24 points for Clark on 9-of-15 shooting. He also had a team-best 10 rebounds.

Arnold said his team struggled to find an offensive rhythm, in part because only three or four players at a time were involved in the attack, rather than all five.

In addition to Swanson's big game, which included hitting 4 of 8 from 3-point distance, Arnold pointed to the efforts of post Blake Bowen from Skyview and guard Derek Owens out of Arizona as bright spots.

Arnold, whose team begins Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges play Monday at Centralia, said the Penguins' preseason schedule gave his young team a chance to gain some confidence while also being tested.

Tony Bryce, the VIU coach, was impressed by Clark despite the team's youth.

"By the end of the season, I expect Coach Arnold will have those guys playing at a very high level," Bryce said.

STEVEN LANE/The Columbian

Clark College's Daniel Anderson is fouled as he drives through Vancouver Island University defenders. Vancouver Island beat Clark 71-63 in the title game Wednesday of the Clark Holiday Invitational.