

Classification, districting proposals could alter leagues

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The Three Rivers League could look much different two years from now and could also be a lot more competitive than it is today. In fact, almost all the districts across the state of Oregon could be facing league changes, depending upon how the OSAA Executive Board and Classification and Districting Committee decide to set up the new leagues and classifications.

The OSAA Constitution mandates that the OSAA has to go through Classification and Districting every four years. This doesn't mean that significant changes have to be made, but the system must be extensively reviewed and any valid concerns must be addressed. According to the OSAA, concerns have been voiced by member schools about current small league sizes, travel costs and competitive balance. The last reclassification to the current six class system occurred in 2006-07 and WLHS went from being a 4A school to a 6A school. One of the great debates is whether to keep the six classification system or to revert back to four.

"The six class system created a lot of success for smaller schools, but it also created excess costs," Rob Holstrom, Athletic Director, said.

The pros and cons of the six class system seem to depend on point of view. Many 1A, 2A and 3A representatives strongly encouraged keeping

the six class system in place at a meeting on Feb. 23. Their reason was that some of their athletes have had the opportunity to reach the state



Lake Oswego Lakers



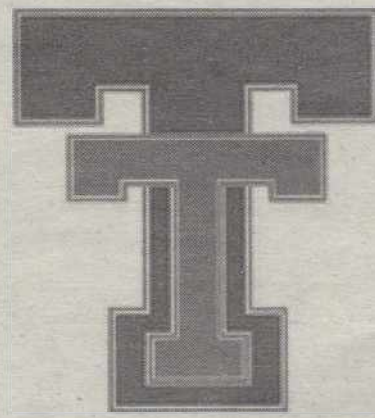
Clackamas Cavaliers

championships, something they would not have been able to do with four classes.

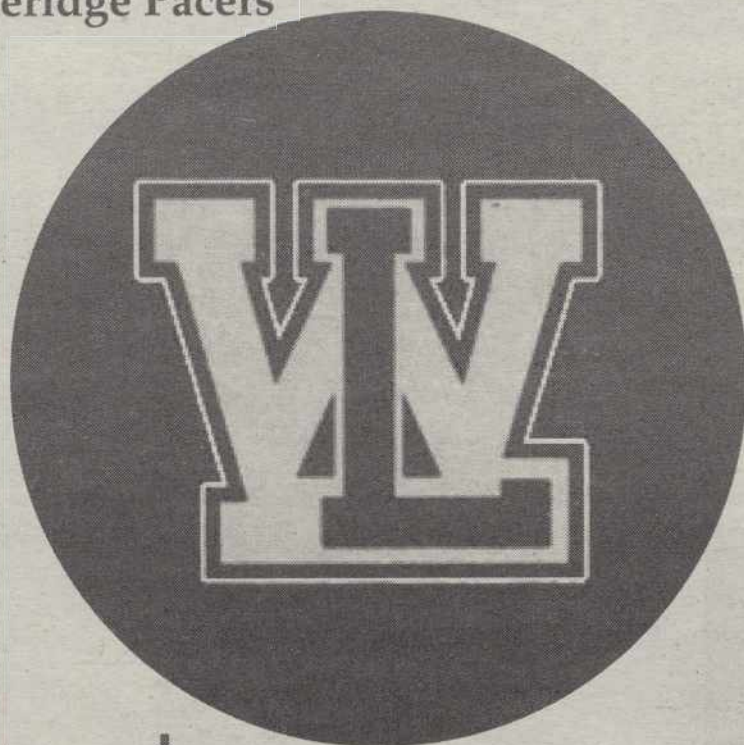
"Benefits associated with six classes include better competitive balance, more opportunities for participation in state playoffs, and in some cases, less travel. Having more classifications mean that schools tend to be closer in size to one another than they were under a four class



Lakeridge Pacers



Tualatin Timberwolves



West Linn Lions



Oregon City Pioneers

system," Peter Weber, OSAA staff member, said. "The push from a majority of schools was for more competitive balance which led to the adoption of the four class system last time."

At this point in time, the



Tigard Tigers



Canby Cougars

Classification and Districting Committee is considering three proposals. The first is a six class proposal with adjusted cutoff points. A straight five class proposal has been mentioned as well as a six class proposal with hybrid leagues in certain geographical regions. This proposal would group schools from different classifications in the same league for regular season play and have them split into their own classification come state playoffs. According to Weber, responses to the hybrid proposal have consistently been focused on travel costs, given the state of the economy.

"The economic challenges that face all of us have transcended our thinking to where we have had to think differently about reclassification and districting," Dennis Burke, Canby High School associate principal, said. "Schools are looking to see where they can make cuts for this spring and for next year. They are beginning to say, how can we afford to be a part of the OSAA?"

"I'm looking forward to getting more feedback on the current proposals. There are pluses and minuses to the current proposals but I remain hopeful that we can end up with something that appeals to the majority of our member schools. We know that not everyone will be happy with whatever final decision is made," Weber said.

Under the straight six class proposal, the Three Rivers League would lose Rex Putnam and Milwaukie. They would both go into the 5A East Metro League. They would be replaced by Canby,

Tigard and Tualatin. Because the changes wouldn't go into effect for two more years, only students of the Class of 2011 and later would be affected. This alteration would increase competitiveness not only in the Three Rivers League, but also in many other 6A and 5A leagues.

"I think it will be good because we will get better competition, but it might mess up playoffs if all of those teams who usually make playoffs are in the same league and that league can only send four teams to playoffs," Elise Miller, sophomore, said. Miller has been on the Varsity Girls' Basketball Team for the last two years and understands the dynamics of the current leagues well.

The OSAA wants the public to know that none of the current proposals are set. According to Weber, there are always significant changes during the process so the final decision often looks quite different than the first few proposals. The Classification and Districting Committee will meet through the rest of the school year and make a recommendation to the Executive Board this fall. The board will make its final decision in late October.

"We believe the committee needs to slow things down so that we can come up with some new and improved ideas," Holstrom said. "If we are really looking at what is best for student-athletes and programs, why can't we look at this from program to program?"

Holstrom has suggested a five class system that could include an A and a B district. He suggests that schools could choose which sports would play in which division depending on criteria of how successful that sport has been. This is just one of the many suggestions that sports enthusiasts around the state have come up with.

"The committee seeks input from member schools, parents, students, fans, etc. in making their recommendation. Our goal is to make sure that the process affords anyone who wants it an opportunity to give input," Weber said. "There are public meetings held every month or so during the school year. In addition, any correspondence sent to the OSAA office is copied for every committee member and board member to put into a notebook for their review. Emails should be sent to peterw@osaa.org. All submitted proposals from the public are being posted on our website at <http://osaa.org/governance/committees/classification/proposals.asp>.

Restaurant offers neighborhood dining with "twist"

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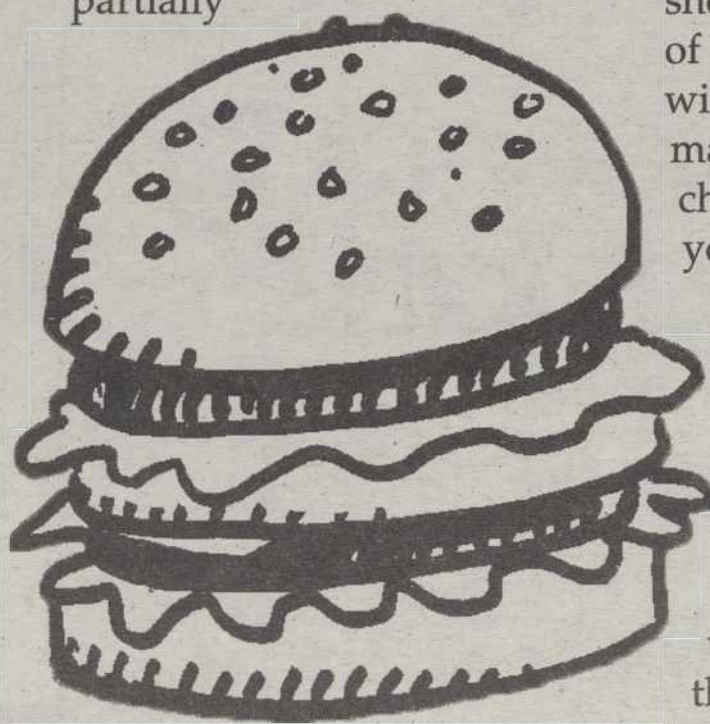
The new restaurant on the top of the hill in the Cascade Summit shopping complex, Twisted Comfort, opened Feb. 17. Their slogan, "comfort food with a gourmet twist," is attracting customers from the area even in the poor economy.

The decor is Tuscan, complemented by rich dark tables and booths. The restaurant has high ceilings which add to the feeling of openness in the restaurant. The olive color of the walls creates a homey and cozy mood and the direct dim low-lighting matches the calm and amiable aura.

The unique story behind the opening of this restaurant is the owner, Lake Oswego resident Leon Anderson, who battled mouth cancer for a year, undergoing many surgeries. While recovering, he spent his time watching cooking shows and delving into the culinary world. He developed his passion for cooking and decided to open a restaurant. He decided

what better location than West Linn?

Although they weren't expecting their signs in the front of the restaurant to come until the following week, it showed up early. This good fortune paired with excited patrons, overwhelmed them with customers. Not expecting such masses, they have been partially



understaffed and frantic, but have held things together well.

"As with any business, there are minor details that are sometimes overlooked," Danielle, Anderson's step-daughter, said. The first

night the restaurant opened, there was a take-out order placed for 15 people that they accepted, only to find that they lacked the necessary take-out silverware and condiments that were needed.

The menu is diverse, representing all regions of the U.S. with prices ranging from \$9-13. Some offerings include shepherd's pie, a gravy mix of beef and lamb topped with peas and carrots under mashed potatoes and baked cheese, along with build your own burgers.

"I went with three other guys and we all built our own burgers. It was a perfect post-game meal," Bryce Baker, senior, said.

According to Anderson, he and his wife have been shocked at the crowds of people who have been drawn to Twisted Comfort. According to Valerie, Anderson's wife, the kitchen is smaller than she and her husband would have liked, but the cohesiveness of the chefs paired with good communication make it work.