

Board votes CCC into NWAACC league
Lack of travel funds competition bottom line

By Rob Conner
Of The Print

Clackamas Community College's short-lived bid to remain the lone member of the National Junior College Athletic Association in the state of Oregon got a cold slap in the face last week as the governing body at the College voted to return to competition with the Northwest's other junior colleges.

The board voted in favor of joining the Northwestern Athletic Association for Community Colleges (NWAACC) which covers the greater Oregon-Washington area. The ruling goes into effect with the '84-'85 school year.

The decision to join the NWAACC came as no surprise to most as Clackamas has been criticized in the past for getting little support from the school board on athletic issues.

Athletic Director Chuck Hudson admitted his hands, as well as the coaches' hands, were pretty well tied with the school's financial situation. "We really didn't have any choice. Financially it would have killed us. Travel alone," he said. "It would have

been tougher and tougher to get competition because the rest of the region is just too far away."

Over the past two years Clackamas was forced to travel to Idaho for most of its Region 18 competition. And next year the NJCAA plans to expand the region into Montana and Utah, according to Hudson.

With the '82 withdrawal from the OCCAA and the subsequent boycott by the other Oregon two-year schools banning Clackamas from their competitions, the College was hard-pressed to fill regular season schedules in many sports.

"We would have post-season competition, but wouldn't have any other competition," Hudson said.

The promise of national travel lured many athletes away from rival schools in the Northwest and to Clackamas over the last two years. Most coaches took full advantage of the unique sales pitch to land some of the state's top recruits. But budget cuts this past winter sapped all available resources leaving no money whatsoever in the school's national travel fund.

The promise of "free" national

travel for the athletes is no longer a reality. Spring sports teams were hit the hardest. Fund-raisers curtailed expenses somewhat, but several athletes still were forced to come up with over \$300 each to meet travel expenses.

Hudson realizes it would be hard to stay clear of the red ink in the future.

"When you look over the whole thing, it's beyond the realm of raising that much money. Most of us had an example of it this year," he said.

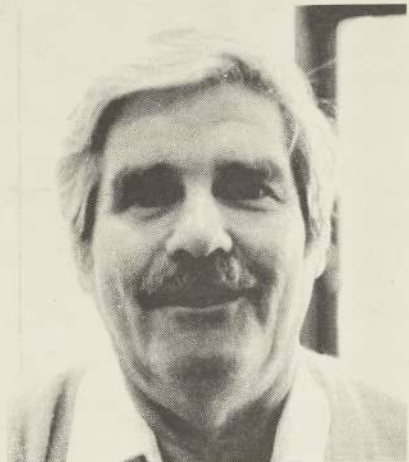
Hudson does not see the move to the NWAACC as a step down for Cougar sports.

"There are more schools (than Region 18 of the NJCAA), and they have a stronger organization," he said. "It's good competition, there are 30 or so teams."

The NWAACC has 27 men's basketball teams, 28 women's, and 24 volleyball teams—the three programs which were hurt greatest in scheduling.

Numbers in the other NWAACC sports include: cross-country-17, soccer-11, tennis-10, track-16, and baseball-18.

The NWAACC does not have a wrestling league so Clackamas will



Chuck Hudson

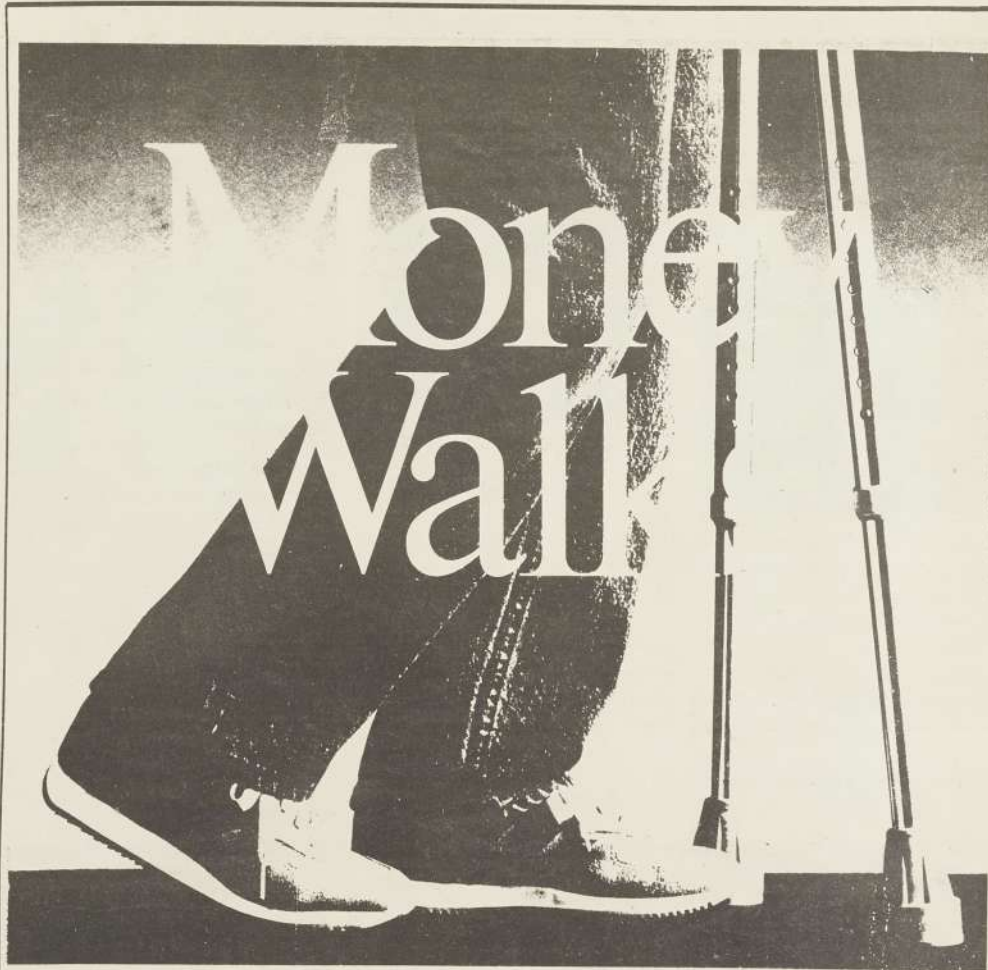
continue to function as an independent under the NJCAA and Region 18. Cougar grapplers will be allowed to compete at nationals, but no school funding will be allotted to them.

The athletic director does not foresee any more animosity from the other Oregon schools toward Clackamas. "I think they are glad (that CCC joined the NWAACC). We have built up a lot of good rivalries."



GEARING UP—Clackamas Community College catcher Mark McLaughlin talks over last minute strategies before the Cougars' game against Lewis and Clark.

Photos by Joel Miller



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