

Student athlete enters political ring, scores some points

By **KIM ARNOTT**
Special to The Champion

Over the last few weeks, Halton high school student David Rynax has been doing much of his learning in the school board head office.

An athlete and student in his final year at Burlington's M.M. Robinson High School, David made a presentation last week to school board trustees protesting possible cuts to the board's athletic budget. Since then he's been sitting through every hour of the board's marathon

meetings to thrash out the 1996 budget.

Late Thursday night, David got his victory. Trustees decided not to eliminate the board's support of high school athletic programs.

"It's great. The amount of stuff I've learned from sports is amazing," said David happily, after the vote.

At stake was the board's \$200,000 annual contribution to high school sports programs.

Trustees were considering the cut as part of their attempt to cut \$16 million from this year's \$286 million budget. Without the cuts, taxpayers

could face a mill rate increase of almost 8 per cent.

The school board currently contributes one-third of the cost of running athletic programs for high school students.

The remaining funds are raised or contributed by students and the individual schools.

For David, who is on his school's football, wrestling, rugby and track and field teams, the financial contribution is already high.

Football players pay close to \$100 a season for equipment and uniforms, and are obligated to

contribute to the school's fundraising efforts by volunteering time at bingo halls, said David.

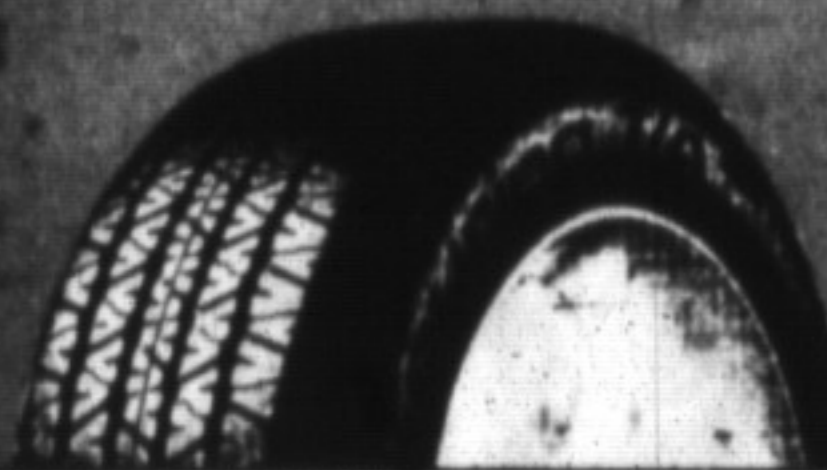
He also told trustees that sports increase school spirit, provide individual motivation and teach time-management skills.

And while the OAC student is glad trustees voted to maintain the sports budget, he says he's been fascinated by the world of politics he's discovered through this process.

"Before this year, I didn't have any idea that all this happened," he said, waving his hand toward the board table.

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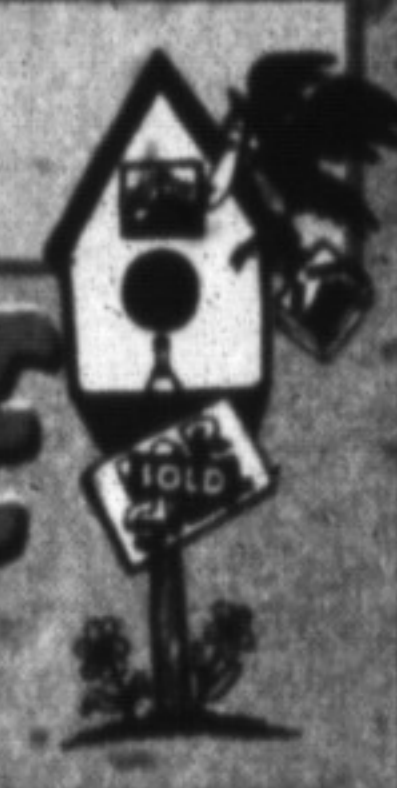
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