

COUNCIL ROCK

# Kids take shot at new game

Council Rock High School-South students learned Tchoukball, a game imported from Switzerland that "involves everyone" on the floor.

By **JOAN HELLYER**  
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Imagine a team sport that didn't include violence or aggressiveness.

One where there would be no quarterback sacking like in football. No hands-in-your-face defense, like in basketball. No checking, like in ice hockey.

Sounds pretty boring, huh?

A Swiss doctor didn't think so 30 years ago when he developed a team sport that didn't involve contact with opposing players. Dr. Hermann Brandt created Tchoukball (pronounced chookball) "to give as great a number of individuals as possible a chance to play a team sport," Pierre-Alain Girardin said.

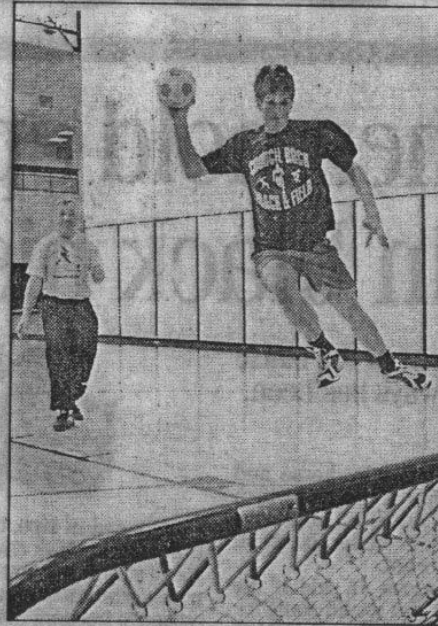
Girardin has joined the bandwagon that's promoting Tchoukball around the United States. The native of Switzerland and resident of Silver Spring, Md., visited Council Rock High School-South Tuesday to show students how to play the game touted as a "sport for all" on the official Tchoukball Web site.

Two Tchoukball rebound surfaces and a Tchoukball are used in the floor game designed for two teams of six, seven or nine people. The rebound surfaces are approximate 3 feet by 3 feet square nets attached to standing uprights positioned at either end of the court. The nets are similar to ones used in basketball rebounding and passing drills. The Tchoukball looks like a small soccer ball.

A team can have the ball for no more than three hand-tossed passes. In that time, players have to get the ball from one end of the floor to the other to take a shot at the opposing rebound net. The team that shoots at the net scores a point if the other team is unable to catch the ball before it hits the floor after bouncing off the net.

The other team can get a point off the throw several ways, including if the ball bounces out of bounds, according to Tchoukball's official game rules. But unlike other team sports, the opposing team does not challenge the team possessing the ball. The passes are made upcourt unimpeded.

"It's fun. It's different. It involves everyone," CR South junior Stephanie Ladzinski said after playing a demonstration round of Tchoukball in front of about 100 kids in the stands in the school gymnasium. Stephanie, a CR South soccer player, said she sees



Council Rock High School-South senior Brendan Barrett takes a flying shot at the goal during a game of Tchoukball. Pierre-Alain Girardin (left) visited the school Tuesday to show students how to play the game.

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some similarities between Tchoukball and her game of choice.

"There's a lot of passing in the game [the same as soccer], except you pass with your hands," Stephanie, 16, said.

Physical education teacher William Hoffman said he invited Girardin to CR South after doing a search for "safe" games on the Internet and finding information about Tchoukball.

"The American brain can't play it right the first time. [American ball] players are so used to getting in somebody's face to play defense. It will take a while to get this game going," Hoffman said.

He and the other CR South physical education teachers are incorporating the game into their team sports classes.

The objective is to get more kids involved in the sport, physical education teacher Sandi Wiggins said.

"It gives everyone a chance to play, get some exercise, burn some calories and get the heart rate up," Wiggins said.

To learn more about Tchoukball, visit [www.tchoukball.net](http://www.tchoukball.net).

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