

Oakland A schools to seek new affiliations

By MARTY BUDNER

The chain of events involving changing league affiliations by local schools has left a great impact on the athletic programs at Avondale and Troy high schools.

Early this week it was announced that eight schools resigned from the Oakland Athletic League (OAL), of which Troy and Avondale are part of. The basic reasons were travel and changing enrollments in the schools.

Most of the class A schools in the two-division OAL will now be part of a new league called the Macomb Athletic

Conference (MAC). The B schools will become associated with the smaller Macomb County schools from the Warren Conference.

With the mass exodus of those eight schools, Avondale, Troy, Oxford and Lake Orion are the lone remnants of the OAL.

It should be noted that the OAL has not officially disbanded, but it appears that at least two of those remaining schools—Lake Orion and Troy—will seek new league affiliations. That would leave Avondale and Oxford as independents.

The OAL resignations do not take ef-

fect until after the 1979-80 school year. This leaves Chuck Nurek, the Avondale athletic director, and Joe Francis, the Troy School athletic director, time to develop new league associations.

Both Nurek and Francis have two options available to them at this point. They can either stick with the Oakland Athletic League (OAL) and hope to recruit a few more teams, or they can attempt to unite with older, established leagues.

The situation is more serious for Avondale. Since it is a class B school, local programs composed primarily of

cept the Yellowjackets into their leagues.

"It does create big problems for us (Avondale) and Oxford," said Nurek, who is in his first year as Avondale athletic director. "I'd prefer to play schools comparable to us, and not that far out of the way."

"But I feel we could compete athletically with some of the A schools. We had three league champions—including football—in the past year, and we have some of the finest facilities around."

"We don't want to go independent. It

would be very tough for us to fill up a schedule, especially for football," he said. "The next step for us is to put out some inquiries, and see what other schools are interested in doing."

One of Avondale's options is to be a part of the new B league with Clawson, Lamphere and the other Macomb County schools. However, Nurek hasn't made a commitment one way or the other as of Tuesday evening.

Troy, which will rise to class A status possibly as early as next year, is in a more comfortable situation. Francis

has been actively soliciting applications from other Oakland County leagues.

"We're exploring a few possibilities," said Francis, in his second year as the Troy School athletic director. "If we're not accepted by another league, we would probably go independent until we can find a league."

"We're interested in joining a league with good academic and athletic activities. We're hoping to be accepted into a league which would serve the best interests of Troy High School."

OAL closing affects 2 area teams

By MARTY BUDNER

The Oakland Athletic League (OAL) may be totally defunct by the time the 1980-81 school year gets underway.

The news struck early this week when eight of the OAL's 12 teams resigned. At a Monday meeting of the league's athletic directors, five Macomb County schools and three Oakland County schools withdrew "because of travel reasons."

The resignations become effective in the fall of 1980. Because the OAL by-laws state that schools must give at least one year's notice upon leaving, next year's OAL sports schedule will remain intact.

The schools which exited the two-division league include the three Ute Community Schools—Ute, Henry Ford and Eisenhower—the two Madison schools—Madison and Lamphere—plus Clawson, Romeo and Chippewa Valley.

Of the schools which resigned, Ute, Ford, Eisenhower, Romeo and Chippewa Valley are all designated class A. Clawson, Lamphere and Madison are B.

The resignations came on the heels of an announcement made last week that the Warren Conference in Macomb County had disbanded.

Only Auburn Heights Avondale, Troy, Oxford and Lake Orion officially remain as members of the OAL. Speculation is, however, that at least two of those schools—Lake Orion and Troy—will be part of new leagues in 1980.

This possibly could leave Avondale and Oxford without athletic affiliation. The schools would then have to compete as independents.

"The OAL has been a good league for us, but I think it was sort of a victim of changing enrollment patterns around the area," said Troy athletic director Joe Francis. "I was impressed with the quality of AD's (athletic directors) in

the league. Everyone seemed to work well together."

"But, geographically speaking, the biggest problem with the league was travel distance. Overall, though, it served its purpose. It's just that times change, and you have to change with it."

The resignation of the eight OAL schools, coupled with the demise of the Warren Conference, creates some interesting new athletic combinations.

In effect, the class A schools from the Oakland Athletic League have combined with the A schools from the Warren Conference. The same applies to the B schools.

The new class A league will be officially known as the Macomb Athletic Conference (MAC). The conference already has 10 schools committed.

See 3 Sensational Sports Events The First Two Weeks in March

- **Basketball**.....Michigan vs. Notre Dame
(March 4 at the Silverdome)
- **Track**.....1979 NCAA Indoor Championships
(March 9-10 at Cobo Hall)
- **Gymnastics**.....1979 Big Ten Championships
(March 9-11, U/M's Crisler Arena)

Shootout At Silverdome: Michigan vs. Notre Dame

The best in college basketball . . . Notre Dame, rated at one time No. 1 in the nation, has Bruce Flowers (Berkley High), Kelly Tripucka, Rich Branning . . . Michigan counters with Olympian Phil Hubbard, Ferndale High's great defensive specialist and cocaptain Tom Staton, plus high scoring Mike McGee . . . This promises to be a shootout in the Silverdome . . . Tipoff 1:05 on March 4th at the Silverdome in Pontiac.



Olympic Stars in Action

Track at its indoor best returns to Cobo Hall . . . You'll see the greatest distance runner of all-time, Henry Rono of Washington State . . . and you'll watch the man who is becoming the finest hurdler in track history (Renaldo Nehemiah of the University of Maryland, a World record holder and getting better . . . Olympic gold medalist Harvey Glance in the sprints and former world high jump record holder Franklin Jacobs are just two of the many stars competing for titles . . . It all begins at 12:30 March 9, resumes at 6:30 p.m. that evening with trials and nine finals, then wraps up on Saturday, March 10 with action beginning at 1:35 p.m. at Cobo Hall.

Gymnastics At Its Best

The 1979 Big Ten gymnastics championships will be a close battle with defending champion Minnesota being pressed by Michigan, Michigan State and Iowa. Olympian Nigel Rothwell of Michigan (and Windsor) in the all-around and NCAA high bar finalist Bob Creek, also a Wolverine, will be two of the top performers at Crisler Arena in Ann Arbor.

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