Future dim for pole vaulters?

By Chris McCosky staff writer

To vault or not to vault is becoming a hot topic of debate throughout Michigan's high school track and field community.

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RECENTLY, THE MHSAA has mandated that schools, as a safety precaution, extend the length of their pole vault pils both in front and in back. This, according to several area school officials, would cost any-neer firm is and to pill, would cost study to the several several to the several several

al crts to enad an excellent traution at Salem. We've had some outstanding vaulters. It's just hard to justify spending that kind of money on one event. We have to look at 11 in the long term, and we decided we would not compete anymore."

John Pundkuian, athletic director of the Welled Lake schools, will recommend to bla district that the event be cancelled.

"Our district's position has not

be cancelled.
"Our district's position has not been determined, but my personal position is that the event has reached a point where it is irresponsible to continue it. I have written the Michigan High School Athletic Association in regards to that."

FUNDUKIAN SAID the Western Lakes conference will continue to spond the condition and the up to the individual scheme, to decide whether to field a pole vault team. "The league has already discussed this. Their position is consistent with



The pole vaulter may soon become an endangered species on the Observerland track and field scene.

will advantage the event from the league if the event is eliminated by the Michigan High School Athletic Association."

But the state association isn't likely to eliminate the event.

"Our representative council, on Nov. 5, went on record saying they will continue the pole vault event in Michigan." said Bunp. "I can't image."

Schools AD Ron Holland Farmington, Farmington Harrison and North
Farmington Will compete in the pole
vault event.
"It's coadly if you haven't kept
your plis up to code," Holland said.
"We're going to go with it (pole
vault). We're basically up to code.
We will have to add the extensions in
tha front. We have very good people
at the three schools who have
worked very hard to keep those pits
in shape."

worked very hard to keep those pits in shape." Holland said he roughly estimates a \$700 expense at each school to comply with the state's mandate. THE THREE Livonia schools have yet to decide the issue. Sources at both Stevenson and Churchill indi-

can cal the pole vault event came almost immediately after the MHSAA mandate.

"Our problem is, with a few exceptions, we don't own our own tracks," said league director Walt Bazylewicz. "We rely on public school facilities. The risk of liability is too much. If we use a facellity that is not up to code, we are just as liable as they would be. It really complicates?"

SAFLI is the last the entire size. To quard against risk of injury, the MilSAA keeps upgrading the facilities. To guard against risk of injury, the MilSAA keeps upgrading the facilities. To guard against product liability, manufacturers of poles and aulting apparatus have upgraded their products and thus their prices. "Physically, of all the events, it's far and away the most dangerous," Salem's Balconi said.

Said Funduklan: "You have events, the concerned with the programs, if any, You are introducing a youngster of the event as a ninth grader. There is a big difference between a 105 pounds eventh grader and a ninth grader who can bench-press 220 pounds eventh grader and a ninth grader who can bench-press 220 pounds." You have to ask yourself, as an educator, who a else day on spend \$8,000-\$9,000 on three or jour kids? And you have to ask, is the event inherently safe? I can't say that it is."

Wayne rips OU

It was welrd, really. The favorites in Saturday's Wayne State-Oakland University mens basketball clash weren't the team most onlookers figured to win.

Everyone familiar with the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) figured WSU was the team to beat. After all, the Tartars were the defending champs, and they were 5-0 entering the game.

But other "intangibles" pointed to an OU victory: WSU was without injured star Grady Lowry (Injured back), the two-time OLIAC scoring champion, the game was being witnessed by one of the largest crowds ever to watch a game at OU (1,313), and the Pioneers were hot, having won five-straight league games before losing last Thursday at Ferris State.

WELL, SO MUCH for home-court advantage, big crowds and intangibles. The Tartars proved they were still the kings of the conference, a title they weren't about to relinquish easily, by beating 0UJ 53-59. The victory kept WSU perfect in the league at 6-0; OU, Lake Superior State and Ferris are all 5-2.

The game was declied by a Tartar Ilurry in the final five minutes. With 5:52 to play, John Henderson hit two free throws to pull OU to within 55-52. But WSU scored the next six points — a basket by Mike Thornton after an offensive rebound, a dank by Dwight King after OU blew a four-on-one break, and a 19-foot jumper by Hank Woodmore as the shot clock ran out — to clinch the win.

"I thought both teams played pretty well," said OU coach Greg Kampe, whose team dipped to 14-5 overall.
"We just didn't do the little things you have to do to win.
We thinged balls instead of catching them and laying them in."

The key sequence in the waning moments was the blown break by the Pioneers. Wallace Davis started it by stealing the ball and heading upcourt with tearn-rates Pete Schill and Johnny Johnson. Davis got the bait to Johnson on the wing, bettingt and of heading to the basket Johnson tried a cross-court pass to Schilli. Schill couldn't handle the pass cleanly and Hank Woodmore stole it back for WSU, fired the ball back upcourt to King, who dunked it. Instead of narrowing

OU sports

the gap to a point, OU trailed by five. The Tartars even-tually built their lead to eight before two OU three-pointers in the last 16 seconds made the final margin close.

THE PIONEERS inability to convert close-in shots cost them severely. Forwards Pete Schihl, Mike McCan and Stacy Davis and centers John Henderson and Dave Hintz combined to score just 16 points on six-of-24 floor shooting. They managed only 15 rebounds. WSU blocked seven shots, four by back-up center Eric Jackson.

The failure of their inside game forced the Pioncers to rely on the perimeter shooting of guards Scott Bittinger and Johnson. Bittinger responded with an excelent performance, scoring 23 points on nine-of-14 shooting (including four-of-five from three-point range) and ishing out four assists.

Johnson added 16 points (four-of-seven three-pointers), three coming on the game's most dramatic shot. With time rouning out in the first half, Johnson fired a 75-footer that banked in, cutting OU's halltime delleit to 30-27 after having trailed by as many as 11. "We're a jump-shot oriented team," Kampe said, add-ing that the fallure of their inside game "was a big part -of why we didn't win. We got 10 offensive rebounds, we just didn't convert on them."

Schihl and Henderson were next highest scorers fo U with eight points apiece. Schihl's eight boards wer-team-best.

OU with eight points apiece. Schilh's eight boards were a team-best.
WSU got 15 points from Avondale graduate Wood-more, a senior point guard. Ted McCree, a 6-foot-2 soph-more guard, scored 14 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, and King tinished with 19 points. WSU outboarded O1' 37-32, and made 46.4 percent of its shots to OU:

OU now travels north to play at Michigan Tech to-night and at Lake Superior State Saturday.

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