

Will Play In New Metro Suburban Loop Hurt Lathrup State Ranking?

By W.W. EDGAR

Don't let the name -- 'Metro Suburban Activities Association -- fool you.

When the new high school league was formed last fall and the word "activities" inserted instead of the customary "athletic" many persons claimed it was a move to take the emphasis off sports and de-emphasize football in particular.

"Nothing could be further from the truth," Ed Litegot, athletic director at Southfield-Lathrup High School, declared in answer to the critics who claimed Southfield-Lathrup would be denied the right to make a real bid for the role of the No. 1 high school football team in the state.

"WHAT WE HAVE done," Litegot explained, "is added to the football and athletic programs other activities in which students, not inclined to sports, could compete.

"I have in mind such activities as debating teams, forensic activities, competition among the bands along with putting the school papers and year books on a competitive basis.

"We never had a thought of de-emphasizing any of the athletic events, particularly football where Southfield-Lathrup has come along so well in the few short years of its existence."

To strengthen his case Litegot pointed out that in the league in which it operated since the school's inception, the members were too widely separated.

"We had a difficult time keeping track of what the other fellows were doing and it is rather difficult to keep interest at a high peak under those conditions.

In our new setup" he said, "three of the schools will be within three square miles of each other -- and that should make for a much better rivalry."

Aside from Southfield Lathrup the other members of the league include Birmingham Groves, Bloomfield Hills Lahser, Royal Oak Dondero, Utica Eisenhower, and Rochester Adams.

Several of the schools are new in any kind of competition. This is especially true of Utica Eisenhower and Bloomfield Hills Lahser. But Royal Oak Dondero, the oldest of the lot, has been fielding teams for the better part of two decades.

"This is a tight little circuit" Litegot pointed out, "and while it may be slow in starting you'll find that in another four or five years all will be fielding strong competitive teams.

ACKNOWLEDGING that several of these schools will be looked upon as rather easy opponents for Lathrup and might have a tendency to influence those who rate the high school teams, thus depriving Lathrup of a chance to make a bold bid for the right to be called No. 1, Litegot had other ideas.

"Ture," he said, **"some of these teams may not be up to the highest standards, but that doesn't mean Lathrup won't be playing a schedule 'tough enough' to deserve rating.**

"We will still have four outside games with what can be rated as top grade opponents -- and you won't find more than four real tough teams on most any school's schedule.

"Aside from our regular league games we will be playing Birmingham-Seaholm, Ferndale, Royal Oak Kimball and our natural rival-Southfield. Those



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four teams could make it rough for anybody and if Lathrup can get by them, our rating shouldn't suffer."

Replacing the word "athletic" with "activities" means that the member schools will have more in common and there is a better chance of building up rivalries and school spirit when competition is not all confined to athletics.

"Our six schools are of one mind" he said, **"and that is a help. We will be shooting for the same goal and the competition should be real interesting. More, too, is the fact that we will be close to one another and that will help to build the kind of school spirit we all desire."**

Southfield Green But Expects To Give Rivals Fits

Ed Bryant, veteran football coach and athletic director at Southfield High, isn't saying much right now as he works with a young squad preparing for the season opener on Friday, Sept. 15 against Birmingham Groves.

But Bryant, who has a habit of getting his team "high" for certain games, figures the Blue Jays just might make things interesting in the

Southeastern Michigan Association.

"We don't figure to win," he says. "Not with such powerhouses as Ferndale and Royal Oak Kimball around. But we aren't going to just sit there and watch the others win.

"We have a squad that appears to like football, one that will give any other team in the league fits when everything is going right. All we hope

is that we don't run into the quarterback problem we had a year ago."

Bryant started the 1971 campaign with three better than average signal callers and lost all three with injuries before the halfway point in the season.

The Jays will call upon a good reserve squad for their strength this

year along with four lettermen from 1971.

The quartet includes tackles Bill Zukoff (245 pounds), and Rick Smith (195) and two quarterbacks, Ron Dunkel and Ed Holton.

"At least we'll have two experienced quarterbacks to start the year," said Bryant. "We can't have two consecutive years of ill luck at that position and right now we're going to build our backfield around them."

The personable Jay mentor tabs Ferndale as the team to beat out for the title with Kimball close behind and Birmingham-Seaholm as the dark horse.

FERNDALE has 18 lettermen returning to Coach Frank Joranko including nine defensive starters from a team that wound up 6-3 last year.

"We're optimistic over our chances this year," said Joranko. "We have one of the biggest offensive backfields in years. Every single one is a speedster and has good size. And we have depth."

Jerry Screws, who also serves as a linebacker, will handle the quarterbacking. He'll have returning starters Dennis LaPrairie and Dean Bacheller as running backs. Bacheller collected 13 touchdowns a year ago and is much improved in workouts to date.

Joranko has a problem in the middle of the offensive line at the guard and center posts but is looking at some big huskies from the 1971 reserve squad to fill the holes.

Rough Days For Agatha, Borgess

By TOM DONOGHUE

The two parochial high schools in Observerland are taking on a challenge of a different tune in the '72 football season.

Bishop Borgess, which fought to a 7-2 mark last season and lost to Brother Rice in the Catholic finals has moved to the Double A Division, a step above the caliber of ball it is used to.

ST. AGATHA on the other hand will be trying to make a comeback from a 3-4-1 record in Second Division West.

Borgess Coach Fred Mushinski likes the challenge of the Double A with a total of 20 returning lettermen in his ranks. Neil Falls has to be the key to success at the swingback slot.

Borgess opens with St. Ladislaus on Sept. 17 with U-D and Catholic Central next in line.

"Speed is going to be our key factor in winning some ball games," said Mushinski.

The season could develop into too big a jump for Borgess in facing such foes as Divine Child, Bishop Gallagher and Shrine but the move has been made and Mushinski is ready to take first season lumps, but he still has hopes of the challenge ending up in the win column.

It's a different story for Coach Mike Bennane and his St. Agatha footballers.

THE AGGIES are coming off a 3-4-1 season but '72 is little brighter.

"The division should be a real race between us, St. Alphonsus, and Mt. Carmel," said Bennane. "We are going to be tough with 15 returning starters.

Mt. Carmel is not going to finish 8-0 this year."

The football scene at St. Agatha centers around the talents of 6-0, 215 pound Pat Brown. The senior received All-State honorable mention his sophomore and junior years in addition to All-League both years.

"Pat is an All-State candidate this year," added Bennane.

The fullback runs the 40 yard dash in 4.9 seconds and does the place kicking and works at linebacker on defense. Senior Larry Bastianelli is another All-Leaguer in the Aggie lineup, carrying 210 pounds at the tackle slot.

Bennane is very optimistic on the season's outcome, but nobody knows better than he, that a team can't rest its hopes on the shoulders of two players.