Troy Athens won't enter MSA until 1977-78 school year

By RICHARD GOLD

Following more than four months of discussion and meetings, Troy school administrators announced that Athens High School will remain in the Oakland A league until the end of the 1976-77 school year.

Starting with the 1977-78 school year, Athens will participate in the Metropolitan Suburban Activities Association (MSAA).

Athen's principal, John McGregor, made the announcement to the A athletic directors at their regularly scheduled monthly meeting, held last Monday.

"We talked it over," he said, "and we decided it was the fair thing to do. We will honor our committment to the Oakland A and fullfill our schedule."

THE DECISION to postpone the league switch by one year came almost a month after the A athletic directors voted to reject Athens' application to withdraw from the league at the end of this school year.

In a 9-0 vote in late August, the ADs shot down the request for the transfer, stating that Athens should fulfill its contractual obligations.

Frank Crowell, athletic director of Madison High School and commissioner of the Oakland A explained the vote. "The league voted that Athens should fulfill its two-year obligation and stay through the 1976-77 season. Any league should have at least two years notice as a minimum. They shouldn't expect to be released the year after they notify us."

He added, "We need time to bring in another team."

Crowell said the divisional playoff system used by the A would be thrown off kilter if Athens withdrew at the end of this year and a replacement was not found for the 1976-77 season because one division would have five teams, while the other would have six.

ATHENS WAS offered the spot in the MSAA, a smaller six-team league, when Utica Eisenhower announced it intended to withdraw at the end of this year.

Originally, Eisenhower was expected to form a a Utica-only league, but they decided instead to take Rochester's place in the Oakland A at the start of next year.

"They (the MSAA) encouraged us to take the step and wait one year," said McGregor. "We talked to them and they said we could join one year later.

"In the intervening time we will play out our schedule in the Oakland A. We had intended to do that if they couldn't find another school.

"If they didn't find another school we would have stayed. You can't really operate any other way."

The move to switch Athens to the MSAA was made originally in July following a meeting between McGregor, Boyd Larson, assistant superintendant of secondary schools, and Peyton Goodwin, athletic director of all Troy schools. Goodwin said a transfer to the MSAA, a league he considered more competitive, was premature and he voted against the proposed transfer.

But Larson and McGregor overrode his vote on the grounds that the MSAA had more to offer the entire student body.

"The basic reason for the transfer is that the MSAA extends opportunities to all students not just those in athletics," said McGregor. "They offer a wider variety of activities such as drama music, student government, and forensics. A student body should have more offered to it than just athletics.

ALTHOUGH MCGREGOR was surprised by the athletic directors' vote—he said earlier he'd "never heard of such a thing before"—he said there were no hard feelings. "There was no overt reaction by the league members, and the A has been very cordial with us. All in all we have no quarrel with the A."

He added, "Hopefully two years down the road we won't be in the same financial straights and we'll be able to take advantage of the wider variety of activities in the MSAA."

Although the A has offered to release Athens from its present committment if a replacement can be found for 1976-77, both league officials and McGregor doubt such a replacement can be located so quickly.

"We have made a committment through 1976-77 and we are not anticipating moving sooner," said McGregor. "If we could manage the move on such short notice we would consider it, but right now it seems unlikely."

The A is composed of 12 teams. They are Troy, Athens, Rochester, Lake Orion, Madison Heights Lamphere, Avondale, Oxford, Romeo, Madison, Clawson, Utica and Ford.

The MSAA, a six-team league, includes: Birmingham Groves, Royal Oak Dondero, Bloomfield Lahser, Southfield Lathrup, Rochester Adams and Utica Eisenhower.

Laker netters win again

West Bloomfield's girls tennis team ran its 1975 unbeaten streak to four Monday with a 7-0 victory over Milford, the third shutout posted by the Lakers so far this young season.

Previously the West Bloomfield girls had beaten Bloomfield Hills Andover 5-2 and then had scored successive 7-0 victories over Clarkston and Waterford Kettering before tackling Milford.

The Lakers' No. 1 singles star, Mikel Blatrow, not only has four personal wins to her credit, but in the process has lost only two games. Kathy Boyle is another unbeaten Laker, with victories in two singles and two doubles matches.

The second and third members of the Boyle sister triumverate, Karen and Tracy, play together as a doubles unit and they, too, are unbeaten this season in their specialty.

West Bloomfield won the Wayne-Oakland League girls tennis title the past two years and even though the name of the loop has been changed this fall to the Greater Oakland Activities League, the Lakers still are the team to beat if anyone else is to claim the crown.

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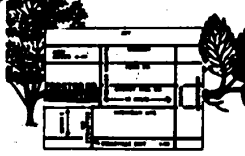

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