

Meeting on Pro Baseball Proves Step Toward Forming Club Here

Prospects for professional baseball in Medford loomed brighter but the considerable task of interesting financial support and creating an organization to operate a club still lay ahead following a meeting last night at the Jackson hotel.

Purpose of the confab was to discuss the possible entry of Medford in the Class B Northwest League. Medford has been extended an invitation to join.

No actual action on formation of a club here was taken last night. But the meeting, second on the matter, proved a step forward.

Three men associated with the Eugene and Salem teams of the Northwest circuit, gave information on their clubs and on the league in general, clarifying the problems, costs, necessities, possibilities and values in club organization and operation. The three, who addressed about 25 Rogue valley men, were Don Husband, attorney, and Dick Strite, sports editor of the Register-Guard, partners of the Eugene club, and Chuck Boice, Salem sportscaster.

From their information and from other discussion at the meeting a proposed plan and program for operating and backing a Medford club will be formulated for presentation to business and industrial firms of the Medford vicinity in enlisting their support. The operation and financing program is expected to be worked out within a week.

Another meeting is tentatively planned for next week. Exact date will depend on when President Frank Graham of the Eugene Emeralds and General Manager Hugh Luby of the Salem Senators may attend. They are attending the minor league meeting now at Columbus, O.

Both the partnership and the stockholder set-ups for club operation were outlined and the partnership plan was mentioned as "best" in discussion among the local interests. When the question arose as to the first step in getting a league franchise, Strite answered, "The first thing to do is to get the partnership."

Two Organizations
Husband reported that there are two organizations in connection with pro baseball in Eugene. He said that a group of bondholders own the park and that 28 men in partnership have underwritten any loss that may be incurred in operating the Emeralds. Each partner has agreed to be responsible for a certain per cent of any loss.

So far, the attorney stated, the operation has cost the partners no money. He said he felt that the Emeralds have made a "paper profit." Husband foresees \$10,000 less expenditure next season because the club has uniforms and equipment and other facilities now provided. Eugene expenses in 1955 were estimated at \$92,000 to \$97,000. He said the club hopes to make \$95,000 or \$96,000 in 1956 "and pay off everything." Husband said the advantage of partnership is that no stock selling is necessary. The partners include a variety of businessmen but lumbermen predominate at Eugene.

Boice spoke of the different Salem operation under a "couple of thousand stockholders." The club under its plan ended the season with only a scant loss.

Players Trying
Strite and Boice commented on the league and the players. The sports editor described players as young men on their way up and always trying and said the managers were a fine sort of men. He was at each league town last summer and found most clubs and parks in good shape.

Boice pointed out that Class B players are better and have a different attitude than those in Class D leagues such as the Far West which once operated here. Because, scouts are on hand to see them, players don't particularly have to get into the record book to be noticed, the sportscaster mentioned. He also mentioned tie-ups and working agreements with Pacific Coast League clubs and remarked that "the players are not too far away from being pretty good players."

Boice also brought out that baseball leagues are fewer and that more players are available than several years ago.

The radio man outlined some of the history of the former Western International league and pointed out that the ability to recover in the formation of the Northwest loop shows that baseball is "very substantial."

Big Improvement
Husband spoke of the desire to leave Medford in the league. He stressed that Class B ball is a big improvement over Class D, which Eugene also experienced, and he stated that the class of ball which the Northwest league has given Eugene has much pleased baseball interests there. He said that there

should be no trouble for Medford to get good players or a good manager.

The three visitors advised sale of tickets to games at a reasonable price, club operation of its own concessions and training away from home. They gave information on club promotions to boost attendance and various means of providing funds for club finance.

It was brought out at the meeting that local interest is apparent and that the main need is a number of willing hands to "sparkplug" and "get the ball rolling."

Need of additional seating and some renovation at the fairgrounds ball park was mentioned. Two plans for such work were presented at the meeting by Architect Bill Siebert.

Harry Chipman acted as chairman of the meeting.

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SPORTS

Boston Red Sox Buy San Francisco Club

Columbus, Ohio — (U.P.) — The Boston Red Sox became the new owners of the San Francisco Seals of the Pacific Coast League today and cleared the decks for operation there by announcing they will give up Louisville of the American Assn.

The Red Sox bought the Seals Monday night in what could be a \$370,000 "package"—paying off the Seals' \$220,000 in back debts, plus another reported \$150,000 to the league.

Sox officials said they plan to build up the Seals' roster with top-flight talent, and that's why they will give up Louisville—long their No. 1 farm club. They said they just do not have enough suitable players to man two high classification minor league teams.

Two Bidders
Boston officials said already they have two bidders for Louisville, one of them a major-league team. The Sox did not identify the bidders. Rumor said one was the Cincinnati Redlegs, but Redleg General Manager Gabe Paul flatly denied any interest in the club.

Baseball officials saw the purchase as having possible future ramifications in the event that the long talked-of expansion of the major leagues to the West Coast should come to pass.

With Boston now in possession of a franchise in the valuable San Francisco area, movement of the American League into this section could be greatly facilitated, whether by transfer of the Red Sox themselves or by moving or addition of some other team.

Pettit Leads NBA Players
New York — (U.P.) — Lanky Bob Pettit of the St. Louis Hawks, playing only his second year in the pro ranks, is bidding to take over as the National Basketball Association's dominant player as the top scorer and rebounder.

Pettit is firing points through the hoop at the rate of 23.6 per game, weekly NBA statistics disclosed today.

Leads Lovellette
And Big Bob took over as the top rebound ace with a total of 167 rebounds to 163 for huge Clyde Lovellette of the Minneapolis Lakers, although Lovellette has played in three more games.

Lovellette remains the leading scorer for the third straight week with a total of 246 points. He's followed by Paul Arizin of Philadelphia with 233, defending scoring champ Neil Johnston of Philadelphia with 219, Pettit with 212, and George Yardley of Fort Wayne with 203.

On a basis of average points per game Pettit leads with his 23.6 average, followed in order by Arizin with 23.3, Johnston with 21.9, Ed Macauley of Boston with 21.0, Lovellette with 20.5, Frank Selvy of St. Louis with 20.4 and Yardley with 20.3.

Wenatchee Selected For Potato Bowl
Bakersfield, Calif. — (U.P.) — Wenatchee, Wash., Valley College was selected today as the gridiron opponent for Bakersfield College in the eighth annual Potato Bowl in Bakersfield Saturday.

Shrine club sponsors picked Wenatchee after undefeated Taft, Calif., Junior College rejected a bid.

Wenatchee has an eight win, one tie record this season, while Bakersfield has compiled an eight win, one loss and one tie record.

BID FOR CONVENTION
Columbus, Ohio — (U.P.) — Jacksonville, Fla., New Orleans, Erie, Pa., and Colorado Springs, Colo., have bid for the 1956 minor league baseball convention.

PREDICTS RAY WIN
Greenwood Lake, N.Y. — (U.P.) — Veteran trainer Dan Florio predicted today that Sugar Ray Robinson will regain his middleweight title from Carl (Bobo) Olson "maybe by a knockout" when they meet at Chicago Dec. 9. Robinson will box today and Wednesday and then leave for the site of the fight on Thursday night.

There are 3,690 miles of railway in West Virginia.