

BEFORE THE OHIO Valley Athletic Conference's 1949 baseball teams are sent away from the post next spring there should be a general clarification of prevailing confusion and a thorough understanding of the championship plan by which the diamond crown will be determined.



Jim Stewart

Confusion of this season, which forced the OVAC executive committee to convene as arbiter, seems attributable, first, to a not clear understanding of the spur-of-the-moment plan used to settle the 1947 playoff for the West Virginia half of the conference title.

Secondly, in the rush of the OVAC's discussion of various spring sports at its last session, the impression was gained by some school officials that the 1948 playoff, between the Ohio-Marshall counties league and the Brooke-Hancock counties loop, would follow last spring's plan.

The confusion is traced to the fact that Wellsburg's Hube McCracken, apparently suffered under the delusion that his Orange nine, as the Brooke-Hancock county ruler in 1947, put its OVAC claims to undue risk when it battled Union in the double jeopardy contest of last year's regional tourney final.

Both OVAC and regional tourney championships were settled in the single game but locally, at least, it had been explained that Union, as Ohio-Marshall counties champion, was amenable to risking both titles upon a single game if its path should cross that of Wellsburg. Had not Union and Wellsburg met in the course of the tourney their OVAC playoff would have been forced over until later.

But due to the lateness of the "hour," the impending state tournament and possible prolongation of the season into June—after the close of the school term—the regional tournament game was merely an expedient vehicle for saving time.

The 1948 season confusion was aided and abetted, of course, by the split of the Brooke and Hancock counties circuit into two separate leagues this spring. Only Weirton of the Hancock loop is an OVAC member, while the Brooke league contained three Conference schools—Follansbee, Wellsburg and Bethany. The natural procedure, under the circumstances, would call for a playoff between the two top OVAC schools of the two loops unless it would be agreed that the season's inter-league games would settle the issue.

Originally the Ohio and West Virginia schools were supposed to meet in an inter-state game or series of games to arrive at one OVAC champion but that plan also was abandoned last spring when it would have thrown the playoff deep into June with the school term over for Bridgeport, the Ohio winner.

So, if the conference is to meet the issues brought out during the last few days it would be wise to conduct a baseball meeting, separate and apart, from the regular spring sports meet-session to iron out any and all moot points.

Golds Play Weirton On Wednesday

The West Virginia half of the OVAC's baseball championship will be decided on Wednesday afternoon, the weather permitting, when Wheeling and Weirton highs will clash upon the neutral diamond at Beech Bottom. The game is scheduled for 4:30.

The championship game was approved last night at a meeting of the OVAC executive committee which convened the interested schools to bring order out of the misunderstanding surrounding the playoff.

At the same time the Bridgeport-Tiltonsville double bill, washed out yesterday for the third time, was reset for Thursday, afternoon at 3 o'clock for the Tiltonsville diamond. These games have direct bearing upon the outcome of the Ohio side half of the conference title.

Tiltonsville must win both games to keep in the race with Shady-side—yet to be met—for the east Ohio league title.

OVAC Committee Will Settle Baseball Issue

Schoolboy athletes were approaching the close of other school year and the spring athletic season's climax. Regional baseball tournaments at Moundsville and Bridgeport will feature the weekend although the twin base races of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference come up for final disposition.

The West Virginia regional tourney opens at Moundsville on Thursday with two games; while Bridgeport high will be host to the Ohio four-school regional finalists on Saturday.

The OVAC diamond races, however, were still short of a decision and when the OVAC executive committee meets tomorrow at 7:30 o'clock at Wheeling high, the West Virginia title series will be unscrambled.

Confusion in the ranks of the Brooke and Hancock county members as to the team which will be met here delays the playoff. Wheeling high, as the Ohio-Marshall counties champion, will be the finalist although Secretary C. E. Petty, of the OVAC, reports that Weirton, Wellsburg and Follansbee had it was "understood" War-