

Brooks Elected Vice President Of New League

The Mississippi-Ohio Valley League was organized here Sunday to replace the Illinois State League, a Class D professional baseball group that had been in operation for the past two seasons.

Charter members in the new league are Paducah, West Frankfort, Ill., Mt. Vernon, Ill., Mattoon, Ill., Belleville, Ill., and Centralia, Ill. Two more teams will be added before the 1950 season opens.

C. C. Hoffman, Belleville, who was acting president of the Illinois State League, was elected president of the new league. Other officers include J. Polk Brooks, Paducah, vice president, and J. Neil Moore, Centralia, secretary-treasurer. Brooks was also made president of the board of directors.

Presidents of the six clubs will serve on the board of directors. Those include Brooks, J. J. Mondino, Centralia; C. S. Ward, Mt. Vernon; Pete Mondino, West Frankfort, and Addie Nesbit, Belleville. The Mattoon representative has not been decided.

The league voted a 120-game schedule which will close on Labor Day. The opening date has not been set, but it will probably be Thursday, May 5. While the Illinois State League always operated on a split season, this was abolished and the organization will play a full season. There will be a Shaughnessy playoff.

The class limit and salary limit for each club will be determined when the league directors meet Sunday, Feb. 6, in a continuation of Sunday's meeting which was recessed late in the evening after more than a 12-hour session.

The player limit was set at 15 players, including manager. Teams will be allowed to carry at least 20 men during the first 20 days of the year, and may also carry 20 during the last 30 days of the year.

Some of the clubs will be operating with hook-ups with major or minor league organizations, while others will operate independently.

"We are not interested in a hook-up," Nesbit, president of the Belleville club, said. "We want to operate independently."

Other clubs want to use eight-player option, with the club being free to sign the remainder of the squad.

Only West Frankfort and Paducah expressed desire for a complete hook-up with major league clubs. West Frankfort is already working with the St. Louis Cardinals, while Paducah's tie-up is expected to be announced within the next few weeks.

Poplar Bluff, Mo., was repre-

selected at the meeting, and is interested in coming into the league. Hoffman is scheduled to attend a meeting in that city Tuesday night. Other cities that have expressed a desire to get into the league are Cape Girardeau, Mo., Sikeston, Mo., Jonesboro, Ark., Blytheville, Ark., and Jackson, Tenn.

"We want a good eight-team league but plan on operating as a six-team loop this year," Hoffman said. "Cape could be ready to go within three weeks if the eighth team could be made ready in time for the opening. Rather than risk a bust-up of any kind, we had rather go along with six teams this season, and add the other two later."

The league is working toward the aim of a compact eight-team organization with a 200-mile boundary line and all cities with a population of over 16,000.

"There's not a Class D league in the country with as good parks as we have," Moore, secretary of the group said. "This is a fact that should determine a lot when we start getting ball players."

While the league's official title is Mississippi-Ohio Valley League because all teams in the loop are situated in either the Ohio river or Mississippi river valleys, the name will be shortened for publicity purposes to M-O Valley, M-O, or just Valley.

Paducah was awarded the All-Star game, which will be played sometime between July 10 and 15. At that time an All-Star group from the three northern clubs will battle a group from the three southern clubs.

Elaborate plans are being made to have Vice President Alben Barkley, Baseball Commissioner Albert Chandler, and Minor League President George Troutman, here for the game.

Before starting the new meeting, the old Illinois State League members voted Marion, Ill., officially out of the league and Paducah into the vacant franchise. Marion had served notice last October that it did not plan to have professional baseball in 1949.

The directors will meet at Mt. Vernon, Ill., next Sunday to complete plans for the season.