

Civic Hockey Rally Here Tonight

By ED SCHOENFELD

Oakland's new franchise in the National Hockey League will be literally flown directly here tonight from New York, and 300 of the city and county's leading civic and business leaders will be at the Oakland Airport in whelp it up.

George Fisharty, Harry Van Gerbig and attorney Frank Tatum of Seals, Inc., will fly in at 7:45 p.m. on TWA.

The Oakland City Council, Alameda County Board of Supervisors, directors of Coliseum,

Inc., the Oakland Port Commission, directors of the Oakland Chamber of Commerce and officials of the Eastbay Water District will be there to express the area's delight at landing the big league sports franchise.

It's a hastily-arranged party, set just together with the NHL announcement out of New York at mid-day, but everybody who can break previous dates is going to be there.

Bing Crosby won't be able to make the party tonight, but before flying out of town the

crooner - sportsman sent his "congrat" to Oakland.

"I'm delighted to hear the news," said Crosby, who owns an interest in Seals, Inc. "I think the area will get a lot of recreation and entertainment out of big league hockey."

"Ours is a very public-spirited group that will do everything to make it interesting and exciting."

Crosby's role? "I'll be a spectator and root for the team," he replied. "I love the game."

Vice Mayor Fred Maggiera of

Oakland and Chairman John D. Murphy of the Board of Supervisors will extend the official civic welcome to the hockey people.

Elmo Mazzera, president of the Oakland Chamber of Commerce, will offer greetings from the city's business community.

R. T. Nahas, its president, will be the honoree for Coliseum, Inc.

"This is tremendous," exclaimed Maggiera when the news of the new franchise was disclosed. Mayor John Hoodhas is out of the city on business.

"The National Hockey League will be coming into a not-to-be-exceeded facility in our new arena and will find this a tremendous area crying for big league sports."

An elated Nahas said: "We are all thrilled at the prospect of having major league hockey here in our beautiful new arena."

"We are very impressed," Nahas continued, "with Mr. Fisharty, Mr. Crosby, Mr. Van Gerbig and the other members

of the combine that made this possible."

"Major league hockey is one of the most exciting of sports and is capable of developing a fierce loyalty on the part of its supporters and fans in large numbers."

"In the East it is not unusual for them to have an average attendance of more than 90 per cent capacity."

"This is a tremendous occasion for Oakland and Alameda County becoming a member in this exclusive organization."

The president of Coliseum, Inc. reported that his group and Seals, Inc. already had agreed in principle to a long-term lease.

"This is one of the milestones in the sports life of the bay area," said President Mazzera of the chamber of commerce.

"It not only will be good news for the people of the Eastbay, but it will give a boost to the economic situation."

Mazzera called the develop-

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ment a means of showing Oakland's cooperation with the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce in a "banquet across the bay" program.

William F. Kowland, publisher and editor of The Tribune, and a director of Coliseum, Inc., observed:

"This is a fine thing for the community and a wonderful addition for the people who will be using the facilities at the Coliseum arena."

"And, it's a leverager of other things to come."

Seals Due At Coliseum

By SPENCE CONLEY
Tribune Sports Writer

NEW YORK — The National Hockey League today awarded an expansion franchise which will bring major league hockey to the new Oakland Coliseum Arena in 1967-68.

Then the San Francisco Seals announced they will move to Oakland next season to play their final year in the Western Hockey League here. They will become the "California Seals" for their debut in the National League, however.

Today's franchise award to the well-organized San Francisco Seals Inc. group was expected. The Oakland site announcement and the relocation of the NHL club came as surprises to many.

NHL Pres. Clarence Campbell was asked "Where will they play?" immediately after announcing the award of the franchise.

"Why in Oakland, of course," he replied. "That was part of their bid."

It was understood that the NHL has specified that lease contracts for its new franchises



BARRY VAN GERBIG

be drafted for 15-year tenancy terms.

Play will commence in the 1967-68 season for the new Oakland club, one of six to be added in a nationwide expansion of the league's only established major league hockey system.

Campbell said he believes it

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future of hockey in the Bay Area, "will be great. They have a wonderful situation and a fine new building. They certainly will be successful."

San Francisco - Oakland, Los Angeles, Minneapolis - St. Paul, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and St. Louis all received "conditional" approval at the close of the NHL expansion talks today.

In a stunning move, the NHL selected L. A. Laker owner Jack Kent Cooke over the L. A. Blades hockey club, represented by Dan Reeves, for the Los Angeles franchise ownership.

Cooke promised construction of a brand new \$42 million hockey arena to be available by the opening of the new league.

Pittsburgh is the only American Hockey League city selected.

Minneapolis-St. Paul, represented by a seven-man committee, was a surprise selection because critical last minute infighting among two groups almost ruined their chances.

St. Louis was granted a team though no bidders appeared. The city will have until April 1 to come up with an agreeable franchise plan, otherwise Baltimore will be given the team.

Philadelphia, represented by Eagles owner Jerry Wolman, also was a surprise. But the city of brotherly love turned up one of the most complete and well-documented presentations.

Buffalo, an early favorite for a franchise, was turned down—probably because of the city's proximity to Toronto, a present NHL city.

By the fall of 1967 these six new clubs will have been stocked with players and will participate in a separate six-team division with home and home games against each of the existing six teams.

Details of a player draft and the desires of existing minor league owners to freeze players were not discussed, but will be examined at a later meeting.

George Fisharty, president of Seals Inc., was jubilant when the franchise was announced.

"It's a warm feeling that creeps all over you. We've finally come to the place we've sought so long."

"We are bringing the last—but certainly the most exciting—of all major league professional franchises in the Bay Area."



BING CROSBY

he said with a smile.

He then became serious and declared: "We've got a tremendous job on our hands. It will not be easy."

Fisharty, Harry Van Gerbig, and attorney Frank Tatum were to arrive in Oakland on a one-stop TWA flight to begin negotiations with Bob Nahas of Coliseum Inc. tonight.

The immediate objectives of Seals, Inc., are a 15-year contract, initial development of an administrative structure and the acquisition of a Canada-wide farm system.

Fisharty will serve on the NHL board of governors. Van Gerbig will assist in player administration and Norman (Bud) Polie will remain as general manager.

Fisharty said he has given Polie 30 days in which to come up with a detailed analysis of franchise and farm club operations.

Shasta Corp., present 50 per cent owner of the San Francisco Hockey Club, will control 65 per cent of the new corporation. The Bing Crosby group, represented by Barry and Howard Van Gerbig and George Coleman, has 35 per cent.