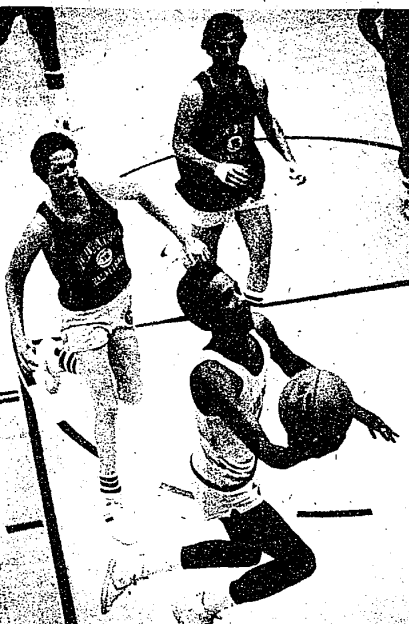


# OU cagers could be on upswing



Ulysses Thomas drives for a layup during an OU practice. (Staff photo by David Frank)

By MARTY BUDNER

Lee Frederick is the players' choice to pilot the Oakland University men's basketball team. The 35-year-old Frederick served as an interim coach last season during Oakland's final 13 games. He took over for Jim Mitchell, who, for personal reasons, just gave a leave of absence by Oakland administrators.

Frederick compiled a 6-7 record, and was named head coach shortly after the season concluded. Oakland's overall mark was 12-15 — its best mark since the 1973-74 season when coach Gene Bolden's team went 17-11.

"It was a shellshock when I had to take over the program. Everything happened so fast, I really didn't know how to approach the rest of the season," said Frederick, who had served as an assistant to Mitchell for the past two years. "We just had our conference schedule left (except one game), and I didn't think we could win any of the games."

"They were tough games, and the only one I knew we could win was against Lake Superior. But, we were lucky be-

cause we won three games by one point.

"It was a trial period at the end of the season. I enjoyed the last 13 games, and I always wanted to be a head coach, so I decided to apply for the head coaching job. The players had a choice, and they voted for me. I think I had an advantage because I knew them and they knew me."

This season Frederick says Oakland will be much quicker, with more offensive balance. His basic philosophy is to get everybody involved in the offense, and not have it centered around one person.

"My style of coaching is different (than Mitchell's). I believe we're more relaxed, and there's not as much tension involved," said Frederick. "Whether we can win that way, we'll have to wait and see."

"We basically want to have balanced scoring this year, and we're not going to be counting on any one person to score points. We're going to wait for our shots, and we hope to control the tempo

of the game. If we have a break, we'll take it."

**THE PIONEERS** will be small, with their starting backline averaging 6-feet-6-inches. Consequently, Oakland's main weakness will be rebounding.

"We're not huge, and we're certainly not going to dominate the boards. We're struggling in that department," said Frederick. "Defensively, we plan on doing everything. We'll change depending on the kind of team we come up against."

A trio of junior-college transfers promise to form the strength of this year's Pioneer squad. They include Ulysses Thomas, Clyde Montgomery and Mark Mendez.

Thomas, a sprinter with 9.4 speed, is OU's quickest player who has "outstanding" leaping ability. Thomas (6-foot-1) averaged 22 points last year at East Wyoming Junior College.

Montgomery (5-foot-9) is an excellent ball handler who will see a lot of playing time as point guard. Mendez is OU's

strongest player. He helped lead Carl Sandberg Community College (Galesburg, Ill.) to a school-record number of victories last season.

"They (Montgomery and Mendez) will share the guard position, and they will help keep the ball in our possession," said Frederick. "They are not fancy, and they will handle the ball well. They will give Les Thomas freedom to run around."

**THE STARTING** center will be 6-foot-9 Dan Rawlings, a junior whom Frederick says has steadily improved. Rawlings had 154 rebounds for a 5.7 average, second to graduated all-league

player Tim Kramer last winter.

Duane Glenn, a junior who had problems with turnovers last year at the guard spot, has been converted to a forward this year. A two-year starter for Oakland, Glenn was the team's second-leading scorer with an 11.6 average.

Some of Frederick's top substitutes will be guards Dennis Hammond and Wally Plese, forwards Bill Peterson (Livonia Clarenceville) and Rich Brauer, and 7-foot center Björn Rossow of Norway.

"We have a strong nucleus of juniors and sophomores coming back, but

they haven't proven yet that they can be successful," said Frederick. "We have some players with good reputations, but they do have some bad habits. But, they're responding well to what I've been asking of them."

The Pioneer will begin their season Saturday with a game at Wright State University (Dayton, Ohio). Their first home game will be at 2 p.m. Dec. 8 against Northern Kentucky University.

Oakland's Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) season will begin at Wayne State University on Jan. 7.

## OU netters win tourney

Judy Stiff and Nancy Golding, who teamed in No. 1 doubles for Oakland University during the season, combined to upset top-seeded Annette Zaharoff and Peggy O'Neil, 6-2, 1-6, 6-3, in the annual Thanksgiving Tournament at Village Racquet Club in Warren.

Stiff, a senior at OU from Royal Oak, also captured the women's singles championship by besting Sue Bauldree, 6-2, 6-3.

The doubles victory by Stiff and

Golding was not the first for the pair. They captured the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) No. 1 doubles championship for Oakland University.

Zaharoff and O'Neil had earned the No. 1 seed position after some impressive performances on a national tour they recently returned from.

Stiff and Golding will be participating in a tournament in Indianapolis Dec. 26.

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