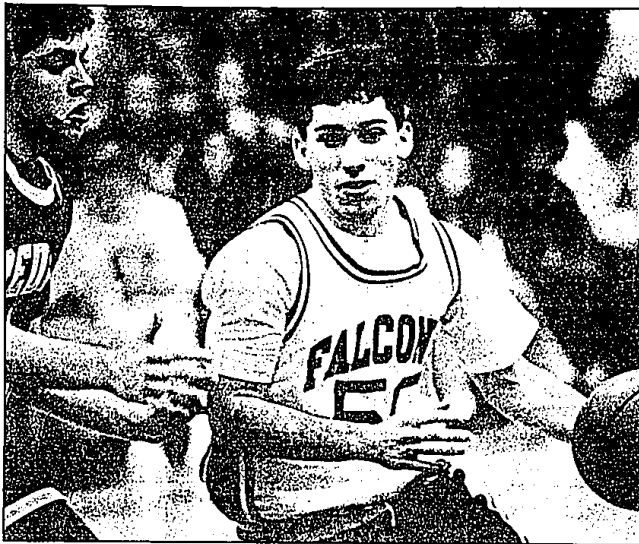




BILL HOSKINS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Long-range scorer: Farmington guard Scott Menser was among the leading three-point shooters in Oakland County.

Falcons from page 1B

"He plays basketball 365 days a year. I don't think a day has gone by that he hasn't shot a basketball. He put a lot of time into his game and is really looking good."

Juncos should be a good complement to Menser at the other wing. He's a bit of an unknown in this area, but he also averaged 14 points for Groves and might surprise some teams early in the season.

"I'm sure they'll find out about him real quick," Mikal said. "Some coaches aren't going to know about him until they see him play. He and Scott have very good range and a nice shooting touch from outside."

Lewis, who averaged 11½ points and 5½ rebounds, will start in the post again and be a major player offensively. Tokar will be the other post player and give the Falcons a strong body under the boards.

"(Lewis) has great quickness and jumps very well," Mikal said. "We're looking for Stan to have a real good year. With bigger people trying to guard him, he's quick enough that he can go around a lot of people."

"He has a good first step and explodes to the basket. We have to make sure he plays under control and doesn't try to do too much. He has looked very good this year."

"Mike will be a post-up player. He has to work hard and get points off putbacks. His shooting has gotten better, but he's going

to be an inside player. If Scott and Steve can be outside threats, that's going to open up the inside for Stan and Mike."

Jackson will play point guard and should be ready to lead the fast break after running cross country for the first time. He averaged 4½ points and also had 21 steals and 42 assists in 21 games.

"He's coming off a good cross country season and is very eager to get going in basketball," Mikal said.

Afterbaugh will be the sixth man and play a wing. Smulek also plays wing, and Hicks will be the backup to Jackson at point guard.

"Kevin is going to give us a good lift off the bench because he's an intelligent player and plays good defense," Mikal said. "I don't think we lose anything when we bring him into a game."

The varsity roster also includes six juniors: 5-11 point guard Jason Jager, 6-4 post Steve Hoffer, 6-2 wing Tim Wheelis, a pair of 6-3 post players in Sam Melnyk and Brian Books and 5-11 wing Sam Latra.

Melnyk, Books and Latra played on the JV team last year, and Wheelis is in his first year of basketball. Jager and Hoffer are transfers from Redford Catholic Central and won't be eligible until the second semester. Jager was a JV player at CC, but Hoffer hasn't played basketball since grade school.

"We're not a big team and big

teams are going to give us trouble," Mikal said, "but we're going to utilize our quickness to overcome our shortcomings. We'll be aggressive and press."

"I think we're going to score some points. My main concern is stopping other teams, so we've been working a lot on defense."

The Falcons begin the season Tuesday with a home game against Waterford Kettering.

Livonia Churchill

Head coach: Tom Lang, fourth season.
Last year: 7-14.
League: Western Lakes, Western Division.
Season opener: Tuesday at home vs. Dearborn.

Notable losses to graduation: Jason Barowski, Daniel Wozniak, Mark Rutherford.
Leading returnees: Ethan Jerome, 5-10, senior, guard (8 ppg); Jeff Barry, 6-3, senior, center (10 ppg); Jeff Barry, 6-3, senior, center (10 ppg); Jeff Barry, 6-3, senior, center (10 ppg); Jeff Barry, 6-3, senior, center (10 ppg).

Promising newcomers: Jay VanWagner, 6-5, sophomore, forward (10 ppg); Jeff Barry, 6-3, senior, center (10 ppg); Jeff Barry, 6-3, senior, center (10 ppg); Jeff Barry, 6-3, senior, center (10 ppg); Jeff Barry, 6-3, senior, center (10 ppg).

Lang's outlook: "I feel good about these kids and their roles. They have worked really hard and they want to do well. This should be a fun year. But, again, what scares me is our lack of height. I'd like to have some big 6-6 kid but we don't. We are going to have to battle every game and be real aggressive. If we can't control the tempo, we will be hard pressed to win."

Livonia Franklin

Head coach: Larry Jackson, first at Franklin, 10th overall.
Last year: 9-13.
League: Western Lakes, Western Division.
Season opener: Friday, Dec. 10, at home vs. Dearborn.

Notable losses to graduation: Jason Meiner, Jason Falcone.
Leading returnees: Paul Kuschka, 6-0, senior, guard-forward (third team All-Area); Mark Blum, 6-3, senior, forward; Clem Henders, 5-9, senior, point guard; Greg Mopla, 6-0, senior, forward.

Promising newcomers: Jason Maschino, 6-4, senior, forward (transfer from Redford Catholic Central, eligible as soon as his house is built in Livonia); Matt Bauman, 6-0, freshman, center; Chad Glad, 5-9, junior, point guard; Joe Pao, 6-5, senior, center (first year of playing organized ball).

Jackson's outlook: "Our first goal is to make the (Western Lakes) playoffs. We haven't done that in at least three years. I like our team's quickness and defense. And in a normal year, we'd have pretty decent size. But when you look at what other teams in this conference have, we look small. But, I'll tell you this, we've got a group of seniors who feel they've paid their dues and now it's time to reap some dividends."

Livonia Stevenson

Head coach: Jim McIntyre, ninth year at Stevenson, 32nd overall.
Last year: 5-16.
League: Western Lakes, Lakes Division.
Season opener: Tuesday at home vs. Belleville.

Notable losses to graduation: Adam Roy (third team All-Area).
Leading returnees: Brad Morgan, 6-2, senior, forward; Chris Chinita, 6-3, senior, forward; Kevin Stencora, 6-0, senior, guard; Jim Grewe, 5-9, sophomore, point guard; Brett Fenn, 6-5, senior, center; Steve Jacobs, 5-10, senior, guard; Steve Hanson, 6-2, senior, forward.

BASKETBALL

Promising newcomers: Jim Balow, 6-4, sophomore, forward; Jeff Backus, 5-9, sophomore, point guard; Eric Curt, 6-2, sophomore, forward; Rick Dinkel, 6-1, sophomore, forward; Jeff Nagy, 5-10, sophomore, guard.

McIntyre's outlook: "This is a good group that has been working hard and starting to come together. I think we're going to have a real competitive year. Overall, we have decent speed and a lot of game experience. Our weakness is how strong we'll be in terms of team rebounding. We aren't big so we'll have to do some things between the time the ball is in-bounded up to half-court to create some problems. We're press as much as we can and be a little more creative offensively."

Westland John Glenn

Head coach: Mike Schutte, second season.
Last year: 12-9.
League: Western Lakes, Lakes Division.
Season opener: Friday, Dec. 10, at Ypsilanti.

Notable losses to graduation: Ken Taylor (second team All-Area); Aaron Scheffer, John Miller, Kevin Claypool.
Leading returnees: Tony Gons, 6-5, senior, forward (16 ppg, second team All-Area); Guy Rucker, 6-11, senior, center; Brent Washington, 6-2, junior, forward; Seven Hubbard, 6-1, junior, point guard; Eric Reppke, 6-8, junior, forward.

Promising newcomers: Albert Jones, 6-2, sophomore, guard-forward; John Abrecht, 6-0, sophomore, guard.

Schutte's outlook: "We are going to be an exciting team. We will run as much as possible because we should be able to rebound well. Defensively, our quickness should set us apart from other teams. My biggest concern is, we will play disciplined. I hope they'll use good judgment, when to push and when to pull up. Also, perimeter shooting could be an Achilles' heel. But with our size, we ought to get some put backs."

Wayne Memorial

Head coach: Chuck Henry, 17th season.
Last year: 17-5, co-champion of Wolverine A League; Mega Conference, Red Division.
Season opener: Tuesday at home vs. Plymouth Canton.

Notable losses to graduation: Bruce Call-houn (second team All-Area); Antonio Dodd (second team All-Area); Bill Rome, Nate Babb, 6-0, senior, guard.

Leading returnees: Courtney Howard, 5-11, senior, guard; Rod Harrison, 6-0, senior, guard; Gerald Adams, 6-1, senior, point guard; Jason O'Brien, 6-5, senior, center; Jeff Hamilton, 6-6, senior, forward.

Promising newcomers: Lorenzo Guess, 6-2, freshman, guard-forward; Richard Rashad, 6-3, freshman, center.

Henry's outlook: "We should have a real strong perimeter game and a real good defensive team. We have more size in the post than we've had in the past but I'm not sure we have the same athleticism. Depth will be a problem. But we have some real good, intelligent seniors and that is hard to beat."

Lutheran Westland

Head coach: Scott Werner, seventh season.

Last year: 2-10.

Notable losses to graduation: Phil Spoljar, 6-0, senior, guard.

Leading returnees: Chris Thomas, 5-10, junior, guard (7.3 ppg); Jeff Kettner, 6-3, senior, forward; Andy Mamoli, 5-9, senior, guard; Matt Purdy, 5-9, senior, guard.

Promising newcomers: Jim Hoff, 5-10, senior, guard; Jon Smolka, 6-2, junior, forward; Paul Priebe, 6-6, junior, center; Jafari Kyles, 6-0, junior, forward.

Werner's outlook: "Our team strengths are our quickness, defensive pressure and we should be strong rebounding. Weaknesses are a lack of experience, lack of an outstanding offensive threat and we need to do a better job of taking care of the basketball and reducing team turnovers."

Westland Huron Valley Lutheran

Head coach: Dave Kolander, eighth season.
Last year: 12-9.
League: Michigan Independent Athletic Association.

Season opener: Monday at Harper Woods.
Notable losses to graduation: Matt Stoudemire (first team All-Area).

Leading returnees: John Cyr, 5-11, senior, forward; Eric Rich, 6-0, senior, guard; Steve Sor-dahl, 6-0, senior, forward; Craig Yamashita, 5-10, senior, guard; Jason Balkoski, 5-10, junior, guard.

Promising newcomers: Dave Gumbis, 6-3, junior, center; James Doeley, 6-3, junior, center.

Kolander's outlook: "We don't have any real outstanding players but we have quite a bit of depth. With our inexperience, I doubt that we can match our performance from last year, but that is the challenge I put to them. We have two outstanding teams in our conference, Redford and Oakland Christian, but third place is wide open. I'd like to think we can win that spot again."

Redford Catholic Central

Head coach: Bernie Holowicki, 38th season.
Last year: 15-10, district champion.
League: Catholic League, Central Division.
Season opener: Tuesday at home vs. Ypsilanti.

Notable losses to graduation: Brian Paku (first team All-Area); Jeff Gurti, Joey DeLong (moved to Bad Ash); Darnan Baskin (transferred to Cass Tech, ineligible until Feb. 1).

Leading returnees: Andy Kummer, 6-3, senior, forward (17 ppg); Anthony Hesano, 6-3, senior, forward (8 ppg); Sean Gallagher, 6-4, senior, center; Joe Daly, 6-0, senior, center.

Promising newcomers: Justin Hoener, 5-11, sophomore, point guard; Mike Ridley, 6-4, junior, forward; John Hander, 6-4, junior, forward; Ryan McKenna, 6-1, junior, guard-forward.

Holowicki's outlook: "We are really going to have to try and make things happen. We aren't going to be able to bang it inside, so we'll have to press it up, play up-tempo and use a 3-4 post court. But I think we will hustle and scrap and be very competitive."

Editor's note: A preview of the Clarenceville team will appear in Monday's Observer.

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