

Basketball

committee at the start of the season.

Hopkins, Lewis and Derocher have been on the varsity since they were freshmen, Smartt since he was a sophomore.

The roster includes senior Jason Sharp and, from the JV squad, juniors Ricky Bryant, Lemay Wilson, Dave Pesci, Andrew Burt, Zach Burton, Matt Reed and Brandon Sinawi.

"If everybody goes out and plays hard every night, the spotlight will be zooming around, and they'll have their time to shine," Teachman said, adding individual stats aren't important. "You have to be complete players to play for me. All have to play defense, and all have to rebound."

Derocher (6-4, 235) was the leading scorer on a balanced team and the MVP. He made the All-Western Lakes Activities Association first team and All-Oberver second team after averaging 12.5 points. Derocher also connected on 44 of 97 threes.

"He has become a more well-rounded player and better defender, according to Teachman.

"He's been very faithful in the weight room," he said. "He's faster at 235 than he was at 220, and he's still stroking the ball. He's added some inside stuff to his game. He can take the hit and still finish the shot."

Lewis (6-1, 250) was an all-state center in football and is a force in the post despite a lack of height. When he takes the ball to the basket, opponents either go down or get out of his way.

"He's not concerned about playing time or stats; he just wants to win," Teachman said, adding Lewis is a leader and crafty inside player. "He can contribute sitting on the bench, going to and from games, in practice. That's the kind of guy he is."

"His contribution won't be numerical; you can't quantify it. He's going to set some picks and hold some guys eight inches taller than him off the boards because he's so darn strong."

Smartt (6-0, 165) runs the team on the floor and is a consistent player whom the coach knows he can depend on.

"I thought he was awfully good last year, and he just took off this summer," Teachman said. "He decided he can take some of

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Mike Teachman
Harrison basketball coach

the offensive load on his shoulders. He still wants to check the toughest guy on the other team and does a great job of it.

"He's fearless; he dives on the floor for the ball. He's an amazing young man. I trust him a lot, his decision making on the floor."

Hopkins (6-3, 200) is noted for his picture-perfect jump shot and is the school's all-time leading free-throw shooter.

"It's nice to know you have a guy like that on the floor," Teachman said. "He made himself a better player. Some guys are not naturally quick and had to step up their game and he did."

The leadership he learned on the football field will go a long way with him. If we come down every time and get him an open jump shot, we're going to win a lot of ballgames."

Johnson (5-9, 140) will play the other guard position. He's a sprinter on the track team and few basketball players get the ball up court faster than he does. He also dunks the ball.

"He's lightning quick and fearless," Teachman said. "He's the guy, out of the starting five, people are going to overlook, and he won't be around if they do; he'll be gone."

Sharp didn't play basketball last year but was on the JV as a sophomore. Like Smartt and Bryant, he was a wide receiver/defensive back in football.

"He has a lot to learn about offenses and defenses, but he did bring those quick feet with him; they came as part of the package," Teachman said.

Ricky Bryant (6-1, 165) will play on the wing but is a good jumper who can play in the post, too.

"He has a great spirit for the game; he loves to play basketball," Teachman said. "He's just an amazing athlete and competitor."

Wilson's shooting range extends to 30 feet. The 6-1, 190-pounder spent time in the weight room and is becoming a

better finisher around the basket.

Burt (6-2, 205) was a post player on JV and is an aggressive rebounder. He also has a two-handed dunk in his repertoire. Burton (6-4, 198) had a good summer and continues a Harrison tradition of big men who can shoot the three.

Pesci was the JV point guard and distributes the ball well. Both he and Reed have improved their shot, according to Teachman. Reed is a good athlete, a tailback on the football team, and will help at guard as well as Sinawi.

The Hawks were WAAA and district tournament runners-up last year. This year, they'd like to be No. 1.

"A 20-game season over three months is more a measure of a team than a three-week season," Teachman said. "We'll have to play three seasons — the regular season, the league playoffs, and hopefully we'll get in it, and the state tournament season."

"Building a season is like building a wall; it's done brick by brick."

The Hawks will try to lay the foundation for a successful season Monday with a victory in their first game at Waterford Kettering.

GOOD GROUP: Teachman likes the collective attitude on this year's team, the spirit of togetherness and competitiveness.

"They get along; they're not negative leaders," he said. "They're not the kind of people everybody has to bow down to them. They're inclusive."

"Matt Derocher gets the broom and sweeps the floor every day. They've carried that winning idea from the football tradition and the 'refuse to lose' theme from last year's varsity. It's a nice combination."

"I know they're 17-year-olds, but I trust them — and I'm going to trust them with much of the basketball team. They'll take a lot of my shoulders."

CROWD PLEASER: "It may end up being our most important player is the sixth man, which is the crowd. If those (students) support us and yell for us," Teachman said.

"Even some of the faculty might be enthused about it. If we get that support, they could win some games for us. There's such a good feeling among the student body this year; they can get us fired up."

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BASKETBALL PREVIEWS

WAYNE MEMORIAL
Head coach: Chuck Henry, 21st season.
League affiliation: Michigan Mega Conference (Red Division).
Season opener: 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 9, vs. Plymouth-Canton.
Last year's overall record: 24-2 (District, Regional champions).
Notable losses to graduation: Lorenzo Coates (HSU), Lavette Coates (Kalamazoo Valley CC), Richard Rashad (Cagnew Valley), Rodney Hurst (Auburn).
Promising new starters: Quentin Turner, 6-7, forward; Samuel Durr, 6-3, swing forward; Derrick Smith, 5-8, guard; KJ Williams, 6-7, forward.
Henry's 1997-98 outlook: "I think it's going to be a fun season. There's a challenge. It's almost like a mystery — even I don't know what's going to happen."

"We're an untested team. And our schedule is tough: It's been since I've been at Wayne."

"Our early schedule includes two of the top five teams in the state — Romulus and River Rouge. Plus we play Belleville, Ypsilanti, Willow Run and Inkster."

"It's going to be fun from the standpoint that every game is going to be a challenge. I say it's going to be fun. I hope it's going to be fun."

DETROIT CATHOLIC LEAGUE
Head coach: Rick Coretti, fourth season.
League affiliation: Detroit Catholic League (Central Division).
Season opener: 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 9, at Harper Woods Bishop Gallagher.
Last year's overall record: 15-8.
Notable losses to graduation: Mark McDonald (Loyola, Ill.), Matt Martini (Madison), Brian Tessey (Wayne State football).
Leading returnees: Chris Young, 6-11, center (transferred to Kirtland); Joe Jones, guard; Nick Moore, 6-1, junior, guard; Dave Lusk, 6-2, junior, guard/forward; Don Stanaker, 6-3, forward.
Promising newcomers: Rob Sparks, 6-2, sophomore, guard; Justin Dckerman, 6-9, freshman, center.
Coretti's 1997-98 outlook: "We have a chance to be a pretty good team, if things fall into place. If all the young kids come along."

"With Chris, Nick Moore and Joe, they played almost 32 minutes a game last year, so the kids have a lot of experience. And everybody's healthy."

"It's going to be spread around a little more with Marc McDonald gone but we'll probably go to Chris a little more. He was our second-leading scorer and should emerge this year."

"Chris improved between his sophomore and junior years and he's improved again. He's getting stronger. He's finishing up almost everything inside now."

WESTLAND JOHN GLENN
Head coach: Mike Schettie, fourth season.
League affiliation: Western Lakes Activities Association (Blue Division).
Season opener: 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 9, at Ann Arbor Huron.
Last year's overall record: 9-13.
Notable losses: David Jarrett, John Becker, Brad Wilke graduated. Returning starter Justin Brown will miss season with a foot/ankle injury.
Leading returnees: Jason Crofton, 6-1, forward; Reggie Sizemore, 5-10, junior, guard; Eric Jolles, 6-0, sophomore, guard; James Harden, 6-2, forward.
Promising newcomers: Ty Haygood, 6-4, junior, forward/center; Yahu Moton, 6-3, sophomore, center; Cornelius Murray, 6-3, junior, forward; Kristie, 6-0, junior, guard; Steven Lawson, 6-0, junior, guard.
Schettie's 1997-98 outlook: "The kids have worked hard all year. They've done a real good job in practice and seem to be coming together real good. They're working together well."

"There's a brand new attitude. We should be competitive this year."

"We'll be quick. We'll run. We'll get it down the floor real quick with our guards. And we should be able to do a good job under the boards."

"The key to our season is how well we stay together. If we play as a team and hustle, create some mistakes and capitalize on them, we'll do alright."

LYONIA CHURCHILL
Head coach: Rick Austin, second season.
League affiliation: WAAA (Western Division).
Season opener: 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 9, vs. Dearborn.
Last year's overall record: 3-18.
Notable losses to graduation: Shawn Wolozky, Matt Van Buren.
Leading returnees: Corey Cook, 6-3, forward; Dale Smith, 6-2, forward; George Helman, 6-3, junior, guard; Lamar Smith, 6-1, guard; Eric Ullinger, 6-0, guard.
Promising newcomers: Randall Boboog, 6-0, sophomore, guard; Ryan Kearney, 6-1, junior, forward; Michael Kennedy, 6-5, junior, center; Ryan Vickers, 5-10, junior, guard; Justin James, 5-11, junior, guard; Jeff Palazzo, 6-0, junior, forward.
Austin's 1997-98 outlook: "We're a lot more athletic than we were last year."

"We've developed a nice core of athletes. Our seniors, led by Corey Cook and Smith, will be excellent post-players."

"I think so far they've done an excellent job in the low post, screening and blocking out and doing the fundamental things."

"Our best outside threat, Lamar Smith, has really improved his jump-shooting ability."

"Randall Boboog looks to be a good offensive threat as well. He's got great range and jump shooting ability."

"Right now the kids want to work hard. They believe they can finish in the top three in their (WAAA) division. Their goal is to make the conference tournament at the end of the season, be one of the top eight teams."

"Definitely, we'll continue to be aggressive. Our defense kept us in games last year."

LYONIA FRANKLIN
Head coach: Dan Robinson, second season.
League affiliation: WAAA (Western Division).
Season opener: 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 9, at Garden City.
Last year's overall record: 10-11.
Notable losses to graduation: Matt Bauman, Peter Sosa, Paul Tark, Mike Klaz.
Leading returnees: Rick Mongeau, 5-6, guard; Brian Facione, 6-3, guard; Eddie Wallace, 6-0, guard; Jay Fontaine, 6-3, forward.
Promising newcomers: Dustin Kuras, 6-4, junior, forward; Jacob Goodie, 5-3, forward.
Robinson's 1997-98 outlook: "We lost a lot from last year, of course, by losing a Division I player plus several other key players."

"We're definitely not as big as we were last year. However, we should be quicker. We need to have that four advantage."

"We're inexperienced, so I've been telling people we're teaching an old dog new tricks. We can't really play the way we have in the past. The faster we pick that up, learning the new styles, the more successful we can be."

LYONIA STEVENSON
Head coach: Tim Newman, second season.
League affiliation: WAAA (Western Division).
Season opener: 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 9, vs. Wyandotte.
Last year's overall record: 6-4.
Notable losses to graduation: All five starters — Scott Belinski, Ed Szumanski, Tyrone Davidson, Wayne Bowers, Mike Potempan.
Leading returnees: Mike Blazalla, 6-0, guard; Bill Bauer, 6-1, guard; Bryan Schief, 6-3, forward; Mike Vorkman, 6-4, forward.
Promising newcomers: Dave Strando, 5-11, junior, guard; Matt Freesein, 6-0, junior, guard; Ryan Tobin, 6-2, junior, forward; Brian Koch, 6-2, junior, forward; Paul Bowers, 6-4, junior, forward; Brian Vermillion, 6-4, junior, forward; Mike Kennedy, 5-10, junior, guard; Brad McCarty, 6-0, junior, forward; Keshi McChristian, 6-0, sophomore, guard.
Newman's 1997-98 outlook: "We just want to keep improving."

"The league itself was a little bit more balanced last year. There seems to be a bigger split this year. There are a lot of teams with a lot of kids returning. We're not one of them."

"It's how quickly they can buy into what we're doing and improve, so we can be competitive. That's what we're looking for at this point. Our kids are working real hard right now, and that's encouraging."

"We'll pretty much do what we did last year — go tempo when we can, picking and choosing our spots. We run a variety of defenses, depending upon whom we play what we need to do. We have very little game experience, so we don't know how quickly these kids are going to come around."

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Zebras will get along without Guess brothers

BY RICHARD L. SHOOK STAFF WRITER

There are no 'Guessing Games' in area boys high school basketball for the first time in four years.

Lorenzo Guess, and his twin brother, LaVelle, have gone on to college from Wayne Memorial.

That's a loss for fans of quality play and good kids, but feel no pity for Coach Chuck Henry of the Zebras.

Henry has coached more than 300 winners during his career and a good two-thirds of them came before the Guess brothers appeared on the scene.

Wayne lost four of five starters to graduation.

"We'll coach the kids who are here and, hopefully, teach them some good things," Henry said. "The greatest thing is to see them succeed when they go on."

All of Wayne's departed starters have gone on to college ball, not surprising since the core of the team produced some 60 victories in three years and were perennial regional champs.

"I think Romulus is just loaded," said Henry, who is in the highest level (Red Division) of the Mega Conference. "I'm sure Plymouth Salem is looking for a big year with all the returning people they have."

"You have to start with who has the most coming back. Those are two that I know of."

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