



Brian Steustloff (54) during a game last season.

Falcon cagers—small but 'exciting to watch'

By TOM BAER

Farmington basketball coach Bruce Brown had a special reason for following the fortunes of the Falcons' football team this fall.

Farmington had a good year in football, finishing in a tie for first place in the Inter Lakes League. And Brown hopes some of that success rubs off on his basketball team.

"That (the football success) has a tendency to develop positive attitudes in other sports," said Brown, who is

beginning his fourth year as Farmington's basketball coach. Two of our players, Rick Milner and Randy Meier, were members of that football team. It has to make them feel like winners."

Farmington's cagers will need all the winning feeling they can muster this year. The Falcons finished 5-15 overall last year and two all-league players (Mitch Thomas and Dave Tyler) from that team have graduated.

"We'll certainly lack size," Brown

said. "We're going to be hunting for rebounds. We'll be quick and we shoot pretty well. We're just going to try to scramble and play a tough defense."

Farmington's tallest returning player is Brian Steustloff, a 6-3 senior who played some last year. "He's improved a lot over last season," Brown said. "He's a lot more confident now."

OTHER FARMINGTON returnees are Milner (6-0) and Meier (5-10). Both started last year as sophomores. Some other players saw extensive action on coach Rich Roy's reserve team last year, and could help the varsity now. They are Mike Danna (6-1), Bob Finnell (6-2), Dick Radatz (5-11), Joel Soronen (6-1), and Tom Harmon (5-11).

All five Farmington victories came against ILL opponents last season. The highlight of the season was Farmington's upset victory over Pontiac Northern on the Huskies' court.

"For some reason, we played real well in the league," Brown said. "We could never put it together outside the league."

Livonia Stevenson, the defending ILL champion, looks good again this season, according to Brown.

"Stevenson has everyone back and they're big," he said. "And Pontiac Northern had the best reserve team it has ever had. But I'd also like to think we can be in there. We're small and we're young, but I think we should be an exciting team to watch."

Farmington opens its season on Dec. 2 at home against nonleague Livonia Bentley. Then the Falcons have road games at Plymouth Canton (Dec. 5) and Birmingham Seaholm (Dec. 9), before opening their league season at home against Livonia Stevenson on Dec. 12.

Farmington will host a Christmas tournament Dec. 22-23. Other entries are North Farmington, Farmington Harrison and Redford Union.

Dec 5	at Canton	8 p.m.
Dec 9	at Seaholm	8 p.m.
Dec 12	Stevenson	8 p.m.
Dec 16	at Harrison	8 p.m.
Dec 22	Tournament	7 p.m.
Jan 6	Northville	8 p.m.
Jan 9	Lakeland	8 p.m.
Jan 13	N. Farmington	8 p.m.
Jan 16	at Pont. Northern	8 p.m.
Jan 23	at Waterford	8 p.m.
Jan 27	Ferndale	8 p.m.
Jan 30	at Stevenson	8 p.m.
Feb 6	W.L. Central	8 p.m.
Feb 13	at Lakeland	8 p.m.
Feb 17	at Churchill	8 p.m.
Feb 20	Pont. Northern	8 p.m.
Feb 27	Waterford	8 p.m.



Bruce Brown—"We should be exciting to watch."

Big transfers should help Southfield-Lathrup cagers

By TOM BAER

The Metro Suburban Association will be a strong basketball league this winter, but Southfield-Lathrup could have the personnel to be competitive.

"I think we could have one of our better teams, one of the best we've had in the past few years," said Lathrup coach Jim Kourtkis. "We have some size and some decent shooters. We have to improve on some things, and only time will tell whether or not we do."

Lathrup finished last season with a 12-11 overall record and a 6-4 mark in the MSA. Several experienced players from that team will be back, and Lathrup has another important plus—Bill Phillips, a 6-6 junior who transferred from Crosstown Southfield High School.

Last year, Phillips had a remarkable sophomore season at Southfield, scoring 16.5 points per game and averaging 13.5 rebounds. For his efforts, he was selected to the Observer & Eccentric All Area team last March. Phillips became eligible to attend Lathrup when his parents moved into the Lathrup sending area.

"Even before I knew that Bill was going to be with us, I felt we had the potential to be a good club," Kourtkis said. "We looked good this summer and we played well together. We

had a lot of kids coming back. "But he (Phillips) is a definite plus factor as he gives us the one thing that we were lacking—a big man in the middle. With Bill, we have even more potential."

OTHER KEY Lathrup players are seniors Tom O'Rourke (6-2½), Gary Hawthorne (6-4) and Mark Johnston (6-2). All started last season. Seniors Casey Forward (5-11) and Steve Harwood (5-9) are battling it out for the other starting spot.

O'Rourke, who helped Lathrup win several games with his fine play, should have an excellent senior season. "Tom's one of the hardest working kids you'll ever see," Kourtkis said. "He's going to have a nice year."

Hawthorne never played competitive basketball before last season, but his experience could make him one of the league's better players now. "Gary's playing well," Kourtkis said. "He's jumping well and shooting better. He needs to be a little more aggressive and that's what we've been harping on."

Lathrup opened its season last Tuesday at nonleague Royal Oak Kimball. The Chargers play next on Dec. 2 at home against nonleague Berkley High. Lathrup begins its MSA season

Dec. 9 at home against Utica Eisenhower.

Bloomfield Hills Lahser, with 6-3 Mark Principe, could have a shot at the MSA title.

"The league is stronger this season than it has ever been," Kourtkis said. "Lahser looks awful strong. They have three or four starters back, plus they have several transfers in, all good-size kids. Rochester Adams has a young team. Their players are inexperienced, but they could come as the season progresses."

Bob Hern begins his second year as coach of Lathrup's reserve team.

Lathrup Basketball

Nov 25	at Kimball	8 p.m.
Dec 2	Berkley	8 p.m.
Dec 5	Eisenhower	8 p.m.
Dec 9	Ferndale	8 p.m.
Dec 16	at Stevenson	8 p.m.
Dec 19	Groves	8 p.m.
Jan 6	Oak Park	8 p.m.
Jan 9	at Dandero	8 p.m.
Jan 16	at Adams	8 p.m.
Jan 20	at Dearborn	8 p.m.
Jan 23	at Eisenhower	8 p.m.
Jan 27	at Seaholm	8 p.m.
Jan 30	at Lahser	8 p.m.
Feb 3	Southfield	8 p.m.
Feb 6	at Groves	8 p.m.
Feb 10	at Hazel Park	8 p.m.
Feb 13	Dandero	8 p.m.
Feb 20	at Adams	8 p.m.
Feb 24	at W. Bloomfield	8 p.m.



Tom O'Rourke during a recent pre-season scrimmage at Lathrup.

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