

Falcon seniors, juniors provide different looks

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Farmington boys basketball coach Bob Kaump can turn to his senior ballplayers for speed and shooting ability, his juniors for size and board strength.

The second-year mentor hopes the diverse attributes each class brings to this year's team will enable the Falcons to improve upon last season's 2-18 record.

Farmington lost three starters, including Steve Howell and his 12 points per game average.

Brandon London, a 5-foot-11 senior, could be ready to take over the role as the team's scoring leader since he is the top returnee in that department. London, also a track and cross country star, averaged seven points last year.

"He's not very tall, but he is a jumper and one heckuva runner," Kaump said.

Chris Cahill and Drew McDougall, a pair of 6-2 seniors, offer the most height to be found among the seniors.

"Drew does a lot of rebounding," said Kaump of the football team's quarterback. "He's very smart and can play all five positions."

DARIN MAGERA, a 5-10 senior, and William Reese, 5-11 senior, give the Falcons some varsity experience at guard. Magera brings back a five-point scoring average from last year.

Magera and Reese will be in the starting lineup, along with London, Cahill and McDougall, for Friday's season opener at Redford Union. Lakes Division play begins Tuesday, Jan. 12, at Westland John Glenn.

"Our returning seniors had a great deal of playing time as juniors," Kaump said. "Although they

Raiders switch to different style

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

North Farmington's boys basketball team is preparing to play a different style of hoop this winter.

Coach Tom Negoshian, adjusting to personnel changes, will have the Raiders playing a more open, free-wheeling brand of basketball instead of the conservative, patterned game it employed a year ago.

"Last year we were lacking offensively, but were second or first (in the league) in defense," said Negoshian, who played for the legendary Ralph Grubb at Pontiac Central. "We think we'll be a better shooting team and have more team speed."

"We'll be able to run again," he added. "I've always liked to run, and I think those things will be changed this year."

The Raiders, who open Friday with a home game against Berkley, will be a relatively young team. North lost four of its five starters, and Kurt Dudek is the only veteran with substantial experience.

SIX-FOOT-5 RICK Karcher, who is now on baseball scholarship at Indiana University, and 6-6 Chuck Howard are gone from the post. And the Raiders have to replace forward Robby Knapp and point guard Mark Taylor, as well.

Dudek, a 6-2 senior, will play a wing position, and Negoshian is counting on him to give North an outside shooting threat since the three-point rule will be in effect this year and, generally, be a team catalyst.

"We're looking for some things from him," Negoshian said. "He's our best shooter, so we feel he has some ability to shoot from the perimeter. We feel that's his strength."

The Raiders will have at least one, maybe two, sophomores on the varsity, and Negoshian is hoping to overcome the youth and inexperience with better team speed and quickness.

Matt Hoffman, a 5-7 sophomore, is the heir apparent to Taylor and has accomplished a rare feat by making the varsity now.

"THE ONLY other sophomore I've done that with was (former All-Star) Rick (Anderson)," Negoshian said. "Rick (Anderson) is in his second year (at college) ball at Eastern Michigan."

"(Hoffman) has good work habits and works at the game. He set this

basketball

are not very tall, they are aggressive, and last year's game time should certainly be of assistance.

"My kids are shooting for a .500 record. Not to be satisfied with it, but that's their goal right now."

Farmington's best hope of crashing the boards and outbounding its opponents lies with a trio of juniors, Mike Myers and Jason Brown, a pair of 6-5 forwards, and Mike Williams, a 6-4 center, would give the Falcons an imposing front line should all three take the court together.

But the cast of newcomers also has some scoring punch, too. Steve Quenneville, a 6-1 senior, was the junior varsity team's leading scorer a year ago, and Dennis Raimi, a 6-2 junior, was the No. 2 point getter.

"Our juniors are quite tall and are improving," Kaump said. "It will be important for us to find the right combination of players to use. I feel we can play 11 people and be very competitive."

"K-KAUMP ADDED the Falcons' style of offense will vary, too, depending on which players he has on the court at the same time."

"Sometimes we will press, fast break or slow down and be patient," he said.

Defensively, he is more definite on what the fans and opposing teams can expect to see from Farmington.

"Players increase their skills by using a tough, man-to-man defense," he said. "We will use an occasional zone."

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'I really feel we're going to have more speed and better scoring. The question is will we be as physical and as good at rebounding?'

— Tom Negoshian
North cage coach

as a goal — to make the varsity as a sophomore. He worked hard in the off-season to get where he's at."

Jim Ratajski and Bill Green, a pair of 6-4 seniors, will have to pick up the slack in the post if the Raiders are to have an effective running game. Ratajski missed more than half of the 1986-87 season with an ankle injury, and Green saw playing time off the bench.

"If we're going to have any board strength, it will have to be from Jim and Bill," Negoshian said.

John Shelton, a 5-10 senior, is another varsity returnee, but may have to play forward. With Dudek moving between guard and forward, Varnoy Hill will either start at the other guard or be one of the first men off the bench. The 5-9 senior played the second half of last season after transferring from Redford Bishop Burgess.

OTHER SENIOR players include 6-1 forward Matt Harmon, 6-2 forward Andy Drake, 5-11 guard Jeff Green and 6-1 guard Tony Burke. Harmon has been out with the chicken pox, Drake played on the JV team last year and the other two are newcomers to the program.

Juniors Matt Letter, 6-3 forward, and Joel Seams, 6-2 forward, are up from last year's JV unit. The other possible sophomore candidate is 6-5 Eric Carlson. But he is just 15 years old, and Negoshian may opt for the assurance of more playing time at the JV level.

"I really feel we're going to have more speed and better scoring," Negoshian said. "The question is will we be as physical and as good at rebounding?"

Hawk cagers get late start

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Boys basketball season begins Friday for the state's high school teams, but Farmington Hills Harrison had its first complete practice Monday.

The Hawks are farther behind schedule than most ballclubs due to the success of Harrison's football team. The school's grid season ended last Saturday when the Hawks played for the Class B championship in the Pontiac Silverdome.

But basketball coach Mike Teachman doesn't mind the imposition on his particular program.

"The benefit is that the players haven't been sitting around," he said. "They've been preparing for a state championship, and that has to get them keyed up mentally and emotionally."

— Mike Teachman
Harrison boys basketball coach

He said the players have not fully recovered from a broken arm he suffered playing football and might miss the basketball season, too, Teachman said.

Others making the transition from football to hoops include 6-foot-2 junior Chad Burgess, 5-9 junior Jason Lichtman and 6-1 senior Dave Romps. Burgess and Lichtman will be in the starting lineup Friday when the Hawks open on the road at Waterford Kettering.

Teachman must replace all five starters from last year's 10-11 season, including 6-8 Brad Ridgeway, who is now starting for Schoolcraft College. But the five who will take the court for the season-opening tip-off are returning players.

BURGESS AVERAGED 10 points and six rebounds last year, and 6-2

'The benefit is that the players (who played football) haven't been sitting around. They've been preparing for a state championship, and that has to get them keyed up mentally and emotionally.'

— Mike Teachman
Harrison boys basketball coach

senior Jim Hill will play opposite him at the other forward.

Lichtman and 5-10 senior Jason McDowell are the guards, and Chris Grisdale, a 6-5, 210-pound senior, takes over in the post after a year as Ridgeway's back-up.

"When you lose a guy who blocks as many shots as he did, you lose a lot of defense," Teachman said. "But we've changed and won't be playing as much zone."

The loss of Ridgeway and the introduction of the three-point shot brought that about. But the Hawks might be better overall defensively since they'll have to compensate for the absence of an imposing figure, as Ridgeway was, in the middle.

"Some of the others tended to get a little lazy, and Ridgeway was the eraser, making up for their mistakes," Teachman said.

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DEPTH AND balance could be the hallmark of this Harrison team, which hopes to be a contender in what is perceived as a balanced league.

"We ought to be able to put 10 players on the floor who can play," Teachman said. "We'll have at least five coming off the bench."

The 6-3 Wauldron, who used his basketball skills to make leaping catches as a wide receiver in football, averaged 13 points and eight rebounds on the junior varsity last year, and 6-3 junior Marc Mack averaged 11 points as a JV player.

In addition, Coleman, a 5-9 guard, averaged 20 points per game as a freshman playing on the Albion Junior varsity last year, and there's 6-5 junior Steve Hempel to back up Grisdale.

"The schedule favors us, too," said Teachman. The Hawks don't play a division game until after the holidays, and that will allow them to catch up after the football delay.

"That gives me time to iron things out," he added. "That's going to help us with the football team going to the Dome and being a young team. This team is only going to get better."

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