

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1993

# SPORTS

B



## Falcons boast experience, talent

Farmington has experience and talent on its boys basketball team, but the Falcons must play well to overcome a lack of height.

BY DAN O'MEARA  
STAFF WRITER



Farmington High is counting on a core group of experienced and talented basketball players to lead the Falcons to a winning season in the 1993-94 boys campaign.

The Falcons begin their third year under coach Denny Mikel and return seven seniors from a team that was 8-14 last year.

"We lost five games by five points or less," Mikel said. "With the experience we have coming back, hopefully, we can turn the corner and those close games can be wins."

"I expect we'll be much better than we have been in the past. We're just much more positive and expect to have a very competitive and successful season."

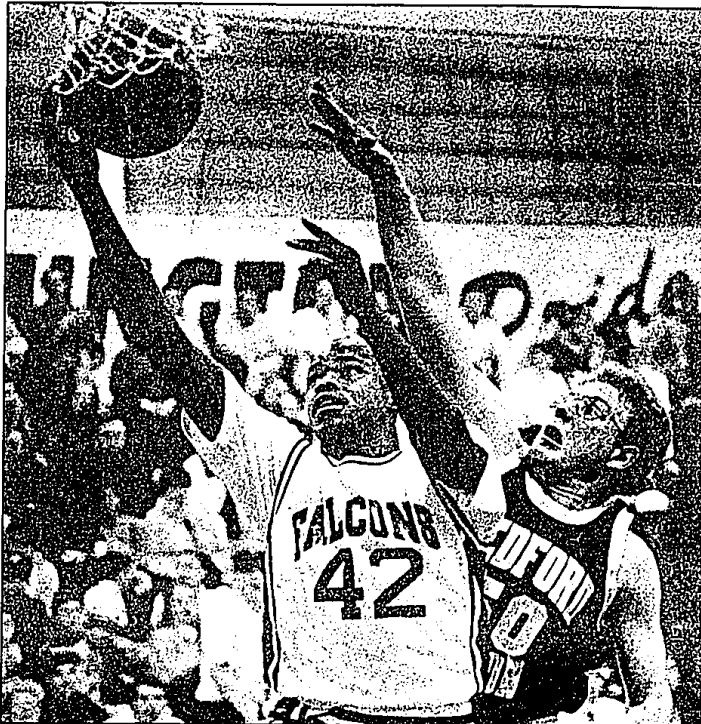
The returning players are 6-foot-1 Scott Menser, 6-1 Jason Jackson, 6-1 Kevin Afflerbaugh, 6-2 Stan Lewis, 6-3 Mike Tokar, 5-11 Tony Smolek and 5-10 Harvey Hicks.

The Falcons also welcomed back 6-3 senior Steve Juncak, who played at Farmington as a sophomore and transferred from Birmingham Groves.

Menser will play a wing position and give Farmington an outside scoring threat. He was one of the top three-point shooters in Oakland County, making 69 of 157 shots for 38 percent. He averaged 14 points overall.

"He has to be our go-to guy if you want to pick somebody," Mikel said. "I look for him to be one of the outstanding players in the conference. When teams look at Farmington, I think their main concern is how to contain Scott."

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BILL BRISLER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Veteran player: Senior Stan Lewis returns to the Farmington starting lineup after averaging 11 1/2 points a game last year.

### Pawlewicz top swimmer

Karl Pawlewicz of Farmington Hills was highlighted in a recent issue of Swimmer's World for swimming the fastest time in the nation this year in the 50- and 100-yard freestyles. Pawlewicz swam the times at the Michigan Short-Course State Championships last March at Saginaw Valley State University.

His time in the 50 breast stroke was the second fastest and his 100 individual medley time was sixth. He set state records in the under-12 category with his times.

Pawlewicz, an eighth-grader at Our Lady of Sorrows and member of the Michigan Stingrays team, also was seventh in the 200 IM, eighth in the 50 butterfly and 100 breast stroke.

Tim Muir, Dan Gabriel, Kirk Moundros and Pawlewicz set a state record and had the third-best time in the medley relay and fifth in the freestyle relay. Hannah Pawlewicz was fourth in the 10-and-under 50 freestyle.

### Fury handles competition

The Farmington Fury, the first premier soccer team in Farmington, is learning about competition at the highest level and doing well in the process.

The under-15½ boys (ninth- and 10th-graders) has compiled a 3-1-1 record in the indoor season. The Fury, formerly known as the Farmington Bandits, was the runner-up in Division II select a year ago and tied for the Division I select title last spring.

Coach Tom Faro retained 12 of the 16 players from that team and added six newcomers to complete an 18-man roster.

"I think we'll surprise some of the existing premier teams with the talent we have," Faro said. "Our No. 1 goal is to compete."

"If the guys play to their potential and play as aggressively as the other teams, the wins will come. We have lots of time to prepare for the outdoor season."

The main strength of the team is the midfield where newcomers Alan Bedokar, Nick Edgeworth, Matt Smith and Nate West help take the load off Chad Goshorn (two goals), Dave Viano (10 goals/10 assists) and Phil Wantin (three/two).

## Hawks made '93 comeback

BY DAN O'MEARA  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills Harrison completed a remarkable comeback story by winning the Class A football championship last week.

With many of the same players from a team that was 4-5 last year, the Hawks regained the Western Lakes Activities Association title, gave coach John Herrington his 200th victory and won four playoff games to finish 11-2.

"They didn't like being the second team in Harrison history to have a losing record, and they were determined it wouldn't happen again," Herrington said.

Looking at scores, the Hawks weren't that bad a year ago, Herrington added. The worst defeat was a 21-7 loss to Walled Lake Western, the 1992 WLAA champ and Class A runner-up.

"We were close enough that an extra year could get us over the hump," he said.

Harrison had returning starters in Gary and Marc Lesperance,

### FOOTBALL

Tim Bares, Charles Bambenek, Steve Shaleh, Nick Williams, Kevin Bryant, Brendan Cotter, Nick Burgess and Dave Hensel.

But the Harrison program also prepared Jason Blumberg, Chad Ziminsky, Matt Zimmerman, Ed Kennedy, Brock Gove and Rick Smith to play well as seniors. The same can be said of juniors Jim Struble and Evan Jefferson and sophomore Jason Granger.

"We knew guys like Brendan Cotter were solid high school players," Herrington said. "Joe Pesci's emergence (at quarterback) had as much to do with us being successful as anything."

That holds true for Bambenek at linebacker, too. Senior Gary Lesperance and Brock Gove also made strides on the defensive line, and Gove was outstanding as the kicker.

"(Bambenek) improved a lot

late in the season," Herrington said. "He really came on and was a complete linebacker. Gary Lesperance improved tremendously, and Brock Gove played very well in all the playoff games."

### College potential

While the '93 Hawks were largely a team without any individual stars, four seniors have the potential to continue playing in college, according to Herrington.

"Burgess is a possible (Mid-American Conference) player. Pesci can play quarterback. For someone, Kennedy has the raw skills to play somewhere and Gove would love to be a kicker or play defensive end."

The key game for Harrison was a 21-6 win over Northville in the third week of the regular season, according to Herrington. It was the first Western Division game, and the Hawks made it their goal

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## Lack of rematch begs question

The question was asked by a colleague last week, and it's one that probably will never be answered to the satisfaction of all.

Was Farmington Hills Harrison's state football title tainted by the fact the Hawks didn't have to play Birmingham Brother Rice again?

With apologies to anyone who thinks this is an attempt to detract from Harrison's big moment, I put that question to coach John Herrington earlier this week.

"All we're claiming is we won the state tournament," he said. "Every game is different. If we had played Rice again, nobody knows what would have happened."

"We're not claiming to be the

best team in the state. All we're claiming is that we're the Class A champions in the tournament."

If anyone needs to be reminded, Rice defeated Harrison 35-0 in the last game of the regular season. I would like to offer a few thoughts on that subject (and others).

Nobody with an objective mind would suggest Rice's victory was a fluke. That would be silly. The Warriors won convincingly, and that's what made it so astonishing.

If they played again, I don't necessarily think Rice would win, but the Warriors would certainly be favored. Everyone had picked Harrison in the wake of its 7-6, double-overtime victory over Westland John Glenn the previous week.

Would the score be 35-0? I think a repeat of that outcome would be unlikely. The halftime score could have been 6-0 (first half) or 14-0 (if the Hawks don't give up a touchdown pass on fourth-

and-21. Rice scored early in the third quarter, and the situation snowballed when Harrison fumbled the ensuing kickoff.

But some things are just inexplicable. A lot of people have wondered how Rice could move the ball so effectively on the Hawks shut down a rather potent Harrison offense and lose the next week in the first round of the tournament.

I have wondered this, too: Did the Warriors think the playoffs would be a breeze if Harrison, which had beaten AA finalist John Glenn — a team as good as any in the state, could be had so easily?

### Emotion plays role

What all of this suggests to me is how difficult it is for high school football teams, even the really good ones, to be prepared emotionally to play back-to-back big games.

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