

## Basketball season arrives for the Pioneers

### Coach knows his players

by SCOTT NEWTON

Coach Dan Brisbin has an advantage over some other first-year coaches in that he's coached most of the members of this year's SUHS boys basketball team.

Under Brisbin's guidance the past three years the freshman teams have compiled a 42-12 record, which includes a 17-3 season last year.

"It's helped us, I think," Brisbin said about having coached most of the players on this team as freshmen. "We might be a little bit further ahead than what we could have been."

The players won't have to adjust to a new system, new terminology or a new philosophy.

"The way that I like the game to be played is as fast as possible, a running style of game," Brisbin said.

He wants this year's Pioneers to take advantage of opportunities for quick scores, and added that they'll run pressure defenses.

"I think that fits this group very well," Brisbin said.

Five lettermen return, including Bob Nippert, a second team all-league selection last year who averaged about 13 points a game.

Other returning lettermen, all seniors, include 6-foot Mitch Paola, 6-2 Steve Brader, 5-8 Marvin Schaffer and 6-foot Randy Martin.

Others that will be on the varsity include Steve Palmer, 6-foot senior, Stu Hoffman, 6-2 junior, Mike Marlee, 6-1 junior, Gordon Brinser, 6-2 junior, Mike Lund, 6-foot junior, Troy Wolf, 5-10 sophomore, and Steve Pettingill, 6-2 sophomore.

Brisbin said that there is good competition for starting positions, and added, "I think, from looking at three weeks of practice, that we're going to have adequate depth."

"I think there will be some kids that can go in off the bench and pick up the slack."

Brisbin said that he didn't get to watch Nippert play that much last year as he was usually scouting other teams. He started off real strong this season, Brisbin said, but was slowed down by a minor injury.

"He's doing a tremendous job at this point," Brisbin said. "He's our team leader. The other players look

to him. He's the guy we go to when we need something done."

Brisbin will be looking for Palmer to take some of the pressure off Nippert.

"He's probably our best outside shooter," he said. "He's a streak-type shooter. He can really shoot when he's on."

"He does some other things well for us, too. He's a good passer, a good ball handler."

Marleau is shooting well, Brisbin said, and Hoffman, a transfer student from Parkrose, is reportedly shooting and rebounding well.

Brisbin said that sophomores Wolf and Pettingill are improving daily.

"Troy's a good all-around ball player. He does everything well," Brisbin said.

About Pettingill, Brisbin said, "He's a very good rebounder, and a good, solid defensive player."

The sophomores could "really be a factor," he said.

Brinser will be backing up Nippert at center. He's primarily a rebounder and defensive player, according to Brisbin. "He's very physical," Brisbin said. "He does a good job of getting body position. He's very seldom out of position. He's a very intelligent player."

Another intelligent player, he said, is Lund. "He will play strong guard and basically determine what we're doing offensively. The strong guard keys the offense as to what we do," Brisbin explained. "He's a good one for that position since he has such good court awareness."

Lund is also a good outside shooter, Brisbin said.

In league play the teams to beat will be West Linn and Oregon City, Brisbin said. Sweet Home and Silverton also reportedly have the potential to do well.

"We feel that we can play any of those people," he said.

"Again, it depends on how much (our) people improve, and accept their roles. But, they're real positive so far. They're working hard. I think they believe in themselves."

"It's kind of hard to tell right now how we stack up. We kind of need a ball game to see people in action and see how things will go against some competition."

Brisbin expects the first of the season to be tough. They'll be playing some teams that plan on being in the state tournament.

"Preseason's a learning experience, and we'll have to accept it as that," he said. "But, we want to win as many ball games as we can."

"Right now our running game in practice is a little inconsistent. We run fairly well some days, and on other days we throw the ball away and commit turnovers."

"I think our coaches have to be a little bit patient with them."

"It takes some experience in game situations to see those things. Hopefully by league they'll know what's acceptable and what's not as far as the running game goes."

The Pioneers, 5-17 last year, look to be a factor in this year's league race. The top three teams qualify for the state playoffs, with the first-place team getting an automatic berth in the state tournament.

Brisbin feels there are some factors that will work in SUHS's favor this season.

He said that he's got an intelligent group, a group that picks things up quickly. He said that they work hard and are positive.

"I think those are attributes that will make up for some things, like their lack of size," Brisbin said.

"I feel we're going to be a fairly good shooting team. I think the shooting has improved over last year."

"And, I think the depth is a little better this year than it was last year. We have more ball players that we can rely on."

He added, "The belief we want to instill in the players is that any time they step on the floor they can beat whoever's standing out there waiting for them."

The first game for the Pioneers will be away, at Gresham, Friday night.

### Pioneers in new district

The OSAA's Board of Control voted unanimously to approve a new district plan, and SUHS Athletic Director Mike Kostuba was relieved.

He's been worked on the redistricting project for four years. "It's been a long struggle," he said Wednesday morning.

"I think there was a lot of relief for a lot of people that had spent a lot of time on it," he said.

### Height, speed in girls' favor

by SCOTT NEWTON

Although the Pioneer girls basketball team could have as good of size as anyone in the league, don't expect them to play a straight set-up offense.

"We have some patterns off the fast break we'd like to run before we settle down into our offense," said John Smith, who is starting his second season as head coach.

Although a tall front line may be the Pioneers' main asset, speed runs a close second, according to Smith, who plans on taking advantage of that fact.

Inexperience is the liability they'll have to work with. Only four of the top 13 girls in the program have varsity experience.

One of those returning lettermen is Dawn New, a three-year letter winner and a second-team all-league selection last season. The 6-foot senior averaged about 12 points and seven rebounds an outing.

New scored 28 points, a school record, during the opener at David Douglas Tuesday night, a 51-41 loss.

Also returning is Cindy McCoy, a 5-10 senior who averaged nine rebounds an outing.

McCoy was the team's most improved player last year, Smith said. Junior Linda Mosbrucker, a 5-7 junior and two-year letter winner, is the team's outside threat.

Becky Rodriguez, a 5-5 senior, is the other returning letterman. Although she didn't start last season, Smith said she played well off the bench.

A bright spot at point guard could be Amy Aschoff, a 5-7 junior. "She's coming along real well," Smith said, adding that she has good court sense and composure.

He said that she's the best they've got as far as being able to shake off a mistake.

Kelly Garlock, a 5-8 junior, will substitute at the post for New and McCoy. "She's looking real good," Smith said.

Peggy Gillies, a 5-7 junior wing and point guard, is out with an ankle injury right now, but will be expected to contribute.

Smith expects Shelley Petrie, a 5-5

senior, to contribute later on this season. She hasn't been out the past two years, but Smith reports seeing signs of improvement.

Two sophomores, 5-5 Jill Ingram and 5-6 Sharon Jensen, give Smith reason to be optimistic.

"Both are exceptional athletes and will probably help us most defensively," Smith said.

He said that Ingram could be their best defensive player, and that Jensen could very possibly lead the team in steals.

Three junior girls that will play varsity and junior varsity, "to assure their progress in the program and to get them the playing time they'll need," include 5-8 Margaret Blackburn, 5-8 Sandra Peterson, and 5-foot Carolyn Botchels.

A number of people involved in the program are getting a late start. Smith, an assistant football coach, started late because of the state playoffs. New was on the volleyball team, which qualified for state.

Rodriguez was on the water polo team, which went to state, and Assistant Coach Molly Knudsen was involved in gymnastics until a little over a week ago.

"We're getting a slow start, but the attitude and enthusiasm is real good at this point," Smith said.

Out of a record turnout of 50 girls, the three teams have been pared to 36.

Smith, who directed the girls to a 7-13 finish last year, would like to turn the recently-founded Sandy program around this season.

"Our philosophy is to try to move the ball as quickly down court as we can and take advantage of any opportunities we get as far as outmatching people," he said.

He added that the preseason schedule will be tough, and that he'll be using the time before league play gets underway to find combinations that work well.

"To say I wasn't concerned with the preseason record would not be totally true, but our number one objective is to just look for combinations."

"This will be the first time that a lot of these girls have played together, and we're still learning some of the things we're capable of doing."

Gresham, Jackson and David Douglas are expected to be among the tougher teams Sandy will play

before running into Timber Valley League opponents.

"Our schedule is very competitive, to put it politely," Smith said.

"In order to stay with those people we're going to have to play fairly aggressively and keep our mistakes to a minimum."

About the league race, he said, "I see Oregon City clearly a step ahead of everybody. They probably should repeat this year in taking first place in the league."

"They have a lot of people back and they have a lot of depth." The varsity only lost one regular season game, and the junior varsity went undefeated, he added.

West Linn, with the aid of a 6-2 transfer student from Washington, and Silverton, which returns most of its team, also are expected to be in the thick of it.

"Depth-wise, we have some pretty talented people," Smith said. "It's just experience, that's our real concern at this point."

### Jones shows improvement

Ron Calhoun, Sandy Union High School counselor and wrestling coach, had some good news earlier this week about Chris Jones, an AAA state champion wrestler last year who was injured Nov. 3 in a car accident.

"I was with him Friday," Calhoun said, "and he seemed to be in about the same condition that he'd been in for the last three weeks. And then Saturday morning a girl he knew, from when she was wrestling manager at Estacada, walked in, and he just rolled over and said, 'Hi, Lisa.'"

"That's the first time he's said anything for three weeks, and he's been talking ever since."

Calhoun said he has been sitting up in a wheel chair some, and occasionally visits the waiting room.

"You can carry on a conversation with him. He remembers what you said, responds to what you say."

Calhoun said that he recognizes everyone, but does tire easily.

"Yesterday he showed his greatest sign of improvement. He ate part of a hamburger," Calhoun said Tuesday.

### Youth League basketball action

Sandy Youth League basketball players, pictured during recent games, include Tara Connelly, in the far left picture. Behind her is Jackie Kunkel. Shooting a free throw is Ray Douglas. Tima Stroupe is pictured below going to the basket. Christi Buck is behind her, and in the background is Kim Roberts. In the far right photograph, also going to the basket, is Tom Tarrants. Behind him is Bill Furlow, coach of the opposing team.

Photos by Scott Newton

