

'We're a big question mark'

Fraser High's Anthony Tucci, pictured in a game last year, returns to help lead the Ramblers. The senior guard and his teammates have been tabbed as a dark horse candidate to win the Macomb Area Conference Blue Division.

Photo by
Randy Wilcox



Big Reds, like several other local boys hoops teams, face rebuilding year

BY JON MALAVOLTI
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There's one thing to be sure about during the boys basketball season this winter — the unsure.

Following a mass exodus of talented players because of graduation, a realignment of divi-

sions, the addition of a new school and the departure of award-winning coaches, the Macomb Area Conference has a distinct new look.

In total, 46 of the 55 players honored as first-team All-MAC selections in 2007-08 were seniors — about 85 percent.

Many of those honorees played on division-winning teams, which, for most part,

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Hoops

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Teams, players to watch

Uncertainty, however, isn't absolute, as many MAC coaches have given early season nods to a few squads they expect to have success.

A tall Utica Eisenhower team and three-time defending division champion Romeo High should pose problems for the Big Reds in the MAC Red.

Voss sees the remaining spots in the division up for grabs among the rebuilding squads.

"The rest of it becomes a little of who performs well and who makes strides," the coach said.

Harrison Township L'Anse

Creuse senior guard Willie Cruz, one of the top returning players in the area could also give Chippewa Valley issues.

Fraser High, meanwhile, has been mentioned by some coaches as a possible dark-horse contender in the MAC Blue Division, but will likely have its hands full with other teams many coaches consider up-and-coming, such as Eastpointe East Detroit and Port Huron High. Warren Fitzgerald, a regular contender, should also be tough.

Senior center Matt Carden, one of the few non-seniors selected to the MAC's first-team All-Conference squads last year, will lead the Ramblers.

Save the date

The state of the great unknown

in the MAC doesn't mean fans shouldn't expect good games throughout the season. Locally, the following contests should be circled on every fan's calendar.

Fraser takes on the Big Reds in a tournament hosted by Chippewa Valley at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 29.

Chippewa Valley plays host to rival Macomb Dakota at 7 p.m. Jan. 7.

The Ramblers get a visit from East Detroit at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 21 in a key MAC Blue clash.

For complete schedules, visit www.highschoolsports.net or call your local school. For more and continuing coverage of boys basketball and other local sports, including game stories and photo galleries, visit our Web site at www.candog.com