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Game Preview: Franklin at Oakwood

Article by: Seth Keim

This one should be an exciting matchup in the Southwest Buckeye League (SWBL) as the Franklin Wildcats visit the Oakwood Lumberjacks. Last year, these two teams split their meetings in two completely different games. Look for this to continue that competitive play and keep an eye out as there are several intriguing prospects on both sides starting with a Preseason Player of the Year Candidate, Darren Rubin from Oakwood.

Oakwood

Rubin is a Senior Guard coming off a season where he averaged 22ppg (SWBL leader) and 4.2 rebounds per game. He has the Lumberjacks off to a 2-0 start this year, as they average 75 PPG and have won both their games by 25+. Rubin himself is averaging 14 points, 5 rebounds and 5 assists to start this year off. He is an Elite level guard who can score from anywhere on the floor. He can shoot from darn near mid-court and knock shots down with deadly consistency. That sniper mentality forces defenses to close out to him quick where he is more than willing to pass the ball off to teammates or drive down the lane and finish around the rim with silky soft touch and ability to put the ball in the basket with either hand. Rubin is clearly one of the best on the floor every night and has the ability to take over the game or dish the rock to Oakwood's other weapons.

Some of those other weapons for Oakwood are Daniel Hu (10.6 ppg) and Will Maxwell (15ppg, 4 assists), a budding Freshman who is off to a fantastic start. These two feed very well of the attention that Rubin inevitably draws and at the start of this season seem to be relishing in that role. Look for them to attack the rim or knockdown shots when Rubin gets double teamed.

Franklin

The Franklin Wildcats have also started this year off with a 2-0 record and are averaging 70 PPG. For them, it is all about their ability to shoot the ball, starting with Zach Winton and Will Emrick. These two are deadly accurate from outside and they can both catch fire on any given night and drop 15+ in a hurry.

Zach Minton is off to another hot start this year averaging 13 PPG while shooting an astonishing 60% from deep. Last year he averaged 14.4 PPG and shot 44% from beyond the arc. Minton will be looked at to lead the Wildcat attack as they try to outpace Rubin and company. He won't be alone as Will Emrick and Caden Johnson will be heavily involved as well.

Last year, Emrick averaged 13PPG, shooting 40% from deep and added 4 Rebounds for good measure. This year he is off to a slower start, averaging 9 PPG so far but is still hitting at his 40% clip from beyond the arc. As this season gets rolling look for the points per game to rise quickly and I wouldn't be surprised if Will doesn't knock down 4 or 5 3's on Fri Night.

Caden Johnson is another weapon for the Wildcats. Last year he only averaged 4 PPG and 3 Rebounds. This year is a completely different story as he leads the team with 13 PPG and 8 Rebounds. Johnson will be a player we will be watching with great interest on Friday Night. He might just be the 3rd weapon Franklin needs to grab a W or two come tournament time.

Final Notes:

Overall, this a very good matchup that features at least 6 prospects that will undoubtedly have a big say in the outcome of this game. Look for Franklin to try and double Rubin when possible but watch out, you can try to limit him but he can't be stopped for the entire game. Minton and Emrick will look to get a rhythm going from outside the arc and watch for that shooting to open up opportunities for Johnson.

For Oakwood, they are going to need to play tight D and make sure to close out on the wings to limit the Wildcat sharpshooters. Hu and Maxwell will need to continue their solid play and aid Rubin throughout. Rubin is going to have to work hard for his shots and get those to fall in traffic and knockdown a few from a long range.

Prediction:

Oakwood 65

Franklin 68