It's a whole new ball game

The new-look men's basketball team debuts Thursday

ALBERT REBOSURA
Sports editor

With a new coaching staff and a roster comprised of new players, the Ohlone College men's basketball program is completely different than last season's squad.

Under former head coach John Peterson, Ohlone finished with a 23-7 overall record and an 8-4 conference record, earning the sixth seed in the Northern California Regional Tournament. Their tournament dreams ended in the third round when they lost 67-60 to the Santa Rosa Junior College team that eventually won the state championship.

Replacing Peterson this season is Fremont-native Scott Fisher.

Fisher's basketball background includes a 16-year playing career overseas – most notably his hall-of-fame career in Australia's National Basketball League. As a coach, he spent five years as the head coach of the Perth Wildcats in the NBL and four years as an assistant coach at the University of Hawaii.

"My expectations are we'll represent Ohlone in a positive way," Fisher said. "We'll play hard. We'll play unselfish. We'll play basketball the right way and in doing so, we'll probably win more than we lose."

The Renegades have 17 players in the program, including three transfers and two red shirts who practice with the team but have to wait until next season for game action.

There are only four players returning from last season. Guards Mike Bethea and Ryo Tawatari played 15.8 minutes per game. The other two are forwards Guru Sanghera and Tawatari played 15.8 minutes per game. The other two are forwards Guru Sanghera and Jessie Wilesmith, guard Marcus Holmuist-Pollock and swingman Elliot Warren.

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Friday's semifinal games have the same start times as Thursday: 1, 3, 5 and 7 p.m.

The tournament ends Saturday with the consolation game being played at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. The championship game will be at 3 p.m.

The tournament honors former player Jonathan Wallace, who was a Renegade from 2002 to 2003. Wallace excelled on the court and in the classroom, earning a basketball scholarship at Adams State College. He died in a car accident – two weeks after accepting the scholarship.

According to Ohlone's website, a portion of the tournament's proceeds go to the Ohlone College Jonathan Wallace Memorial Scholarship Fund, established by his parents after his death.

The Ohlone men's basketball team will play at 7 p.m. Thursday and 5 p.m. Friday. Their performance on Thursday and Friday will determine when they play on Saturday.

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Offensive offense

The San Francisco 49ers sucked on Sunday.

They lost 13-10 to the last-place Arizona Cardinals in a controversial fashion – Colin Kaepernick fumbled the ball on a quarterback-sneak at the goal line with two seconds remaining.

You would think the 49ers – who had an extra week of preparation from their bye-week – would beat the Rams, who have money players injured.

I took some time to analyze the game and, after further review, the ruling on the field is that the entire offense is at fault for another lackluster performance.

The play calling by Head Coach Jim Harbaugh and offensive coordinator Greg Roman has been questionable.

The Rams' defense had eight sacks, forcing two turnovers. That's unacceptable for an offensive line that was annually the best in the league since Harbaugh's arrival.

Kaepernick's inconsistent play has been partly due to the coaching staff holding him back, but mostly because of his poor decision-making.

What I've seen from him this season is lack of touch on throws and his decision to force throws downfield – passes that are often incomplete – rather than throw short to gain positive yards.

His lack of pocket awareness and his trouble reading defenses doesn't help an injured offensive line.

Frank Gore and a smash-mouth mentality led the offense's success in previous seasons. For some odd reason, the coaching staff ditched a scheme that worked for an unpredictable offense that lacks an identity.

I suggest the 49ers revert to that style of offense. More importantly, let Kaepernick run – I was at Candlestick during the 2012 playoff game against the Green Bay Packers, and I saw him single-handedly win that game with his running abilities.

The 49ers 4-4 record is mediocre at best, and the caliber, and the lack of offense is killing them. Their defense is second in the league despite missing key players to injury.

With a division as tough as the NFC West, the 49ers better hope the offense doesn't flounder away their playoff chances.