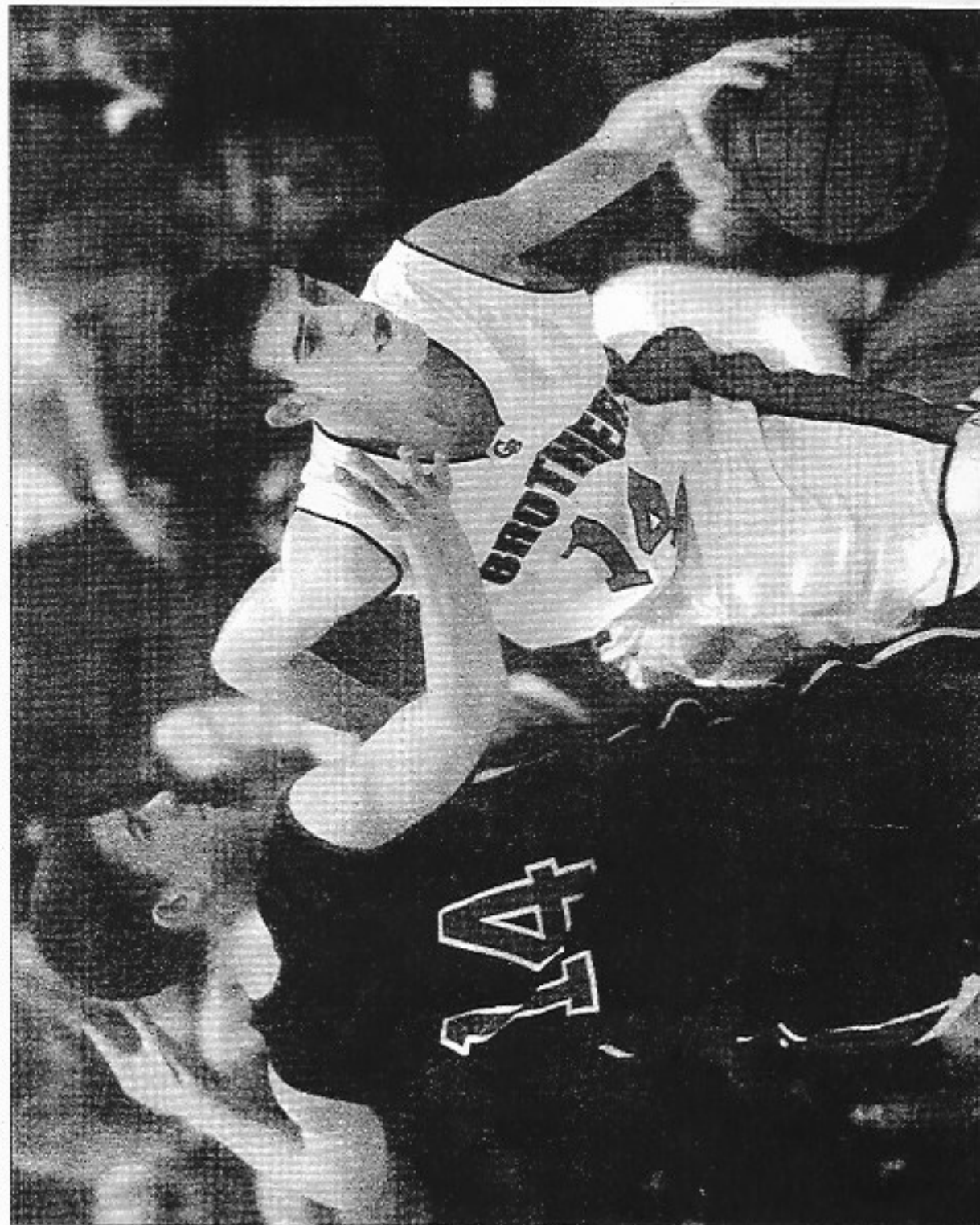


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HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL



Bo Henning drives around Union Mine's Austin Vonasek last year. Henning is averaging 27.6 points a game for his dad, coach Rich Henning.

JUST LABEL HIM ONE OF THE BEST

Christian Brothers star Bo Henning makes his case on the court

By Jason Jones
BEE STAFF WRITER

There are a lot of things you can call Bo Henning.

Opposing fans heckle Henning about his slender build and for wearing racquetball protective glasses while playing basketball. You can also hammer Henning for being the son of his coach, Rich Henning, at Christian Brothers High.

But Bo Henning is also one of the best high school basketball players in Sacramento.

The 6-foot-3 junior guard is averaging 27.6 points per game - second only to Cal-bound forward Ryan Anderson of Oak Ridge among area players.

"He's amazing," Oak Ridge coach Steve Scott said after a Trojan victory last week. "He's a great shooter. We were all over him, and he still drained them (from the outside with 26 points). He's the best shooter I've seen in quite a while."

Weighing just 165 pounds, Henning usually finds himself confronted by opponents who figure multiple defenders combined with physicality will slow him down. But Henning's relentless effort and quick release on his shot have proved hard to stop.

"People try to push me around," Henning said. "I try to be smarter."

Those smarties are aided by being the coach's son.

"Some weeks my body is just banged up, and it's hard to get up and down the court in practice. But I can take the hits."

Bo Henning

A 6-foot-3, 165-pound junior guard for Christian Brothers

"Sometimes after the game we bring it home and talk about it," Henning said. "We watch film together at home."

Rich Henning said he knows his son had to overcome the "Coach's Kid" label when he began playing varsity basketball as a freshman.

Rich Henning said he knew Bo would contribute, because he played with the Falcons before his freshman season during summer league games.

"He's always had nice form with his shot since the fourth grade," Rich said. "I wasn't sure that he would be able to play on the varsity level, but he proved to be one of the better players."

Henning proved to be a solid varsity player and an All-Conference player by his sophomore season in which he averaged 18.3 points and four assists per game.

His scoring has increased nearly 10 points per game because he takes the time to study the game with his father and has access to the gym.

Henning said watching film has allowed him to know the angles that best allow him to get open off screens and create opportunities for teammates.

But he's also taken a beating at times as the focal point of the Falcons' offense.

Scratches and scrapes from defenders and falls aren't uncommon as Henning works tirelessly to get open.

He has worn the racquetball glasses ever since getting poked in the eye playing against Sac High, causing caused him to miss four games.

"Some weeks my body is just banged up, and it's hard to get up and down the court in practice," Henning said. "But I can take the hits."

Henning is a three-sport athlete who was an All-SVC soccer player and also plays baseball. The constant activity keeps Henning on the slim side and also helps with his toughness.

He leads a team that has only three seniors

and admits to being too hard on his teammates at times, such as when the Falcons trailed Bellarmine Prep of Tacoma, Wash., by 16 at halftime in a December game. CBS rallied to win 57-56.

"He just snapped on us," teammate Kevin Farrell said. "Then he came back after the game and apologized."

Farrell calls Henning a "natural-born leader," and it's a role Henning takes seriously, even if it means taking the blame in losses.

"He puts a lot of that on himself," his father said. "That's why he might try to do too much in a game."

Behind Henning's sharpshooting and leadership, the Falcons hope to challenge for the title in the Sac-Joaquin Section Division IV Playoffs.

The Falcons are 10-13 while playing a tough non-league schedule and in the Sierra Valley Conference. The tough non-league and SVC slate has CBS in the upper half of the Division IV power ratings.

Henning said the team is evolving from one that just stands and watches him as everyone has begun to understand their roles.

If that continues, Henning doesn't mind if the fans mock the glasses or think he's just the coach's son taking all the shots.

He'll take being called a winner just fine.



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