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Orange County boys basketball preview: Top 5 players to watch



Mater Dei's Harrison Butler, right, puts up a shot in front of St. Augustine's Josue Lara in the Nike Extravaganza in Santa Ana on Saturday, February 4, 2017. (Photo by Paul Rodriguez, Orange County Register/SCNG)

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The Register's 2017-18 boys basketball preview's list of the top five players to watch this season.

Dawson Baker, Capistrano Valley: The 6-foot-3 senior guard might be Orange County's scoring champion this season, although he plays on a team with plenty of other scorers. He can score equally well from inside and outside. Baker scored 22 points a game last season.

Harrison Butler, Mater Dei: The 6-6 senior has been a fixture in the Monarchs' rotation since his freshman year. Butler, who averaged nine points last year, always has been a scoring threat around the basket with his excellent jumping skills. He added an outside shot last season that makes him even more effective. He recently signed with Southern Utah.

Spencer Freedman, Mater Dei: The 6-1 senior point guard is the most reliable player on the Monarchs roster. He can score when needed – his 17 points last season in a CIF-SS Open Division semifinals win over Chino Hills proved that. But Freedman most excels passing the ball on the fast break or in the half-court offense. He signed with Harvard.

Jake Kyman, Santa Margarita: The 6-7 junior is as smooth a player as there is in Orange County. He is a very good outside shooter and can quickly slice his way to the hoop. Kyman, who averaged 14 points a game last season, has drawn the recruiting attention of many top college programs.

Michael Wang, Mater Dei: He might be the Monarchs' scoring leader this season. The 6-10 senior, who signed with Penn, is a very good outside shooter for his size. If his inside game has developed then Wang is set for an outstanding season.

-STEVE FRYER


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Steve Fryer

Steve Fryer covers high school sports at the Orange County Register. He writes a weekly column on the county high school sports scene and also covers games and writes features. Steve also writes a weekly column that covers pro and college sports, and other topics. Steve does concert reviews for the Register, too, when time

permits. Steve's first byline appeared in the Register in 1979. He was in the inaugural class inducted into the Santa Ana Unified School District Sports Hall of Fame. Steve also is in the Southern California Interscholastic Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame, and was the first journalist to receive the Contribution to Education award from the Orange County Department of Education. Steve was honored as Champion for Character by the CIF-Southern Section.

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