

Thompson was an all-state choice three years at Roland, and certainly has justified that billing thru the early winter Iowans' first five games this month. His average is 16.8, fourth best on the all-tournament personnel scoring list.

Three of his starting mates all are veterans. Stan Frahm, 6-3 senior, and Chuck Vogt, 6-5 sophomore, are the forwards. Harry Wetter, 5-11 senior, and ~~Chuck Duncan~~ ~~brawny 6-5 senior~~ plays the opposite guard, and Chuck Duncan, brawny 6-5 senior, the pivot.

Strannigan does have a big man in 6-8, 235-pound Jim Sinning, Marshalltown, Ia., sophomore, but he has been used sparingly and doubtless is not ready for such a tempo as the tournament always produces. Duncan probably is the conference's best medium-sized center. He finished fourth among 1953 tournament pointsmen with 55 points and ninth in the conference scoring chase on a 13.7 average.

Overall, however, this is not a tall squad, nor is it deep. It will run into considerable trouble if either Duncan or Thompson falls over-often. For behind Duncan is the inexperienced Sinning and Bill Hale, a 6-5 junior, who did not play enough last season as a sophomore to letter. The No. 3 guard is Gerald Sandbulte, pudgy 185-pounder, who once played at Nebraska. Senior Don DeKoster, 6-3, is the first frontline replacement.

Yet by playing a slow possession game, Strannigan doubtless can guide his thin club thru the rigors of excessive fouling and fatigue, to cause considerable trouble on given nights. Bettering that sixth place finish ~~of last winter~~ in last year's tournament is within reach.