

SPORTS

'THAT'S JUST TUCK'

Blizzard forward's battle with Asperger's strengthens him on and off the ice

By Jared Rubado
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Junior hockey is all about opportunity. For some, it's a chance to take the next step in their game before competing in the college ranks. For others, it's one last chance to play the game they love before moving on.

In the NA3HL, kids are fighting to keep their careers alive. For Woodbury native Tucker Kruse, playing for the Alexandria Blizzard meant much more. Kruse is a 5-foot, 4-inch forward out of Cretin-Derham Hall High School. Not only does he have to overcome the lack of physical presence on the ice, he was born with high-functioning autism. From the time he laced up his skates, Kruse's father, Todd, knew that he would have to battle.

"We found out he had Asperger's when he was around 12 years old," Todd said. "Growing up, we knew

he was different than most kids."

Asperger's is a condition on the autism spectrum that affects a person's social life. Kids with Asperger's have a lack of social awareness, sometimes have a hard time making friends on their own and show an inability to read the thoughts and emotions of other people.

People with Asperger's often show an extreme focus towards one aspect of their life. For Tucker, his life is the sport of hockey.

High School

Life was not always easy coming up through school for Tucker.

Todd said Tucker endured the pressure of bullying in high school. However, it never deterred him from giving up his love for hockey. While Tucker was tested emotionally by some of his peers,

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“Work hard, do your thing and be yourself. There's nothing wrong with that.”

TUCKER KRUSE

Jared Rubado / Echo Press
Tucker Kruse looks toward the net with the puck against North Iowa on Jan. 11 at the Runestone Community Center.

An upset for the ages

Revering relives how he and his teammates shocked No. 1 SCSU

By Eric Morken
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Alexandria native Parker Revering has taken the long road to playing Division I hockey, but he did not have to wait long to experience the biggest thrill of his athletic career once he got there.



Revering

Revering is a freshman defenseman for American International College, a private school in Springfield, Mass.

with an enrollment of 1,372 students. The Yellow Jackets play Division II in every other sport but hockey, and even in hockey Revering admits that not many people knew about them. That's changed dramatically in the last week after AIC pulled off what



Photo by RJB Sports

Alexandria native Parker Revering handles the puck during a game with Division I American International College this season. Revering and his Yellow Jacket teammates just pulled off what is being called one of the biggest upsets in college hockey history by taking down No. 1 St. Cloud State in the NCAA Tournament.

some are calling the greatest upset in college hockey history by beating No. 1-ranked St. Cloud State in the opening round of the NCAA Tournament on March 29.

"It was unbelievable," Revering said. "I played three sports pretty much my whole life, and it's hands down the greatest experience I've ever been a part of."

Not many people gave AIC a chance in the opening round of the Western Regional in Fargo, N.D.

that night, but Revering said he and his teammates never doubted themselves.

This is a close group. A team that had already wrapped up the first-ever NCAA Tournament berth in program history after winning the Atlantic Hockey Conference Tournament.

The Huskies (30-6-3) came in as the dominant team in college

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Storhaug surprised, humbled by Hall of Fame honor

By Eric Morken
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Alexandria's Mark Storhaug was at the 2018 boys state swim meet at the University of Minnesota when there was a break in the action between meets.

Storhaug, a 30-year head coach for the Cardinal swim teams, took the time to read over the bios of others who had been inducted into the Minnesota Swim Coaches Association Hall of Fame. There was current Alexandria swim coach Kathy Walker, along with many others that Storhaug had known and grown to admire over his decades of being on the pool deck as both an athlete and a coach.

"I had kind of lost track of it," Storhaug said of thoughts of joining the Hall of Fame himself someday. "When I was looking at all the pictures and the bios that went with them, I saw former colleagues and coaches I knew. The stories and the history of Minnesota swimming is so interesting."

Storhaug mentioned it to Walker how neat it was to see her up there.

"I think that spurred her on to nominate me and see if my story was qualifying," Storhaug said.

A Hall of Fame committee decided this year that indeed his story was worth joining that prestigious company.

Storhaug will officially be entered into the Minnesota Swim Coaches Association Hall of Fame on May 3 at a banquet in Minneapolis. It's an honor that took him by surprise almost five years after his decision to step away from his head coaching duties with the Alexandria boys and girls.

"It's very humbling," Storhaug said. "Nobody thinks that their story would qualify themselves. There's so many great

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Storhaug

Hasz sisters continue to set Gopher records

By Eric Morken
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If anyone wondered how the talent of Alexandria's Megan and Bethany Hasz would translate from dominant careers with the Cardinals to the Big Ten level with the Gophers, those questions are quickly being answered.

The Hasz twins, red-shirt sophomores on the track this spring, are already cementing themselves as some of the best in University of Minnesota history as they continue to break school records. They set new Gopher marks in the 3,000-meter and 5,000-meter races during the indoor season. Now they



Megan Hasz



Bethany Hasz

have the new records in the outdoor season for the 5,000 and 10,000-

meter races.

At the 2019 Iowa State Classic indoor meet, Megan placed third overall in the 5,000-meter run with a career-best time of 15:51.55. That was almost eight seconds faster than Megan Duwell's previous Minnesota record time of 15:59.23 that she ran in 2010.

At that same Iowa State

meet, Bethany improved on her own Gophers' record in the 3,000-meter run when she finished in 9:11.46.

The Hasz sisters hit the ground running in their first meet of the outdoor season. Bethany already held the 5,000-meter Gophers record, and she bested her previous time at the Stanford Invita-

tional on March 29 by finishing in 15:45.72, nearly 14 seconds faster than her previous PR.

Megan then took her turn. She raced in the 10,000-meter run and set her own school record. Megan finished that race in 33:09.57, beating the previous Gophers record of 33:24.93 set by Laura Docherty in 2013.



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