



David Samson / The Forum

Todd and Elizabeth Medd hold a Fargo Davies football helmet that honors the memory of their son Liam who died last February and displays the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

'MORE THAN JUST A MEMORIAL'

Fargo Davies, South football teams honor late classmate with helmet decals

By Carissa Wigginton
The Forum

Fargo

The Fargo Davies and Fargo South football teams see a 10-digit phone number and the initials 'LM' every time they put their helmets on. Each time they take the field this season, they're playing for more than just a win.

A decal bearing Liam Medd's initials, a Fargo Davies student who died by suicide in February, and the number to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-8255) is on the back of every South and Davies football player's helmet this year.

The stickers — black with white writing — honor the memory of Medd, who was



Medd

15, and spread awareness of the suicide prevention hotline.

Liam's parents, Todd and Elizabeth Medd, are happy two local teams are honoring their son, but it's bigger than that for them.

"It's an honor for him to be memorialized that way, but just as important, if not more important, is making sure that we had the phone number for the Suicide Prevention Lifeline on there so that it was more than just a memorial," Todd said. "It was a very action-oriented step by both schools and coaches and teams to do that."

Liam, who played baseball and football, went to school at Davies, but grew up with a lot of the kids from South through youth sports. He was a second baseman in baseball and played cornerback and wide receiver in football.

Davies head football coach Wayne Werremeyer, in his second year at the helm, contacted the Medds about the decals. The idea came after he was approached by some players in the program last school year after Liam's death.

"We had a group of kids, football players, that decided mental health was an issue and suicide for young males was an issue that we just don't talk enough about,"

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Fargo Davies players Jameson Wanzek, Dylan Feldner and Jack Bullinger along with their Eagles teammates are wearing decals on their helmets this season to support the Medd family and raise awareness for suicide prevention.

Boscan playing for father

RedHawks infielder, batting champion
Boscan motivated by memory of his dad

By Eric Peterson
The Forum

FARGO — Fargo-Moorhead RedHawks infielder Manny Boscan won the regular-season American Association baseball batting title this summer in a season in which he wanted to honor his father.

Anderson Boscan died a little more than a year ago from COVID-19, said Manny, a 28-year-old from Maracaibo, Venezuela.

"My motivation this year is my father because my father passed away last year from COVID," Boscan said. "That's my motivation."

Boscan has been a valuable player for the RedHawks, playing four different infield positions, while batting .344 with 24 doubles, seven home runs and 63 RBIs in 91 games. He helped F-M finish second place in the North Division to earn a spot in the playoffs. The RedHawks (61-38) host the Milwaukee Milkmen (59-41) at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 8, at Newman Outdoor Field in a one-game wildcard



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Fargo-Moorhead's Manuel Boscan warms up at Newman Outdoor Field in July.

playoff. The Chicago Dogs (63-37) won the North Division.

Boscan edged teammate Kevin Krause for the league batting crown. Krause finished the regular season with a .341 batting average to finish in second place. The RedHawks also finished 1-2 in the league batting title race last season. This summer, Boscan has played first base, second base, third base, catcher and designated hitter for the RedHawks, with 32 games coming at second base.

"The level of consistency is just incredible, but also his

ability to play above-average defense everywhere," RedHawks manager Chris Coste said of Boscan. "That's probably why he should be in the running for most valuable player in the league because of his ability to play all these positions well above average."

When the RedHawks acquired Boscan from Milwaukee in the offseason, he was primarily projected to play designated hitter. Those plans changed after RedHawks second baseman Trace

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Fargo-Moorhead Softball Hall of Fame to induct 2021 class this Sunday

The 2021 Fargo Moorhead Softball Hall of Fame induction ceremony is 1:30 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 12, at the Northside Softball Complex in Fargo. The 2021 Fargo Moorhead Softball Hall of Fame inductees are: Collette Folstad; Doug Millar; Charlie Johnson; Willie Brown; Rick Roggensack; and Jim "Jolly" Hirschert.

The event will be held in conjunction with the 2021 North Dakota USA Softball Co-Ed State Slow-pitch Softball Tournament.

Collette Folstad has been a part of the Fargo-Moorhead area softball scene for 29 years as a player, coach, and sponsor. She played, coached and sponsored 21 years of fastpitch and eight years of slowpitch. Collette's teams played in 18 state tournaments and earned two runner-up and a third-place finish at the national level. She also held many positions of leadership with the F-M Women's Softball Association and was an advocate for young women in the game.

Doug Millar played fastpitch softball for 20 years for several teams, including Lepird

Drywall, Fargo Stars, Moose Lodge and Coors Light. He also managed fastpitch teams for five years. Millar was a top-notch first baseman in the field and at the plate, and he played on three state championship teams. He played in eight national tournaments and was named to the national All-American team in 1986. Millar also served in leadership positions with the F-M Fastpitch Softball Association. Charlie Johnson has umpired fastpitch softball in the Fargo-Moorhead area for 35 years. He has umpired 42 state tournaments and 49 national tournaments. Johnson also umpires NAIA and NCAA collegiate fastpitch. Johnson is widely considered one of the best umpires to have come out of the Fargo-Moorhead area.

Willie Brown played and umpired slow-pitch softball for 39 years. He played for several teams, including Budweiser, Miller Lite, Elks and The Box. Willie was known as a solid hitter and outfielder and catcher. He played for six state championship teams and played in six national

SOFTBALL: Page B31

TUESDAY'S METRO HIGH SCHOOL VOLLEYBALL ROUNDUP

West Fargo Sheyenne 3, West Fargo 3

WEST FARGO — Sheyenne downed rival West Fargo 25-17, 18-25, 25-21, 25-19 on Tuesday in Eastern Dakota Conference action.

Kailee Waasdorp was strong on both offense and defense, tallying 15 kills and 32 digs to lead the Mustangs. Lexy Terhark added 10 kills. Kennedy Colter totaled 22 assists, while Khloe Brown and Reagan Bogenreif each had six blocks.

Nadia Chwialkowski had a double-dou-

ble with 28 digs and a match-high 17 kills for the Packers. Chloe Pfau added 11 kills and Raina Chwialkowski posted 26 digs. Olivia Soine recorded 36 assists.

Sheyenne improved to 8-2 overall and 3-0 in the EDC. West Fargo dropped to 7-3 overall and 2-1 in the EDC.

Fargo Davies at Wahpeton

WAHPETON, N.D. — Fargo Davies' match at Wahpeton was suspended after a Wahpeton player was injured. The schools will discuss when to complete the match.

Davies is 7-2 overall and 2-0 in the EDC. Wahpeton is 2-7 overall and 0-2 in the conference.

Fargo South 3, Grand Forks Central 0

FARGO — South rolled to a sweep over Grand Forks Central in EDC action.

Brynn Nelson paced the Bruins with 12 kills. Emma Dalby followed with 11 kills and Gen Gard added nine kills. Maddie Jackson tallied 33 assists and Laura Green anchored the defense with 23 digs.

South improved to 6-3

overall and 1-1 in the EDC. GFC dropped to 0-9 overall and 0-2 in the conference.

Fargo Shanley 3, Valley City 1

VALLEY CITY, N.D. — Shanley came back to earn a 24-26, 25-22, 25-17, 25-17 win over Valley City in EDC play.

Shanley improved to 7-3 overall and 2-1 in the EDC. Valley City fell to 3-7 overall and 1-2 in the EDC.

Fargo North 3, Fargo Oak Grove 1

FARGO — North notched a 23-25, 25-15, 15-21, 25-18 victory over

Oak Grove.

Sophie Pundsack and Ella Olson each had five kills for the Grovers. Taylor Christenson had 10 assists and Isabel Anderson tallied 14 digs.

North rose to 7-2 overall this season.

Barnesville 3, Moorhead Park Christian 0

BARNESVILLE, Minn. — Barnesville cruised to a 25-13, 25-23, 25-19 Minnesota volleyball sweep against Park Christian.

Park Christian's Andie Sandman had five kills and Belle Suckert and Ruth Harris both had

four. Mia Metzger had 10 set assists and Kendra Loeb had eight, and Avery Aakre had 15 digs.

Barnesville rose to 3-0 overall this season, while Park Christian fell to 0-3 overall.

Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton 3, Wadena-Deer Creek 1

WADENA, Minn. — D-G-F posted a four-set victory over Wadena-Deer Creek

The Rebels improved to 2-0 overall and Wadena-Deer Creek fell to 1-2 overall.

Forum staff reports

TUESDAY'S METRO HIGH SCHOOL BOYS SOCCER ROUNDUP

West Fargo Sheyenne 3, West Fargo 1

WEST FARGO — Sheyenne downed rival West Fargo on Tuesday in Eastern Dakota Conference play.

The Mustangs improved to 3-3-3 overall and 3-2-3 in the EDC. West Fargo fell to 2-5-2 overall and 1-4-2 in the EDC.

Fargo Davies 3, Fargo South 0

FARGO — Three different Eagles found the back of the net to spark Davies to a shutout EDC win over South.

Patrick Lawrence, Charlie Metzger and Bill Mukundiye each scored a goal for Davies. Raj Smith, Josh Peterson and Leon Hidanovic each tallied an assist. Davies goalie Esteban Nuñez made one save.

South goalie Chessen Coleman recorded eight saves.

The Eagles remain unbeaten, improving to 7-0-1 overall and 6-0-1 in the EDC. South fell to 2-4-1 both overall and in the conference.

Fargo Shanley 2, Fargo North 2

FARGO — The Deacons and Spartans played to a tie in EDC action.

Gannon Koltes and Gunner Schwartz each scored a goal for North.

Shanley moved to 2-3-3 both overall and in the EDC. North is now 4-3-2 overall and 2-3-2 in the EDC.

Moorhead 4, Grand Forks Red River 0

MOORHEAD — The Spuds rolled to a shutout win over Grand Forks Red River in nonconference action.

Moorhead improved to 3-1-1 overall. Red River dropped to 6-4 overall.

Forum staff reports



West Fargo Sheyenne's Dylan Sipe fires a shot past West Fargo's Teklezgi Berhe at Essentia Health Packer Stadium on Tuesday.

David Samson / The Forum

LM DECALS

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Werremeyer said. "So they got some petitions going to get some resources here at the school, and this was pretty much a piggyback off of that. What can we do to get this issue in front of these kids? And what can we do to maybe help one or two kids?"

Werremeyer reached out to Fargo South's head coach Tyler Kosel ahead of an Aug. 20 scrimmage between the two teams. Kosel was on board with the decals and a post-scrimmage talk. Around 200 Bruins and Eagles players gathered in the Davies gymnasium for a discussion on mental health and suicide prevention after the scrimmage.

The teams also heard about Liam and his story from the Medds, who have used their voice to reduce the stigma around suicide. The Medd family directed memorials to the Fargo Davies Turf

Fund, among other organizations Liam was a part of, and helped fund the turf field at the high school that was unveiled last month.

"The conversations are super important," said Werremeyer, who was Liam's baseball coach when he was about 8 years old. "We come to practice every day, and they're constantly getting told that if they need help to ask for help — what don't you understand about the plays we're running, about the schemes we're running?"

"But then it comes to mental health and all of a sudden it's not OK to ask for help; and that's something that we need to get past. When they have questions about mental health, it's no different than asking a question in a math class or asking a question on the football field."

The Medds created the 4-6-3 Foundation — a reference to their son's love of baseball — with the Dakota Medical Foundation earlier this

year to connect youth and adults to suicide prevention resources and help end teen suicide. They're especially trying to reach teenagers and teenage student-athletes.

"Liam was somebody that was a high achiever, an athlete, a straight-A student," Todd said. "What we always tell the kids is what happens in your mind with mental health and sometimes mental illness is no different than what happens with an injury on the football field. In fact, it's even more important because it can be so hidden and it can be so hard to diagnose."

According to the most recent full-year data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is the second-leading cause of death for ages 10 to 34 in the U.S. and in North Dakota. Nationally, men died by suicide 3.63 times as often as women in 2019, according to the data.

"Knowing that it's one of the leading causes of death for that age group

was a shock to us," Todd said. "We're trying to take away the mystery around it and kind of bring it into the light as best we can, so that we can have these open conversations and kids know they can reach out if they do have a concern and don't go the route that Liam went and others have gone."

There was a sense of urgency for the Medds to start the 4-6-3 Foundation after the death of their son. The loss is heavy, but they hope speaking out prevents more suicide deaths, Elizabeth said. "It was very difficult. We're still going through the grief process and will probably be for the rest of our lives," Elizabeth said. "But we didn't want to wait and have more of our youth not know that there is hope and that there are resources. We had to get the message out."

The Medds also noted the pandemic's toll on the country's mental health, especially children, whom it

has been "extremely stressful" on, Todd said.

Todd and Elizabeth talked about mental health, drugs, alcohol and chemicals in the brain with Liam and his younger sister, Selma, but didn't talk specifically about suicide prevention and resources.

"We've got very few regrets in life, but one of ours was we didn't talk to him about suicide," Todd said. "We want parents to know that you're not putting anything into their head that isn't already there."

"We were naive, right? We didn't think it could happen to us," Todd added. "Even the last moments we spent with Liam before we left for our errand, we didn't think it could happen to us. It's such a shock."

Liam was caring, generous, funny, smart and fearless, his parents said. He was an "amazing" older brother to his 10-year-old sister Selma, who he called "Smalls" after the character from the movie

"The Sandlot," Elizabeth said.

"We were always amazed by the way he lived his life," Todd said. "And maybe it was because he only had 15 years. It's kind of hard to get our mind around, but he lived a lot in those years."

September is National Suicide Prevention Month, but the decals will remain on the Davies and South helmets all season.

"If we can do something to prevent another death, it's certainly something we're going to do," Werremeyer said.

If you or someone you know is experiencing suicidal thoughts, contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline for support at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or text "Home" to 741741 to connect with someone from the National Crisis Text Line.

In North Dakota and Clay County, Minn., dial 2-1-1 or text your zip code to 898-211 for free, confidential referrals to resources, listening and support, and crisis intervention through FirstLink. Forum reporter Carissa Wigginton can be reached at cwigginton@forumcomm.com.

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