

## Playing for audience of one

### Blossoms standout plays for his biggest fan: his late grandfather

STORY BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

As the winter sports seasons come to an end, so does another chapter in the history of Drew Kittelson's storied athletic career with the Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossoms.

The senior added to his list of school records in the winter by snapping two Blooming Prairie boys basketball records – most points in a single game and the highest percentage of team points scored in a single game – while also tallying his 1,000<sup>th</sup> point against Lake City.

"I didn't really know at the time where I was at with the records because I was so locked in. I honestly didn't expect to break the record that night. I missed like all of my shots in warm-ups and thought I was off, but after the game, I realized I'd only missed maybe seven shots the whole time," said Kittelson after scoring 48 of his team's 59 points in a 86-59 loss to Triton.

Despite the loss, Blossoms fans were able to watch history before their eyes as Kittelson's 48 points snapped a Blooming Prairie record that had previously stood for over 65 years.

Back in 1957, Dean Brudwick set the school record by scoring 44 points against Hayfield – before the three-point play was introduced to the Minnesota State High School League.

"I wasn't surprised to see it broken, you know, records are meant to be broken. That was 1957. Now I'm 83, so that's 65 years ago. That's quite a spell in there. I didn't think it would stand this long, but it's always something I've kind of held onto," said Brudwick, who now lives in the Mankato area.

Brudwick also said that he was happy for Kittelson to hold the record, as it's something he'll hopefully be able to cherish long after his playing days are over.

In the same night, Kittelson also broke the late Anthony Nelson's record for scoring the highest percentage of his team's total points by dropping 81.3% of his team's score to surpass the 69.3% mark set by Nelson in 2015.

Kittelson said that it was an honor to hold the record and be able to put his name in the record books with Nelson, and said that Nelson's family congratulated him on the accomplishment after the game.

However, according to Kittelson, playing has never been about setting records or earning the spotlight.

Instead, it was all about playing for his biggest fan: his late grandfather, Dean Goette.

"He'd been my biggest fan ever since I was a little kid. I know he'd be proud of me no matter what, even without the records or the wins. It means a lot to know that he was there with me through all of those years, getting to go through all of these amazing moments. I wrote his name on my shoes before the season, and I've dedicated my play this year to him."

Goette passed away at the age of 61 at the Mayo Clinic Hospital in Rochester on Thursday, Dec. 9, 2021.

Kittelson said it was hard to adjust to playing without having his grandfather in the stands, as Goette's signature cheering style made it easy for Kittelson to hear and locate his grandfather even while he was locked in on the game.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNNIE PHILLIPS

Blooming Prairie senior Drew Kittelson puts up a contested shot against NRHEG in the Blossoms' game against the Panthers on Feb. 11. Kittelson recently broke two Blooming Prairie scoring records for most points in a single game and highest percentage of total team points in a game.

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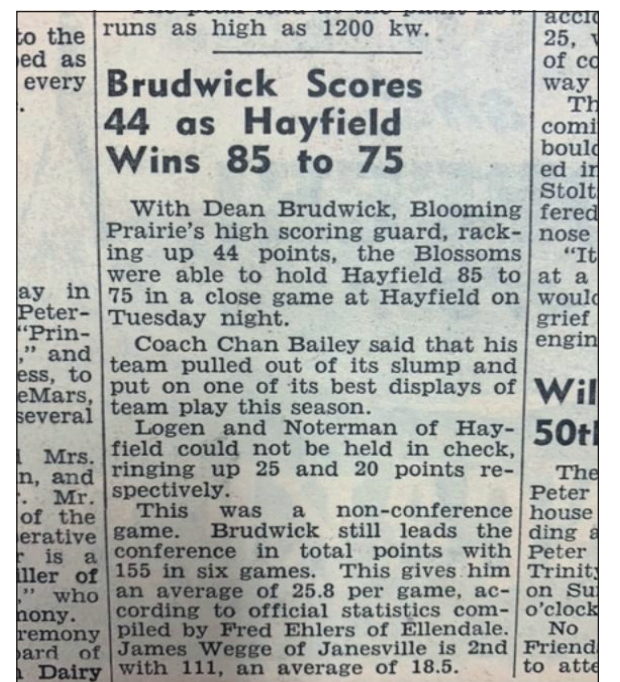
**Drew Kittelson**  
Star Blossoms Player

"My grandfather's signature move was that he actually used to bark instead of cheering. He was always up in the stands getting rowdy and firing up the crowd, so when I broke the record, the student section and fans began to bark for me. It was a special moment for me... I almost began tearing up on the court."

While Blooming Prairie's football and basketball seasons are

both over for the year, Kittelson has the future to look ahead to now as the senior will prepare to join the Minnesota State University-Mankato football team in the fall as a freshman in college.

Kittelson said that while he is excited to get to campus and start his new journey, for now, he is planning on enjoying his time with friends and family where his athletic story all began – in Blooming Prairie.



This story appeared in the Blooming Prairie Times in 1957 when Dean Brudwick set the Blooming Prairie school record of most points in a game—44. That record stood for 67 years until last week when Drew Kittelson shattered it by scoring 48 points against Triton.

### BLOSSOM RECORDS BROKEN BY KITTELSON

- Most points in a single game: 48 (previously held by Dean Brudwick)
- Highest percentage of team points in single game: 81.3% (previously held by Anthony Nelson)
- Plus, Kittelson hit 1,000 points



PHOTO FROM FACEBOOK

Drew Kittelson shoots the free throw that earned him his 1,000th point as an Awesome Blossom. The senior reached the 1,000-point mark in his final game as an Awesome Blossom.