

Older brother mentors 2 Durant wrestlers

By Paige Happ

Two Durant wrestlers can trace their interest in the sport back to their older brother, who is now a police officer in Wilton.

27-year-old Chase Kraklio qualified for the state tournament his senior year of high school at Central DeWitt in 2013.

Chase wrestled in the 195-pound weight class despite only weighing 170 pounds. Unfortunately he lost his first two matches at state, ending his wrestling career.

However, his interest in the sport never was lost. He continued to share his wrestling knowledge and passion with his younger brothers, Durant wrestlers Kady and Kamdyn Kraklio.

“I started wrestling with my brothers as soon as they could walk. By age 3, they had each competed in tournaments,” said Chase. “They went to my meets, and we wrestled on the mat during warmups.”

Chase continued to teach his brothers the sport when they were growing up on their own mat in the basement at home.

“We fight like brothers too,” said Chase, who has been a police officer for the Wilton Police Department ever since he graduated from the police academy in April of 2021.

Chase got his coaching license in the summer of 2021 and has been volunteering as a wrestling coach at Durant ever since.

Kady, a junior, and Kamdyn, a sophomore, enjoy having their older brother in the wrestling room with them.

“He is just a good practice partner in the room and offers good advice,” said Kady, who qualified for the state tournament last year

“Chase has been a big part of my wrestling career,” said Kamdyn. “He helps me a lot in the off-season and pushes me to be the best version of myself.”

Kamdyn is the closest to Chase’s weight and height; this allows them to wrestle more in practice than Chase and Kady do.

Chase enjoys watching his younger brothers compete like he once did.

“I go to as many of their wrestling events as I can,” said Chase, who attended college at Concordia University Irvine in Orange County, California.

Attending a college in California caused Chase to miss a few years of watching his brothers compete. Chase now tries his best to be present at his brothers’ meets.

“Being a police officer, my schedule prevents me from going to everything,”

said Chase.

Both Chase and Kamdyn watched Kady compete at the state tournament last February.

Not only does Kady enjoy having his older brother around but also his younger brother Kamdyn.

“Yeah, he can be fun when we are alone,” said Kady. “He is like a built-in best friend.”

Although they don’t often wrestle each other, Kady also enjoys having his younger brother as a drilling partner.

“Kamdyn and I aren’t allowed to wrestle live cuz it turns into a bloody fist fight,” said Kady.

Kamdyn has enjoyed wrestling his whole life and sees himself continuing his wrestling career in college.

“Wrestling is my favorite sport, and I mostly enjoy wrestling because of the hard work it takes and how it is an individual sport,” said Kamdyn.

Kamdyn’s ultimate end-of-season goal is to qualify for state and place, and Chase believes he will be watching both of his younger brothers wrestle in Des Moines in February.

“I see both boys going to state this year,” Chase said.”They have over a decade



Photo by Nic Poston

Durant brothers Kamdyn and Kady Kraklio tie up in the wrestling room as older brother Chase, a volunteer coach for the team, looks on.

of experience each and are looking really good in the [wrestling] room.”

Fantasy football trending at Durant High School

By Colby Gast

Around half of the boys at Durant High School play fantasy football, according to interviews with several students.

But it is not just a boys’ game.

Wildcat Chronicles sports editor Lauren Callison competes in a league with her three older brothers, Leo, 24, and twin brothers Lucas and Logan, 22.

Fantasy football is a mobile game that has gained mass popularity across the country since it was first released in the early 2000s. It has over 29 million players playing in 2023, according to Statista.com.

Fantasy football can be a simple and complex game. It involves drafting and managing a team, and it follows the NFL throughout its regular season.

Fantasy football owners will be in leagues that have anywhere from four to 32 teams in them. The more teams in a league, generally, the harder it is to win.

At the beginning of the NFL season, owners will draft a team of NFL players, and these players can be from any team.

In a standard league setup, 14 spots make up a roster. These include one quarterback, two running backs, two wide receivers, a tight end, a flex player that can be either a running back, wide receiver, or tight end, a kicker, and five bench slots. An NFL team’s

entire defense is also considered one roster spot.

As the season moves forward, the owners will manage their fantasy teams as needed. NFL players will have bye weeks, forcing owners to switch them out with someone else. Trading with another player in the league is a common move as well during the fantasy season.

Each week, one fantasy football owner’s team will go head to head with another owner’s team. Whoever ends the week with more points wins that round.

The game is scored by the point system the app you play on has created. It will track every player’s points on its own.

A player on a fantasy team can earn points for the owner by scoring a touchdown, getting rushing yards, getting passing yards, getting receiving yards, or kicking a field goal.

A defense can get points by getting an interception, forcing a fumble, sacking the quarterback, and more.

In the last weeks of the season, the fantasy playoffs will occur to crown the champion of the league.

The game gives fantasy football owners the ability to play with their friends and have fun. Leagues often can get very competitive, which makes it even more fun

to some.

Some of the popular apps that host fantasy football leagues include ones from ESPN, Yahoo, CBS, Sleeper, and many more.

Senior Collier Rockow has been playing fantasy football since the fifth grade. He joined a league with his dad and his friends and instantly got hooked to the game.

“I love competing against my friends week in and week out,” said Rockow. “It really just tests and grows my football knowledge.”

Playing fantasy football really helps Rockow stay up to date with the NFL.

“After starting to play fantasy football, I watch almost every game and watch certain players on my team to see how they do,” Rockow said. “It really keeps me very interested in the NFL season.”

Callison enjoys playing fantasy football because it gives her a chance to connect with her older brothers.

“If there is a day we’re all four home, it’s usually on Sundays, which is when most NFL games take place,” said Callison. “I really look forward to Sundays now, and it has definitely brought us closer.”

Callison is the only known girl that participates in fantasy football at Durant High School.

Late nights and snowy roads: life on the road in RVC

By Lauren Callison

Life on the road for Wildcat winter sport athletes is a challenge.

Through late nights, long bus rides, and school the next day, they endure it all.



Photo by Kaetlyn Hansell

Mariah Alpen steps off the bus after a recent road game.

The Wildcat boys’ and girls’ basketball teams started the season off with four consecutive road games after Thanksgiving break.

Their first home game came December 9 against Cascade. They have a total of 12 away games scheduled for the regular season. They will travel an average of 82 minutes round trip on a bus with the longest trip of the season to Bellevue High School, a 146-minute round trip journey

It’s hard to perform well at away games after being stuck on a bus.

“The buses definitely aren’t the most comfortable, especially when you’re in them for long periods of time,” said junior basketball player Mariah Alpen, who has a pre-game routine that starts way before she steps into an opposing gym.

“I listen to music and try to go over most of the plays in my head to prepare for

the game,” said Alpen.

“For me, mentally, the game starts as soon as I step on that bus.”

Alpen often brings her homework with her as well.

“Sometimes we don’t get back until 11 p.m., so a lot of times, I will have to bring homework onto the bus because it’s the only time I have to do it,” said Alpen.

While travel during the winter can be rather difficult, bus driver Mrs. Jill Randolph makes it a priority to keep the kids safe. During one road trip coming home from West Branch, she had to stop in the middle of a snowstorm at a rest area because it was unsafe to drive.

“We had to pull over; I couldn’t see out of my windows, the snow was coming down that hard,” said Mrs. Randolph.

The players feel safe on the bus considering the wintery conditions that

could greet them on a road trip.

“I trust that if there were excessive amounts of ice, to the point of it being not safe to travel, we would not be traveling,” said senior Addison Schuett.

Alpen feels the same way.

“It’s definitely something to consider when driving in the winter, but we have great bus drivers, and I trust their judgment of the roads,” said Alpen.

After a road game, basketball players sometimes arrive back at Durant High School close to midnight.

Junior Bryce Daufeldt and Alpen both find it difficult to wake up after a late night of basketball and go to school in the morning, but they are able to prioritize their school work.

“It’s hard for me to wake up in the morning, but it’s pretty easy to stay focused in class,” said Daufeldt.