

Bryce Daufeldt takes the field for his brother

By Lauren Callison

When the Friday night lights shine on junior Bryce Daufeldt, he’s thinking about his brother, Brady Daufeldt, unable to play, on the sidelines.

Since first grade, they had always played football together. Until a fateful day freshman year when Brady was diagnosed with an acute sinus infection that spread to his brain, leaving him unable to move the entire left side of his body.

Brady was hospitalized in the University of Iowa Stead Family Children’s Hospital in September of 2021. He was in the hospital for a month and had to undergo three surgeries before returning to school a month later.

“During his surgery, a part of his skull was removed, and seven months later it was replaced with a piece of PEEK plastic,” explained Mrs. Stacy Daufeldt, who is the mother of the two boys. Bryce, Brady and their sister Adison are triplets.

Two years later, Brady said he now feels he is “back to 100 percent.” Brady now plays baseball, track, and basketball.

“The only limitation I have is that I can not play football,” said Brady. Playing football would be dangerous for Brady since it is such a contact-heavy sport.

“Football was my favorite sport to

play, and I was very upset when the doctors told me that I can not play football anymore,” said Brady.

This is an emotional limitation because the football memories their family holds go back as far as when they first started to play football in first grade.

“I remember going to games when they were younger and hearing both of their names get announced on a tackle,” recalled Mrs. Daufeldt.

It was their favorite sport, and according to Bryce, a family friend even named them “the B&B wrecking crew.”

As it can be imagined, they have always been very competitive with each other.

“Playing sports with Brady has always been really fun,” said Bryce, “even when it looked like we hated each other.”

For Mrs. Daufeldt, things started to feel like they were getting back to normal when Brady got back into sports. About a year and a half after the diagnosis, he was cleared to play basketball in his sophomore year.

“It felt good to be able to watch them play basketball together again; that’s when the normalcy started to settle in,” said Mrs. Daufeldt.

Brady was thrilled as well and more than ready to get into an athletic routine, say-

ing it “felt amazing to get back into sports.”

When Fall rolls around, it still is difficult for Mrs. Daufeldt to watch one of her sons play the sport both of her sons once played together.

“Sometimes, it’s still hard to watch Bryce play [football] knowing Brady cannot, but I love how Brady is still able to be a part of the team even though he is unable to play,” she said.

Brady serves as a team manager for the Wildcats. He helps the coaches with plays and practice plans and takes stats during the games.

Although the Wildcats ended the season with only one win, Bryce was a leading defensive player. He was third on the team in tackles with 27 through eight games.

Bryce, who plays offensive guard and defensive end, said he tried to improve every week “and find something new to work on.”

Mrs. Daufeldt said she is proud of what Bryce has accomplished this season and the leadership role he filled on the team. Bryce was named one of the team captains for this season.

“I love watching him go out for the coin toss as a captain; he has really stepped up as a leader this season,” said Mrs.



Photo by Kaetlyn Hansell
Bryce Daufeldt looks over for a defensive play in the Beckman Catholic football game.
Daufeldt.

Even though Bryce enjoys playing football, it is hard for him to not be able to play alongside his brother, Brady, like when they were younger.

“I think of Brady every time I look at the sideline, and I see him just standing there watching,” said Bryce. “I feel bad for him that he can’t play, but I can.

“It makes me feel like I have to put in that extra effort for him because I will never know when my last snap of football could be.”

Volleyball team finishes with winning record

By Colby Gast

For the first time since 2018, the Durant Wildcats volleyball team finished the year with a winning percentage above .500.

The Wildcats were 17-12 overall in the regular season and won their home tournament October 7, cruising through the competition to win five matches and only dropping one set. Defense was a key part of the Wildcats’ success. Through 27 matches, junior Katelynn Toft was ranked third in 2A for total blocks with 106 blocks.

Regular season conference play, on the other hand, was very tough, as the Wildcats finished 2-8 against conference opponents. However, the River Valley Conference

(RVC) was no easy challenge. Four teams from the RVC South alone were ranked at one point during the season.

In just his first year of leading the Wildcats, Coach Alec Straw seemed to turn the program around for the better. Coming into the season, Coach Straw knew the team was just a “tweaked mindset” away from being successful.

Coach Straw has preached three things to his team since the first open gym: attitude, effort, and energy.

“These three keys translate to all areas of volleyball,” said Coach Straw. Through constant and consistent work with his players, Coach Straw put a winning

mindset into their head. In the end, it proved an altered mindset can really do a lot.

“Our expectation was to be a bit more successful in conference play, but we learned a lot and competed at a high level, which was ultimately our end goal,” said Coach Straw. Overall, he was happy with the season results and is excited to keep growing and improving.

Senior Isabelle DeLong, who led the team in kills with 182 through 27 matches, was a key player in the lineup and said the team improved its mental approach to the game.

“The difference this year was the mentality,” said DeLong. “We knew that we have a crazy amount of talent and that we could do anything we put our minds to.”

DeLong believes this is a big step in the right direction for the program.

“There is such a talented group of young girls coming up, and this season just gave them a taste of what they can accomplish,” she said. “Hopefully this gives them the will to keep improving and just the confidence that they can succeed,” said DeLong.

DeLong feels the program has turned the corner this year.

“The program hasn’t been known

for winning for a while, and I think we changed that this year,” she said.

Senior Kennedy Jehle is very proud of the season the team has put together, and she understands the significance of this year’s accomplishments. Jehle led the team in assists with 373 through 27 matches and was an efficient and effective server for the team. She had a success rate of 96.1 percent with 231 attempts.

“It feels really good to know all of the work we have put in this year has paid off, and that this is a start of a change for Durant volleyball,” said Jehle, who acknowledged the ups and downs the team faced throughout the season.

“Our team has a strong bond on and off the court that really helped us face adversity,” she said. “We trusted all the work we put in during the offseason, and all the long practices at the beginning of the year to help us stay on top.”

Jehle believes one of the biggest changes of this year was in the team’s chemistry.

“Our atmosphere is very supportive but also holds us accountable,” she said. “I think it’s really important to balance both of these to have a successful team.”

Apex Ink and Apparel’s junior high athlete of the month

708 5th St., Durant, IA 52747
563-785-6223

Eighth grader Louis Thoma is playing for Durant’s football team. He’s playing wide receiver and defensive back. Thoma has been playing tackle football since fourth grade and did two years of flag football before that. Football has taught him discipline and perseverance.

Thoma

Arty’s Ice Cream and Grill’s football player of the month

609 W. 5th St.
Wilton, IA 52778
563-732-2222

Freshman Maxwell Barker is playing nose guard on defense and guard on offense for the Durant football team this year. Barker has been playing football since the first grade. Barker got into football because he would watch football with his dad. Football taught Barker to never give up.

Barker

Rise & Grind’s volleyball player of the month

624 5th Street
Durant, IA

Sophomore Paige Happ is playing for the Durant volleyball team this year. Happ has been playing volleyball for six years and got into the sport because her two older sisters also played it. Happ has grown to love the sport, and she enjoys competing with friends while also having fun. Happ plays in the back row for the varsity team.

Happ

Today’s Dentistry coach of the month

502 9th Ave.
Durant, IA 52747
(563) 785-4541

Head Football Coach Joel Diederichs has been coaching football at Durant High School for seven years. Coach Diederichs, who is also the high school principal, has always enjoyed playing football as well as coaching the sport, and he wanted to give back to the sport as much as the sport gave to him. What Coach Diederichs enjoys most about coaching is watching the athletes achieve their goals.

Diederichs

Peel’s Inc. cross country runner of the month

755 W. Iowa 80 Road
Walcott, IA 52773
(563) 468-5460

Sophomore Royce Richman is running cross country for the third year in a row. He got into cross country because he was looking for a fall sport to help him with track. Richman enjoys that it is an individual sport, and he has to focus on his success as well as the team’s success.

Richman