

# MHAJ



MINNESOTA HOCKEY

2022 HOCKEY  
CAMP GUIDE

HERMANTOWN'S  
ZAM PLANTE SEES  
THE GAME ON  
ANOTHER LEVEL

# HAWKEYE

**BAR DOWN BATAVIA** +  
LIVERNE'S SCORING  
MACHINE

**SERVING SAVES** +  
TENNIS STAR ANSWERS  
MAVS' CALL

**RUSSO'S RANTS** +  
THE TIRELESS  
TAYLOR TURNQUIST



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# MHJ

MINNESOTA HOCKEY JOURNAL

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The purpose of Minnesota Hockey, an affiliate of USA Hockey, is to encourage and improve the standard of youth and other amateur ice hockey, to conduct ice hockey tournaments and to select representative teams to participate in tournaments; to associate with other ice hockey associations; to do any and all acts necessary for creating further interest in youth and other amateur hockey."

### MINNESOTA HOCKEY CORPORATE PARTNERS

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# FACEOFF

# 24

## AVERY SAVES THE DAY

Tennis star and Litchfield native Avery Stilwell returns to the crease for the Minnesota State Mavericks' hockey team.



► Minnesota State freshman tennis player **Avery Stilwell** returns to the crease against one of the nation's top teams.

# MARCH

## IN THIS ISSUE

### 06 / GOALS & ASSISTS

Snapshots from around the State of Hockey.

### 12 / 2022 CAMP GUIDE

Meet new friends and develop your skills at these summer hockey camps.

### 13 / SOUND OFF: MY HOCKEY FAMILY

Ten years after his accident, Jack Jablonski gives thanks.

### 14 / Q&A: BAR DOWN BATAVIA

One on one with Luverne's scoring machine, Kamryn Van Batavia.

### 16 / TIPS: PSYCHED UP

Mastering the mental game with Dr. Tiffany Jones.

### 18 / STATE OF HOCKEY SPOTLIGHT: DINOMIGHTS

Get to know one of the coolest hockey programs in the state.

### 28 / RUSSO RANTS: TAYLOR POWER

Spring Lake Park's Taylor Turnquist is a tireless worker and true role model.



# 20

► Zam Plante averaged nearly 3 points per game as a junior for the Hawks this season.

## HAWKEYE

Hermantown's Zam Plante sees the game on another level.

**ON THE COVER:**  
Future UMD Bulldog Zam Plante.

Photo by Tim Kolehmainen/  
Breakdown Sports Media





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August 7-9, 2022

## Women's Hockey Skills Camp

Three-day hockey camp for the college-bound and varsity player

August 10-12, 2022

## Women's Hockey Goalie Camp

Three-day hockey goalie camp for the college-bound and varsity player

August 10-12, 2022

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# Goals & Assists



## PHOTO BOOTH

# Classic Minny

→ There's no place quite like the ODR (OutDoorRink). The State of Hockey kicked off the year with two premier outdoor hockey events in the 2022 NHL Winter Classic at Target Field (Jan. 1) and Hockey Day Minnesota at Mankato (Jan. 22).

From subzero temperatures to snowy weeklong celebrations, Minnesotans embraced the elements in what will be a winter to remember.



► The people of Mankato showed up for the long-awaited Hockey Day Minnesota at Blakeslee Stadium.





## MINNESOTA MUSINGS

*“Great teammates are simply just good people. They work hard to do their best and care for those around them. Many of the things that make players successful in a team setting go on to help them be successful in life after sports.”*

– **Garrett Raboin**,  
Gophers Assistant  
Coach, Detroit Lakes



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## MINNESOTA HOCKEY NEWS & NOTES

### ▶ RETHINK THE RINK

Hockey is an important part of Minnesota culture. The players, arenas, and teams are woven into our heritage, established as a social institution.

The sights and sounds of any sporting experience are like none other, and JLG Architects understands the excitement, exhilaration, and celebration of a hockey fan.

JLG understands something else as well: what it takes to construct a premier community hockey facility that will take the sporting experience to new heights for everyone who utilizes it. Our company grew up in Minnesota and North Dakota; ice hockey is in our blood. With the nation's only arena-specific design group that works on nothing but ice hockey every single day, and the only Certified Ice Technician architect in Minnesota, we are the region's—and possibly the nation's—ice hockey experts.

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### ▶ MINNESOTA'S BEST PLAY HIGH PERFORMANCE

The CCM Minnesota Hockey High Performance (HP) Spring Programs and Tier I Leagues provide the top players in Minnesota with an opportunity to train with and against each other.

As a part of the USA Hockey Player Development process, the HP Spring Programs provide a series of tryouts, festivals and camps to identify and develop the best players in Minnesota at ages 14-18. At the 15, 16 and 17 levels, the top players advance to the USA Hockey National Select Festivals.

The HP Fall Tier I Leagues offer players high performance training and skill development in combination with intense competition leading up to the Bantam, Girls 15U or High School season. All teams will have the opportunity to compete for the chance to represent Minnesota at the USA Hockey Tier I National Championships.

For more information, including the most up to date schedule, visit [minnesotahockey.org/highperformance](http://minnesotahockey.org/highperformance).

### ▶ CHEVY WISHES YOUTH TEAMS GOOD LUCK ON DRIVE TO STATE

However you have been involved with hockey, the idea of setting goals and striving to achieve them has been part of the dialogue. Goals can be short-term or long-term, but no matter what they are, we plan to reach them through hard work, extra reps, additional coaching, and a lot of sweat! So what might get in the way of achieving them, even if we have the tools, resources, and a solid plan?


Chevrolet is excited for their ninth consecutive season as the presenting partners of the Minnesota Hockey Region and State Tournaments. With "The Drive to State powered by Chevy," Chevy Dealers play a key role in the signature events of youth hockey in Minnesota.

"Like the rest of the hockey players and families in Minnesota, we are very excited for the most thrilling time of the hockey sea-



son—State Tournament time," said Patrick Johnson, President of the Select Heartland Chevy Dealers. "We wish all of those teams competing for a spot at a Minnesota Hockey State Tournament the best of luck on their Drive to State!"


The Drive to State, powered by Chevy, will be highlighted by 14 State Tournaments hosted by ten communities. Region Tournaments will be played March 4 through March 6, followed by State Tournaments being played March 18 through 20. **MHJ**



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## HOCKEY WORD FIND

Find and circle the 10 words in the group below. Words can be found horizontally, vertically, diagonally and backwards.

### POSTSEASON REPORT

- FRIENDS
- TOURNEY
- COMMUNITY
- IMPROVEMENT
- WINS
- FUN
- SKILLS
- RESPECT
- GAMES
- LOSSES

G A M E S D N E I R F I  
 C A A N K E R A R U O M  
 P O D I I M W I N S A P  
 T L T E L G U V N R C R  
 U Y O G L C F K O E C O  
 D M T L S F R H F S E V  
 E P S M M A S A V P X E  
 N I F L M M H G A E F M  
 T O U R N E Y E S C E E  
 S S C O M M U N I T Y N  
 L O S S E S E E R S O T

### A DANGLER'S DICTIONARY



# 'Flow' (noun)

def. // A particularly nice head of hair.  
"Wow, look at that beauty's flow."



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MADE IN MINNESOTA

# Home Ice Advantage

Minnesota-based Tradition Companies takes community-based hockey to heart

→ Hockey players are everywhere in Minnesota. Board rooms, offices, jobsites, classrooms, fire stations—you name it. If you're a Minnesotan, chances are you work with a hockey player or two.

If you're employed at Tradition, you work with 133 of them.

Nearly half of Tradition's employees played hockey, and almost half of those played college hockey. Five of them played professionally.

And like so many other Minnesotans, they're still involved in the game—playing, coaching, volunteering and watching their kids play.

"In Minnesota in particular, hockey is not just a sport, it's a huge part of who we are. The community-based hockey programs are one of the true gems of our state," said Erik Hendrikson, President of Tradition Mortgage and former captain at Burnsville High School and Gustavus Adolphus College. "The experience is second to none."

That's why Tradition gives back to community-based hockey, and that's why so many hockey players work there. Simply put, Hendrikson knows customers can trust and rely on them.

"We find that the people who've played youth hockey and youth sports offer better understanding, service and care to their clients," Hendrikson said.

People like former NCAA Champion and Gopher captain Taylor Williamson, who started as an intern at Tradition and is now a mortgage loan officer.

"We all stand on the same values and take pride in the opportunity to work

here," Williamson said. "I believe that's why we compete and work as hard as we do for our clients."

## HOCKEY DEVELOPS CHARACTER

Former Wild broadcaster and NHL goalie Mike Greenlay has found a new home at Tradition. He knows what the game instills in young people.

"Hockey requires a thick skin mentally and physically," said Greenlay, who oversees the company's marketing and communications. "Pressure can expose those who aren't ready to take on adversity and uncertainty.

Hockey teaches you to band together in these times and business is no different when things get difficult."

"Hockey requires creative thinking and the ability to react quickly," Hendrikson said. "This carries over to problem-solving and finding financial solutions for clients here at Tradition. You have to be able to think on your feet."

## HOCKEY TEACHES TOUGHNESS

Williamson, a former Ms. Hockey from Edina, knows all about adversity. Against all odds, Williamson fought through brain surgery and a rare neuromuscular disorder to return to the ice for the Gophers and finish her college career.

Now she's sharing those life lessons with the next generation.

"Hockey is more than just a sport. It is a tool we can use to teach young athletes



***We all stand on the same values and take pride in the opportunity to work here. I believe that's why we compete and work as hard as we do for our clients."***

**—TAYLOR WILLIAMSON,  
Ms. Hockey, NCAA National Champion**

how to be a good teammate, how to compete, how to stay determined, and learn life skills that they will be able to use long past their hockey careers," said Williamson, head coach of the Wayzata girls' high school team.

## HOCKEY MEANS BUSINESS

Teamwork, reliability and grit are just a few of the qualities needed to be successful on and off the ice.



## A TRADITION ON ICE

**38%**

(133 out of 350)  
of Tradition's  
employees  
played hockey

### AMONG THEM:

- 65.4%** played high school hockey
- 41%** played college hockey
- 6.4%** played pro hockey
- 1 former Wild broadcaster**



**Mike Greenlay**

**82%** of those who played hockey  
are still involved in the sport:

- 41.3%** Coaching
- 44.4%** Playing
- 25.4%** Volunteering
- 44%** Hockey parents

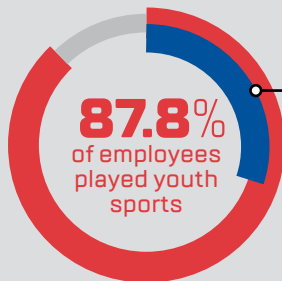


**Taylor Williamson & Erik Hendrikson**



**Loan officer by day and Wayzata girls' varsity head coach by night, Taylor Williamson leads by example.**

## A TRADITION OF ATHLETES



- 56.1%** Baseball/Softball
- 43.3%** Football
- 40.6%** Basketball
- 23.9%** Tennis
- 17.2%** Track and Field
- 17.2%** Soccer
- 17.2%** Golf
- 13.3%** Volleyball

## A TRADITION OF GIVING BACK

CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2021-22:

**∞**  
**Countless hours**  
of coaching and  
volunteering

**12+**  
**Youth team  
sponsorships**

**20+**  
**Rink dasher  
board ads**

**2**  
**High school hockey  
tournaments**

**2** **Hockey scholarships**  
in honor of Bloomington  
Jefferson's Mike Ryan  
and Tom Kurvers

**AND MORE:** DinoMights, US Pond  
Hockey Championships, Girls High  
School Elite League, Minnesota Hockey,  
Special Hockey, Hendrickson Foundation

## MORE THAN A MORTGAGE

TRADITION'S 2021 IN REVIEW:

**5,000**  
loans closed

- \$2+ billion** in loan volume
- 3,000+ houses** sold by Robert Thomas Homes, the largest privately held homebuilder in MN
- \$2 billion** in total assets with Tradition Capital Bank, one of the largest banks in MN
- \$1+ billion** in assets under Tradition Wealth Management

"Hockey players are team players," Hendrikson said. "They know that in order to win, you have to go into the corners and work hard. You aren't always on the power play or first line—you need to earn it. Hockey players, in our experience, put the team and clients ahead of themselves. That is what it's all about if you want to separate yourself from your competition as a company."

### HOCKEY BUILDS COMMUNITY

Why does Tradition give so much back to youth hockey?

"Hockey brings communities together to support their teams. Strong teams mean strong communities," Hendrikson said. "Tradition is here to serve the communities we live in, which means keeping traditions like youth and high school hockey going strong." **MHJ**

## 2022 CAMP GUIDE



### CARROLL GOALIE SCHOOL

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Find the speed to succeed. GPS Hockey builds complete players from the blades up, applying advanced skills to game scenarios with and without the puck. For 2022, we have eight camps across MN, including our AAA boarding camp at Shattuck-St. Mary's. Visit our website and social media to see our full lineup of training options for the State of Hockey.

[@power\\_skating](https://www.instagram.com/power_skating) | [grunnahpowerskating.com](http://grunnahpowerskating.com)



### HEARTLAND HOCKEY CAMP

Deerwood, Minn.

Heartland Hockey Camp, located in Deerwood, Minnesota, has been inspiring hockey players in the state of hockey for 38 years. The camp is owned and operated by U.S. Olympian and NCAA Hockey Champion, Steve Jensen. The camp offers six hours of ice time each day and also features a wide variety of wonderful fun-filled waterfront activities and fabulous fishing. Their world-class coaching staff features U.S. Olympians, Stanley Cup Champs and U.S. Hockey Hall-Of-Famers. Their 164-acre campus also features a newly constructed 4,464 square foot off-ice training center. The Heartland Hockey Camp is one week of unbelievable fun and you will leave with a lifetime of unforgettable memories.

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# My Hockey Family

Jack Jablonski reflects on how far he's come in the 10 years since his injury

**I** DON'T REMEMBER THE ACTUAL HIT. I don't remember hitting the boards. But I remember hearing the whistle against the silence of the arena.

As soon as I hit the ice—silence. That's never good.

But in the 10-plus years since then, since that Dec. 30 day in 2011, where a legal hit sent me head-first into the boards and fractured two of my vertebrae, severing my spinal cord, I only hear the cheers.

At the time of my injury I was 16 years old. At that age, I don't think you ever really grasp the severity of an injury that will leave you paralyzed. How could you? It was such a fluke accident in the game you love. But the one thing I did recognize was the immediate support from my hockey family.

It began with my Benilde-St. Margaret's teammates. It was my coaches, the family in the stands, the opposing team. Then, it expanded exponentially. The entire State of Hockey rallied around me. They still do today, lifting me up and giving me the strength to tackle each new challenge and help me celebrate every small step toward me walking again. I cannot thank the Minnesota hockey community enough for not only supporting me, but also the Jack Jablonski Foundation to help us advance paralysis recovery treatments through research.



It's really just remarkable to witness how a negative moment can be turned into such a positive movement.

But that rally has gone beyond Minnesota. I was so fortunate to have an outpouring of support from around the country. NHL teams, heroes I admired as I had the same dream of one day playing in the NHL (I like to think I've made it there with my work as an associate digital media content specialist with the Los Angeles Kings.) It reinforced my love for hockey, even though I couldn't play like I used to.

And man, do I love the game of hockey. From the first time I stepped on the ice, it's been my first love. But if my injury has taught me anything, it's that while the logistics and skills of the game are bar none, it's the people that make this game so



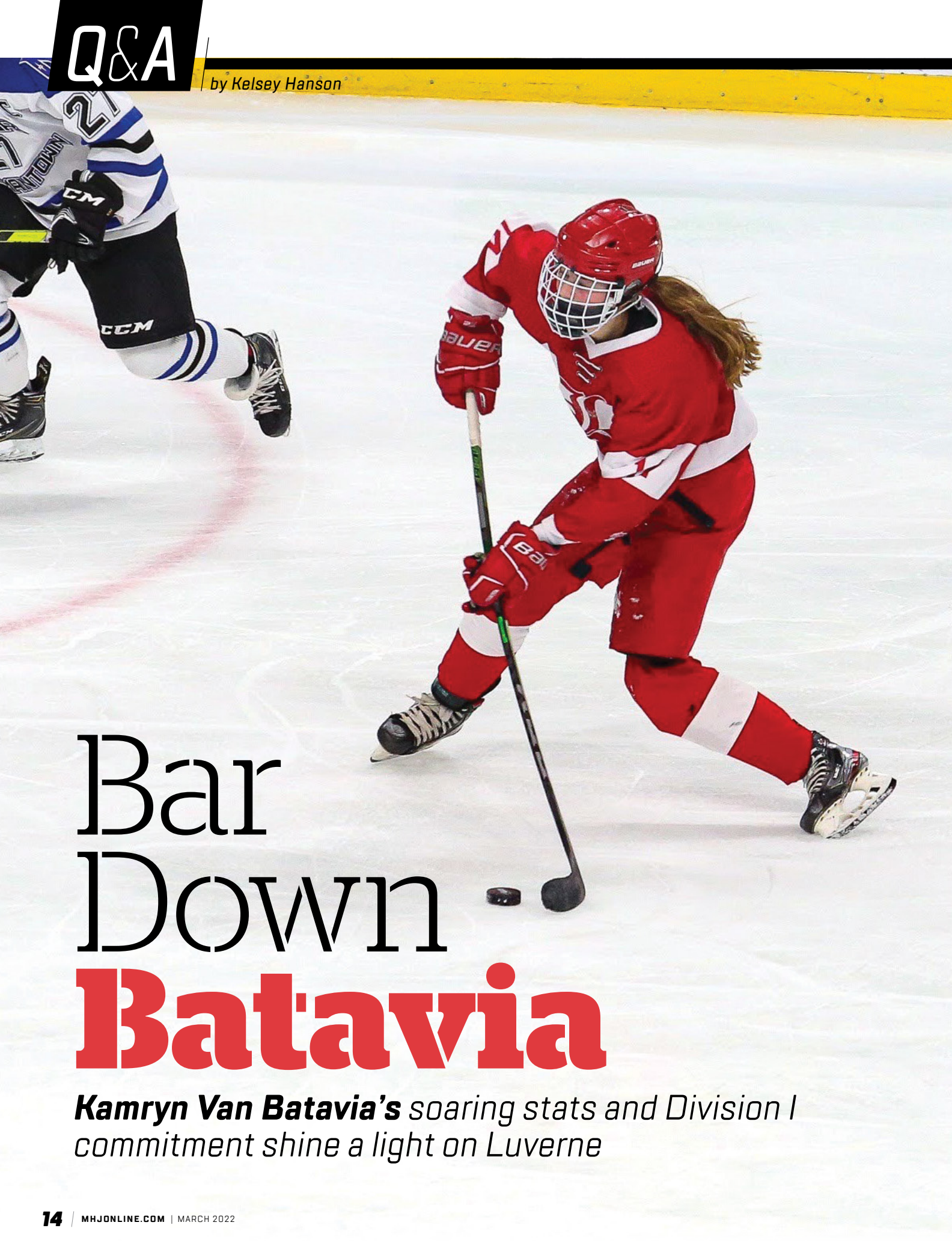
## Breakthrough Research Developing

The Jack Jablonski Believe in Miracles Foundation's focus is now on directing both funding and public attention to stunning new research happening at the University of Louisville that is demonstrating truly breakthrough results restoring voluntary muscle control below the point of injury to the spinal cord with the use of epidural stimulation. Learn more and get involved at [jablonskifoundation.org](http://jablonskifoundation.org).

great. It's the mom and dad who are willing to drop everything to spend a weekend at an out-of-town tournament; it's the volunteer coaches and scoreboard operators; the teammates who make a locker room fun, and the opposition who help you compete. Without the support of my hockey family, I would have been in a very different place mentally and emotionally, so thank you. I cannot say that enough.

As for next steps, I am excited to continue our pursuit of raising money through the foundation for spinal cord injury research. We've made so much progress and have had such a huge impact, it's incredible.

So like I said, 10 years ago there was silence, but today, it's louder than ever in the best way possible. **MHJ**



# Bar Down **Batavia**

*Kamryn Van Batavia's soaring stats and Division I commitment shine a light on Luverne*



KAMRYN VAN BATAVIA IS GETTING USED TO MEDIA ATTENTION for her seriously impressive game stats. The junior's two goals in the Section 3A double overtime-winning final against New Ulm gave her 80 on

the season while helping Luverne reach its third-consecutive state tournament. With a career goal record pushing 200, there's good reason for her to be in the spotlight.

But for Van Batavia, hockey is more than a game. It's about community.

"I love knowing that I have a whole hockey family behind me—parents, coaches, and my teammates—hockey is a really fun sport because no one could do it alone," she said. "Every day at practice, not only am I working to better myself, but our whole team is working to benefit each other."

**MHJ // What's your earliest hockey memory?**

**Kamryn Van Batavia** // My earliest skating memories are my dad taking me out to the rink for open skate and mini mite open hockey with my cousins. My earliest hockey memory was going to 12U State.

**MHJ // Your dad played hockey for Luverne. How much of an influence has he been?**

**Van Batavia** // My dad is *the* influence and the reason why hockey is such a big part of my life. He is my biggest role model on and off the ice. He's just always there pushing me and helping me strive to be my best.

**MHJ // What does it mean to Luverne to have made it to the State Tournament the past three years?**

**Van Batavia** // There's been a lot of people who have gone through Luverne hockey and continue to give back to the sport. I can always look up in the stands and see past teammates of mine or my aunt and my older sister who also played. Parents whose kids have graduated still come back to support our team. I think that's just the love everyone has for the sport. Our two successful varsity teams are role models who encourage younger youth hockey players. There's so many kids that are wanting to come out for hockey, and it just shows the kids that their big dreams can be accomplished.

Photos / Canaan Petersen; Van Batavia Family



**THE VAN BATAVIA FILE**

**POSITION:**

**F**

**SHOTS:** Left

**HEIGHT:**

**6' 0"**

**HOMETOWN:**



**COLLEGE:**



Minnesota State Mavericks

**FUN FACT:**

Kamryn hates socks and refuses to wear them with shoes and skates.

**YOUTH HOCKEY:**



Luverne Hockey Club

***"Last summer I really focused on my shot. I would shoot 200 pucks a day, maybe more. This year showed me that hard work really does pay off."***

**MHJ // How did you decide to commit to play at Minnesota State?**

**Van Batavia** // I attended a few college camps over the summer. When I stepped on Mankato's ice and toured the campus, I knew I wanted to go there. Meeting the coaching staff and being able to hang out with some of the teammates made me realize I want to play there for the next four years. There's a big difference between the high school and college level, but I feel like I have the whole community of Luverne at my back.

**MHJ // How did you get to have such an accurate shot?**

**Van Batavia** // My dad would tag along sometimes when I would shoot pucks, which helped with my accuracy. Last summer I really focused on my shot. I would shoot 200 pucks a day, maybe more. This year showed me that hard work really does pay off.

**MHJ // What's your greatest strength as a hockey player?**

**Van Batavia** // I see the ice well, and I'm able to read my teammates well. Our team has really good team chemistry.

**MHJ // What tips do you have for youth hockey players?**

**Van Batavia** // One thing that people have always told me is that it goes by fast, and I never believed it until this year. This season's almost over already, and I'll be a senior next year. So enjoy it because it goes by fast. Also learn to enjoy the training and make it fun because it really does pay off. **MHJ**

# PSYCHED UP



→ Mastering the mental game with **Dr. Tiffany Jones**

DR. TIFFANY JONES IS A

CERTIFIED MENTAL PERFORMANCE COACH who has worked with athletes of all ages and in all sports for almost 20 years. That includes work in the sport of hockey, consulting with USA Hockey, the U.S. Women's National Team, as well as college teams and individuals.

Jones offers some tips for players (and their coaches) to help with the mental side of the game of hockey.

## ▶ SHIFT WORK

Being in a strong mental state when you're "locked and loaded" during your minute-long shift on the ice is important, Jones says, but it's just as important to remain in a good mindset and "laser-focused" when you return to the bench and sit down between shifts.

Use that time to assess how your shift went, "Like what went well and why, and how do I keep doing that, or what was the one thing I learned?" Jones said. "Maybe it's from a mistake or something that I can change."

"Then I need them watching the game because there's so much they can learn by sitting there and picking up different things. Either it's different players on the ice or what that team is trying to do tactically, getting them to think like that when they're on the bench and really still being very active."

## ▶ COLOR COMMENTATING

One way for players to stay engaged in the game mentally is by talking to each other about the game. Jones suggests



▶ Keep your head in the game in between shifts when you're on the bench. Watch and talk about the game. What are you seeing and learning? How can you improve?

players think like TV commentators calling the game when they're watching from the bench and then tell their teammates their observations.

"Talk the game to each other," Jones said. "Point out something that they could do differently. But be specific, not just, 'We have to be better.'"

"What is something that's in the players' control that would allow them to be better? 'Is your stick down on the ice?' 'Are you moving your feet?' 'Are you keeping your eyes up?' Teach them to have that dialogue with each other. It can be fun because they're engaged. They're talking the game."

## ▶ LISTEN (COACHES, TOO!)

"Coaches tell the athletes too much," Jones said. "Instead, ask them why. 'Why do you think that?' 'Why do you think that would be a good adjustment?' Or, 'Why do you think it would be a good tactical change?' Because that gives insight to the kids. Do they understand? Is it a lack of understanding or is it a lack of application or is it a lack of application under pressure? Maybe they're thinking about it in a cool way and they're just not there yet physically."

"Ask and then really listen. Then you can always challenge them or give them a different idea or say 'This is what we're going to do as a team now.' But we don't want to





► Creating a game-like atmosphere and environment during practices helps players with pressure, decision-making, adversity and much more.

shut down their thinking. We create too many robots.”

### ► ROAR LIKE A LION

Have you ever had someone to tell you to relax and breathe when things get stressful? Jones says you’re always breathing, of course, or you’d be dead. It’s not inhaling air that’s the problem; it’s exhaling. Athletes get in trouble mentally when their exhale becomes short or they start holding their breath in. Breathing out is a great way to bring back your focus.

“Something players can do right when they get to the bench—before they say anything—is take a really long exhale,” Jones said. “What that does is it calms the

*“Mental toughness is not about sucking it up and fighting through your feelings. It starts with self awareness...”*

body, which then allows you to calm the mind. It’s harder to calm the mind sometimes and we can control the body more, so let’s change how the body feels and that helps change how our head feels. And they can do that on the ice or off the ice.”

“Lions roar in the wild because when they start to get tense, that is their way to extend their exhale. It gets the CO2 out, and CO2 creates lactic acid and causes fatigue. That’s when the mind starts to go, ‘I’m stressing. I’m making mistakes.’”

### ► BE BRAVE

Coaches aren’t mind readers, and it can be hard for them to know what you’re thinking. Be brave enough to let your coaches and teammates know how you’re feeling and what you’re thinking.

“Mental toughness is not about sucking it up and fighting through your feelings,” Jones said. “It starts with self awareness, and then having the bravery to be vulnerable with yourself and then being brave enough to be vulnerable with the coach or with someone who can help you.

“Coaches need to create that kind of environment for kids and teach them how to be more self aware, too,” Jones said.

“But athletes hold the key because they’re the only ones that know what they’re really thinking and what they’re focused on.”

### ► PREPARE IN PRACTICE

Practices should simulate games as much as possible, and that’s something hockey generally does well, Jones says, especially with the intensity of small-area games. It’s also important to make sure players understand how those drills transfer into their games. Ask them the same questions you would on the bench or between periods in a game.

Making the environment difficult can help, too. “A lot of times we set up practices for success, right?” Jones said. “But when you go play against another team, they’re not setting anything up for you to succeed.

“I’m always saying, ‘How do you create an environment that simulates some of the things they’re going to feel in a game?’ You change something with their senses. So what do they hear, see? So is it playing different kinds of music or loud music so they have a harder time communicating? How are they going to work through that? Is changing the rules of a drill and seeing how they respond? Are they reacting emotionally or with wisdom?” **MHJ**



STATE of  
HOCKEY

# DinoMights



## HOME ICE:

Augsburg Ice Arena,  
Billy Lindsay Rink, Tria Rink

## FOUNDED:

**1995**

## FOUNDER:

John Foley

## MEMBERS:

**500+**

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Scott Harman

## WHY THEY'RE AWESOME

In the early 1990s, the Phillips, Powderhorn and Central neighborhoods in Minneapolis were known for gang involvement and low test scores.

But John Foley believed those neighborhoods were teeming with bright kids who needed an outlet.

The son of a local pastor, Foley knew there had to be something that could help guide those children from their early elementary days through high school.

In 1995, he founded DinoMights, which provides opportunities for physical, academic, social and spiritual excellence. Though hockey is a significant factor in reaching a diverse set of youth, relationships are the epitome of what make DinoMights thrive.

“I think we’ve really stayed true to that vision,” said Scott Harman, DinoMights Executive Director. “Hockey wasn’t necessarily the point. There needed to be something where a relationship could be sustained through the whole journey of school.”

In its 27 years of existence, DinoMights’ unique youth hockey program has impacted countless lives—all while fostering an atmosphere of inclusion.

“There’s an untapped power in DinoMights to sort of revolutionize all of hockey in Minnesota,” Harman said. “I think people are starting to see that. They’re asking: ‘How can we do better when it comes to diversity in hockey?’”

► DinoMights isn't just about hockey. Staff members tutor kids all the way from elementary to high school graduation, setting them up for success into adulthood.

## MAKING STRIDES

DinoMights primarily serves diverse schools located in lower-income neighborhoods in Minneapolis, and also in St. Paul since its expansion in 2017. Year-round programming is the core of its existence, but each spring, it also hosts its free, six-week Greg Carroll Learn 2 Skate Program.

First-graders from those schools have the opportunity to take part in the program, and it's often the first time they've ever stepped on the ice.

"I think one of the major questions when it comes to diversity in hockey in Minnesota is just, where's the welcome?" Harman said. "There are barriers that exist. But with the Greg Carroll Learn 2 Skate Program, it's a great way to go directly to the kids and say, 'you're welcome here.'"

That initial welcome opens the door for them to participate and register in DinoMights' year-round programming. Though COVID-19 has affected DinoMights' ability to host its seasonal Greg Carroll Learn 2 Skate Program over the past few years, that's not stopping it from finding creative ways to reach kids.

In the 2021-22 season, there are more than 500 kids involved with DinoMights.

Earlier this year, DinoMights partnered with the Herb Brooks Foundation to form the Friday Night Lights Girls' House League. Each Friday, DinoMights girls' players gather at the Billy Lindsay Outdoor Hockey Rink to play games against each other, and even meet local Minnesota Whitecaps players.

DinoMights skaters also spent time in the spotlight before the 2022 Winter Classic game at Target Field, where they had the chance to skate on the auxiliary rinks before the Wild vs. Blues game.

"On that day, we were at the heart of the hockey universe," Harman said. "It was such a unique experience."

## SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS

While DinoMights is known for its hockey programs, it also places a large emphasis on setting kids up for academic excellence.



"We tutor our kids all the way through high school graduation," Harman said. "For elementary tutoring, we're really focused on reading skills. Middle school is really about developing study skills, and then high school is really about creating an atmosphere of achievement and having a vision for your future."

Harman has been involved in DinoMights since 2000, and has served as its Executive Director since 2007. He's thrilled when students discover a passion for hockey, but he knows it's important to think beyond just making a varsity team.

"It's fun to compete for that and work for that, but that's just not everyone's goal," Harman said.

At the same time, the program aims to ensure everyone has opportunities for social, spiritual and academic excellence.

"Every single kid is going to be a student," Harman said. "Every single kid is going to be a family member and a community member. They all need to be good at those things, and those are all skills that can be built on your hockey team—whether that's the team that goes to a State Tournament, or the team that plays in a house rec setting."

## EMBRACING INCLUSION

Harman hopes DinoMights' values and mission will help inspire other associations.

"There's a real uniqueness to what we do," Harman said. "What I hope is that the principles of what make DinoMights special could actually make a huge impact on some of the places in Minnesota where we're losing hockey."

To Harman, that also means tirelessly making sure everyone has the chance to play.

"Even when you have a big association, I think it's really important to be examining and saying, 'OK, we've got 1,000 kids. That's a lot. But is anyone being left out?'" Harman said.

That principle of acceptance has guided DinoMights from the start.

Harman still remembers the very first DinoMights game he coached. After the game, the kids invited him to tag along to the park down the street—a simple gesture still ingrained in his mind.

"At that moment, I just felt so welcomed," Harman said. "That was the day I really felt like a DinoMight—all because they invited me to the park to play with them. I think that's the heart of hockey in Minnesota. That's what it's all about." **MHJ**



HAWK

27

HAWK

# KEYE

by HEATHER RULE

*Zam Plante embodies the Hermantown hockey spirit*

# Z

**ZAM PLANTE** is finishing up his second year playing varsity hockey for Hermantown, but he's been around that locker room since he was 5 years old.

Zam's grandpa, former longtime Hermantown coach Bruce Plante, let him hang out with the high school team.

Zam would sit on players' laps in the locker room during intermissions. Players like Dylan Samberg, who now plays for the Winnipeg Jets in the NHL.

"Dylan Samberg, he was my best friend back then," Zam quipped. "To us he was our best friend, because we were 5 and he was a senior and let us come sit by him in between periods."

## SLIGHT SETBACK

A dozen or so years later, and Plante is averaging nearly 3 points per game as one of the leaders in that Hermantown locker room. Despite missing almost a third of the season with an injury, he was still one of the top point getters in the state.

Coming back from injury wasn't new to Plante, having missed time each of the last two seasons as well. The process doesn't get easier, but there is one benefit.

"You understand what you need to do to get back," Plante said. "You focus more on keeping your lungs, staying in shape and picking up on things that—even though you're not playing—you can still pick up on just being in the locker room and watching the game."

The self-discipline Plante has as a player is impressive to his coach, Pat Andrews. For instance, when he worked his way back from injury this season, he'd go to the rink and bag-skate himself.

"That's not normal," Andrews said. "Normal teenage kids don't do that. He goes to the rink and works on what he needs to get better."

► Plante's high hockey IQ keeps him a step ahead of the competition.



# ZAM PLANTE

POSITION:

**F**

SHOOTS: Left

HEIGHT:

**5'9"**

HOMETOWN:



Hermantown

COLLEGE:



University of Minnesota Duluth

FUN FACTS:

Zam spent countless hours playing with his buddies on the outdoor rinks after school.



► Zam tallied a goal and an assist in a 4-1 victory against Hill-Murray earlier this season.



**Dylan Samberg, he was my best friend back then.** To us he was our best friend, because we were 5 and he was a senior and let us come sit by him in between periods.” —ZAM PLANTE

## EYES LIKE A HAWK

Plante skates on a line with his sophomore brother, Max. Younger brother, Victor, is an eighth-grader playing for the Hermantown Bantams. Their dad, Derek Plante, is a former NHL player and an associate head coach for the University of Minnesota Duluth men’s hockey team, where Zam is committed to play collegiately.

Andrews pointed to three things that makes Zam a standout player: The “unbelievable compete” in everything he does, his skillset on the ice and his hockey mind.

“In many ways, it’s like having another coach on the bench,” Andrews said. “He’s seeing things

in real time where most players come back to the bench and they’re not looking for feedback, because average players don’t want to be told what they need to work on. Zam comes back with ideas and is having a conversation.”

## CULTURE KEEPERS

Plante’s skills led him to a junior hockey trial run, scoring four goals and seven points in 17 games with the USHL’s Chicago Steel this fall before returning to Hermantown for the high school season. He’ll be back in Chicago for the rest of the spring. Though it can be tempting for some players to leave high school hockey behind for junior hockey, Hermantown players often stick around, like Samberg, Blake Biondi and Cole Koepke.

“I think it’s just the hockey culture in Hermantown is about being the best you can be,” Plante said. “Everybody’s trying to get better, and it’s a winning program. We’ve had a lot of success. We like playing with our teammates and trying to push for a state championship every year.”

## TOURNEY TRADITION

Hermantown has a tradition of making the trek to Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul for the state tournament, with 17 appearances since 1994, including nine consecutive



► Plante hopes to follow in the footsteps of two-time state champion and two-time NCAA national champion Dylan Samberg, who made his NHL debut this season.

trips from 2010-18 which included six-straight runner-up finishes and then back-to-back titles.

Plante was there watching all of those games. Hermantown was the runner-up again in 2020 before making the big dance again last year. But the 2021 state tournament was a different animal, taking place during the pandemic with various restrictions in place.

A COVID-19 exposure during the team's section semifinal meant Hermantown played its junior varsity players—and Plante, who returned from injury—in the state quarterfinal. Plante played nearly all of the 51 minutes in that game, recording a goal and assist in the 7-3 loss.

The outdoor hockey culture in Hermantown is a critical component of their long-term success. Plante recalls skating four to five hours a day on the outdoor rinks after school with his friends, where everyone is having fun, playing against older and younger kids, and trying to push each other to get better every day.

Not only did it build bonds and develop skills, it drove kids to compete on their own terms.

"I really think what separates us," Plante said. "These guys are really competitive." **(MHJ)**

► Zam collected his 100th career point with Hermantown during a victory against Holy Family on Feb. 11.



**In many ways, it's like having another coach on the bench.**

He's seeing things in real time where most players come back to the bench and they're not looking for feedback, because average players don't want to be told what they need to work on. Zam comes back with ideas and is having a conversation."

—PAT ANDREWS, HERMANTOWN HEAD COACH



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AUG. 22-25 @ RICHFIELD



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# SEVERAL



Minnesota State freshman tennis player **Avery Stilwell** stepped up in a big way for the Mavericks' hockey team

by JESSI PIERCE





I just thought, there's no way this is going to happen. This can't be real. **'There's no way this ends up happening.'**



Minnesota State University women's hockey coach John Harrington didn't know what to do. He found himself in what he deemed a "goalie nightmare," his squad down two of their three goalies with surgeries, the third suffering a concussion with a questionable return—and it was only November.

Harrington was able to use a male student at MSU to fill in during practices, but that still left a large hole as the team prepped to face its biggest competition of the year: Ohio State.

Goalies aren't just growing on trees, even in the State of Hockey. However, as stroke of luck would have it, they are living on dorm room floors with other hockey players.

"Some of our freshmen said there's a freshman on our floor named Avery Stilwell who played in high school," Harrington

recalled. "She plays on the Maverick tennis team, but she plays goalie so maybe she'd be interested in doing that."

### **PECULIAR PROPOSITION**

Stilwell, who played 81 career games in net for Litchfield/Dassel-Cokato and set a school record with a career .930 save percentage, had shifted her athletic focus to tennis after graduation, competing collegiately with the Division II Minnesota State singles squad, earning her a No. 2 ranking following the fall tennis season.

So Coach Harrington reached out to the Mavericks tennis coach. "I had to track down the tennis coach (Ryan Kucera) and I said, 'look Ryan, she's not gonna play, we're just bringing her as backup in case Calla Frank doesn't clear concussion protocol. But we're not planning to play her we just need her through Christmas.'"

► Stilwell was a five-time all-conference tennis player, four-time all-conference hockey goalie, and all-star softball catcher for Litchfield.



Kucera agreed to bring the proposition to Stilwell.

“I had heard rumblings on the dorm floor that this was a possibility,” said Stilwell. “But I just thought, there’s no way this is going to happen. This can’t be real. There’s no way this ends up happening. And then, sure enough, my tennis coach asked to meet with me, and he just explained the situation and asked if I would be interested.

“He explained the risks that could potentially happen and all of that and let me figure it out. We met with the hockey team and met with quite a few people in our meeting so it was a little overwhelming just how many people had a say in this situation, but we talked it out scheduling-wise, what I will do, what I won’t, and all that both teams would do to help me.

“It moved very fast. I believe I found out on a Tuesday or Wednesday, and I was on the ice Saturday, and we played Ohio State on Thursday, so just very fast moving—I don’t know if I even processed it if I’m being honest. Just kind of went with the flow.”

## STARTING IN GOAL...

Harrington and brass worked to get clearance for Stilwell to make sure she would be compliant to join the hockey team. Luckily, she had already been NCAA sanctioned through tennis. And still, the plan heading into a weekend bout with Ohio State, then the No. 2 women’s team in the country, was to have Stilwell as a backup to Frank.

“And then we get word from our athletic trainer that Frank didn’t pass concussion protocols so she can’t play,” said Harrington with a laugh. “So, all of a sudden, we have Avery, and we’re going to Ohio State, and I don’t know what’s going to happen.”

With just three team practices and one tutor practice, Stilwell was told she was starting.

“I laughed. I was like, are you serious? How is that possible,” recalled Stilwell. “I left tennis practice and went to the rink to do full recovery with their athletic trainer since I was sore using muscles that I hadn’t used in months since I last played in high school.

“It was all just really crazy.”

## GEARING UP

Stilwell also had to deal with figuring out the equipment aspect. Through practices she mostly borrowed equipment but with the actuality of playing in a game, she called mom to bring her gear. As moms do, Stilwell's drove down that night—two days before the team was leaving for Ohio State.

"I kept it in my dorm room for a day or two, and then my gear was not up to collegiate standards, so the team had a lot of extra stuff for me to have," Stilwell said. "I needed some white pads they had there. I used the men's goalie's (Dryden McKay) older gloves and a catcher and other stuff they gave me, but I couldn't close the glove, so I used my own glove which has green lace from high school, so it was a hodgepodge, just everything I could get my hands on."

All of this insanity was just the prelude to making the trip to Ohio State, which at that time boasted an powerhouse offensive attack and a 10-2 record.

"It was extremely intense," said Stilwell. "I don't think I'd ever been so nervous. Nothing really compared to that. I was questioning myself a lot, like why would I do this and what am I doing here. But everyone around me was so supportive from my teammates on the hockey team and tennis team to both coaches too. There were no expectations. And the amount of people

that reached out to me from back home, it felt like the whole hockey community was watching."

## ROCK STAR

On Friday the Buckeyes handed the Mavs a 6-3 loss, with Stilwell making an incredible 45 saves. On Saturday she stopped another 39 in a 9-0 loss.

"We ran out of gas the next day, but she was being a rock star there for us and our girls loved having her," said Harrington, who had Frank back for the rest of the season after that series. "I tell everybody a funny story about that, we give out an award after the game for our player of the game and the player who wins it the previous night gives it to the next person. Avery won it Friday, and the next night we tell her to pick someone out and she goes, 'OK, I know who I want to give it to, but I don't know everybody's name on the team."

"If that doesn't sum up the entire situation, I don't know what. But again, she was just so great coming in and helping us out. You couldn't ask for a better person."

Stilwell still laughs when she thinks about the chaos of it all but notes she's really happy that she went through with it. Does that mean there's a potential for her to return to the crease anytime soon?

"I think I'll stick with the tennis team." **MHJ**



► Stilwell used a smorgasbord of goalie equipment for her Mavericks' hockey debut, including some gear from two-time All-American Dryden McKay of the men's team.

## AVERY STILWELL

POSITION:

G

HEIGHT:

6'  
0"

HOMETOWN:



COLLEGE:



Minnesota State University

FUN FACTS:

Stilwell competed as a three-sport athlete at Litchfield, playing tennis, hockey, and softball. In tennis she was a six-year starter who earned all-conference honors five times with an overall record of 168-31. In hockey she was a four-time all-conference selection as a goalie with a .930 save percentage (a school record). In softball she ended her career with 459 average including 28 doubles, 19 home runs and 97 RBI.



“

***“You have to be willing to put in the extra time, the extra effort, to build yourself as an individual player.”***

- TAYLOR TURNQUIST

TAYLOR  
POWER

A full-page photograph of Taylor Turnquist, a Minnesota Wild player, in action on the ice. He is wearing a black and blue uniform with the number 8 on his black helmet. He is holding a hockey stick and looking towards the camera. The background shows the white ice and the wooden boards of the rink.



## → Spring Lake Park's Taylor Turnquist has hardware, heart and a relentless work ethic



rowing up in Blaine, Taylor Turnquist aspired to be a high school and college hockey player. She never even considered she'd one day get to play professionally for her hometown Whitecaps because they didn't exist.

When Turnquist was too young to have her driver's license, she would throw her hockey bag over her shoulder and bike six miles round-trip to the Super Rink to work out and skate.

"The biggest thing for young girls is just developing individually," Turnquist said. "You have to be willing to put in the extra time, the extra effort, to build yourself as an individual player. And then as you start to be a part of teams and better and better teams, you have that individual skill set and those specific assets as a player that you can bring to a team and make a team better.

"So once you build yourself as an individual player, everything else comes with it."

Turnquist would go on to become a three-sport star for Spring Lake Park High School. She played soccer and lacrosse, but hockey was her love. Her twin brother, Luke, played for the boys' team, as did brother, Nick, who is 18 months older.

Most notable, as good as she was, she decided not to transfer to a private school even though Spring Lake Park was a small school not successful enough yet to thrust her into the limelight of playing in the state tournament or something like that.

"I really had that drive to make it to Division I, and there was a lot of pressure and thought about transferring to a bigger program to get noticed," Turnquist said. "But ultimately, I just decided that if I'm good enough, if I have these skill sets that Division I college coaches like, they'll find me and if I perform well enough and I'm on the stat sheet, I really thought, 'They'll seek me out.'"

They did.

# HER



## CLARKSON CONNECTION

Turnquist ended up getting a scholarship to Clarkson University, where she won two national championships as a defenseman who at times played shifts as a forward. She'd go on to win an Isobel Cup with the 2020-21 Boston Pride and this season plays for the Whitecaps in the now-named Premier Hockey Federation.

Most cool?

In college, she met the love of her life, now-Minnesota Wild center Nico Sturm.

"She's a little bit ahead of me when it comes to championships," Sturm said, laughing. "She's a great, great hockey player. One of the best skaters I've ever seen, and not just on the women's side."

Sturm, 26, hails from Augsburg, Germany. He played part of his junior hockey for the NAHL Austin Bruins, so he was familiar with Minnesota when he signed as a highly sought free agent out of Clarkson in 2018 after assisting on 31 goals his final season

in college. That was the most by a Clarkson player since former Wild player Todd White. Sturm also became the first Clarkson junior to reach 100 career points since former NHLer Erik Cole.

He has played parts of four seasons for the Wild and is one of their hardest working, most physically fit players. Playing largely a fourth line and penalty kill role, Sturm had scored 19 goals and 35 points in 97 career games heading into this year's All-Star break.

Signing with Minnesota was made even more attractive because that's where his girlfriend was from.

Sturm met Turnquist during their freshman years at Clarkson. Sturm would find himself bumping into Turnquist a couple times a day on the small Potsdam, N.Y., campus. They each started in the business program, so they took some classes together before Turnquist changed majors. But the men's and women's teams shared a weight room, a training room

▲ Minnesota Wild forward Nico Sturm met Taylor at Clarkson University in Potsdam, New York, where they both starred for the Division I men's and women's hockey programs. They've been together ever since.

and a hallway to their respective locker rooms, so Sturm started doing homework with Turnquist, and as Turnquist said with a laugh, "we hit it off, and here we are."

## GOING PRO

Turnquist, 24, who scored 37 goals and 68 points in 25 games mostly as a forward during her senior season at Spring Lake Park, left Clarkson with 40 points in 158 games before winning the National Women's Hockey League title with the Pride.

Last season, with Turnquist living in Boston and Sturm playing in Minnesota, Sturm lived with Turnquist's parents and twin brother in Blaine. He couldn't have been more thankful to have a family to come home to everyday during his first full season in the NHL because of how lonely he got at times playing for the Iowa Wild.

This season, Turnquist signing with the Whitecaps allowed the couple to get an apartment together in the Twin Cities. She sustained an injury early in the season, but she has since returned

and had eight points in 11 games through early February.

They are each other's support system.

"It's so awesome to see the strides he's taken as a player since we were freshmen in college," Turnquist said. "It really comes from his work ethic. In college, he came to the rink every day and almost treated it like he was a pro already. He did every single thing that he could to make him the player that he is. I strive to have the work ethic that he does. It's inspiring to me. He just never ceases to amaze me. And now, to see him playing for the team that I grew up as a little kid going to games and rooting for and wanting autographs, it's super awesome.

"I try to make it to as many of Nico's games as I can. I have a busy schedule, with my practices and stuff. Sometimes I'll practice at 7 and then I'll just quick head over to the X to catch the last half of his game. But it's just amazing to see everything he's been able to do and accomplish and I really do think that each day he grows more confidence and you can see it on the ice. He's always wanting more for himself. He's not complacent with where he's at. I think the future has great things in store for him."

## TIRELESS WORKER

As for Turnquist being inspired by his work ethic, Sturm scoffs at that notion. It's the other way around, he says, as he is constantly blown away by Turnquist's energy and enormous heart.

Not only is Turnquist a fantastic hockey player, she is navigating hockey with her ambition of one day becoming a special ed teacher.

While playing pro hockey in Boston, Turnquist taught autistic students at the New England Center for Children, a school with students from preschool through age 22. She

specifically taught 12 students ranging in age from 12 to 16.

During hockey season, Turnquist's days were long. The Pride would practice three days a week. She'd wake up at 6 a.m. those days, eat a healthy breakfast and be at school by 7:30 a.m. When school ended at 4 p.m., she'd hit the gym, rush home for dinner, then be at the rink for an 8 p.m. practice.

"It's a field of work that probably most of us wouldn't be able to do. I certainly wouldn't," Sturm said. "Her job takes a lot of energy. The stories she tells me are tough to hear, and it's tough to leave that at work and not take it with you, not to think about what the families of those children have to go through every day. I just admire her for that. It takes special people to do that kind of work, and we all know that these people don't get paid enough for the kind of work they do."

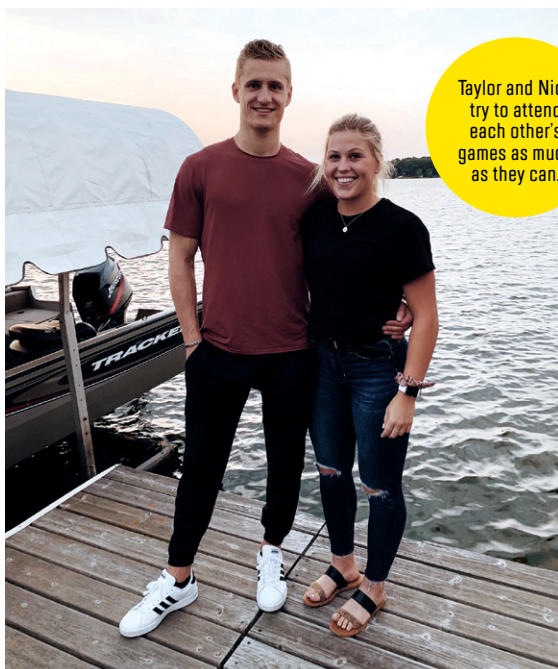
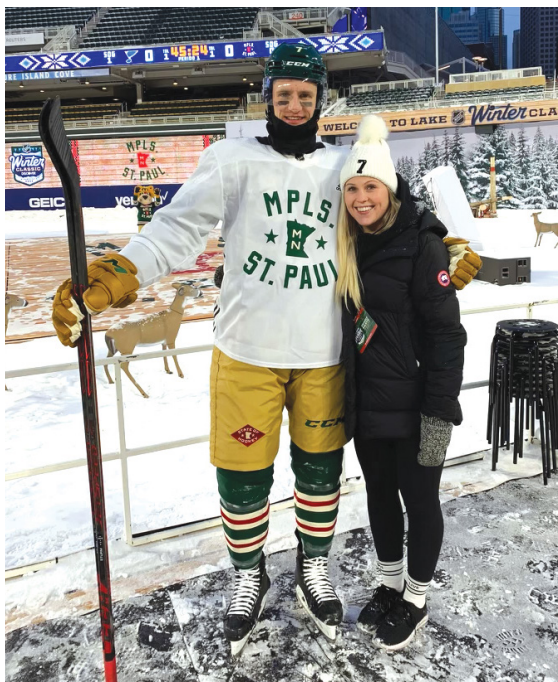
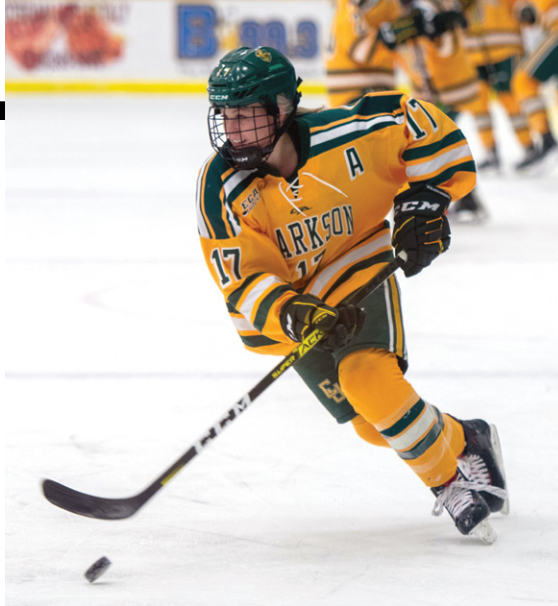
While playing for the Whitecaps, Turnquist also is pursuing her masters at the University of Minnesota. On the side, first semester, she taught at a middle school. This semester, she's at an elementary school.

Sturm is in the final year of a contract that pays him \$750,000.

"I feel guilty," Sturm said. "I get to make a really good living by playing a game. And then I talk to her every day and the type of pay that teachers get paid for doing work that, let's be honest, is a lot more valuable to society than playing the game of hockey is pretty unfair."

But that work has been so valuable to Turnquist and some days has her leaving school inspired.

"It's a very challenging job," Turnquist said. "The students (in Boston) are very low functioning and they can't be in public school. That's why our school is so amazing. It gives these families a place



Taylor and Nico try to attend each other's games as much as they can.



Turnquist was a standout hockey, soccer and lacrosse player at Spring Lake Park High School.

for their children to come and be taken care of and learn so much each and every day. There are days when it's very challenging. The behaviors that they have are very unpredictable. Every single day you have no clue what type of situation might arise. It's mentally draining some days. But on the good days, it's so rewarding."

Women's pro hockey has come a long way in the past few years. Salaries continue to rise, but as Sturm said, "She works hard seven days a week, yet she's not even making a fraction of what I make. It doesn't make sense to me. But she wants to keep playing hockey and I couldn't be more supportive of that. I always tell her, 'You keep playing as long as you want to.' She obviously knows she wants to do something with her education, but she's too good at hockey and loves it too much to not play."

*"Our league is seven years old now, and each year, it just continuously gets better and better. It just makes me so happy that younger girls can see us and be able to say, 'I want to be a professional athlete.'"*

—Taylor Turnquist

## FULL CIRCLE

Sturm's an unrestricted free agent, so her hockey future largely depends on Sturm's. There are only six teams in the PHF, so theoretically, Turnquist may only be playing professionally next year if Sturm re-signs with the Wild or he ends up in Toronto, Buffalo, Boston or on any of the New York/New Jersey based NHL teams (Rangers, Islanders or Devils).

But Turnquist is gratified that young girls growing up in Minnesota have something to aspire to when it comes to hockey beyond college or the Olympics. It's pretty neat that each morning the couple wakes up they know they are two professional hockey players suiting up for the men's and women's pro teams here in the Twin Cities.

"So many girls that love hockey and are good at hockey have college

to work toward, but once college is over, it's like, 'Now what?'"

Turnquist said. "So to have the younger generations be able to look up to us and be like, 'I have these aspirations to play professionally,' it's very exciting to see it continuously moving forward, each year.

"Our league is seven years old now, and each year, it just continuously gets better and better. It just makes me so happy that younger girls can see us and be able to say, 'I want to be a professional athlete.'

"I wouldn't be anywhere that I have been without hockey. I was a sophomore in high school and was like, 'Yeah, why not go to New York and play Division I hockey?' Not knowing even where it was, any of that. But it really was the best four years of my life and introduced me to Nico and without playing at Clarkson, it wouldn't have taken me up to Boston, where I found my passion for special ed. That brought me back home to play professional hockey and get schooling here. Everything has come full circle and it all comes back to just loving hockey as a kid." **MHJ**

*Michael Russo writes for The Athletic. He's entering his 17th season covering the Wild and 27th covering the National Hockey League. He co-hosts the Worst Seats in the House podcast on talknorth.com and Straight From The Source podcast on The Athletic. Both podcasts can be heard wherever you get your podcasts. Russo can be heard weekly on KFAN (100.3-FM) and seen throughout the hockey season on Bally Sports North and the NHL Network. Follow Russo on Twitter and Instagram at @RussoHockey. To subscribe to The Athletic at a discount, go to [theathletic.com/straightfromthesource](http://theathletic.com/straightfromthesource).*





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