

Seniors

Continued from Page 8A

Galanakis has contributed nine points, two rebounds and three steals this season in seven games. He's 2-of-5 from 3-point range. Fuller's statistical line includes four rebounds and two assists in eight games.

Slaughter has registered seven points, four rebounds and three assists in eight games and Thomason currently has four points, six boards and three assists in his seven contests.

"A lot of it goes back to how long we've been playing together," Thomason said when asked why he decided to stick it out. "I have made it this far already and these guys are my brothers. I wouldn't turn my back on them and they wouldn't turn their back on me."

Bauer, Cole Plowman, Jake Ingle, Drew Thompson and Carson Satterfield are the senior starters on this year's 17-6 squad. Tade Vanderlaan plays significant minutes, too, and the other two seniors are Kacey Sommars and Ian Reynolds.

Sommars plays more than some of the others, but he also could have decided to give up basketball and focus his time on baseball. His playing time on the hardwood is often dictated by matchups.

Sommars played quite a bit against Fairfield but wasn't on the floor as much in the win over Solon.

He's averaging 1.9 points and 1.1 rebounds per game in 18 games this winter.

"I try to be a supportive teammate in any way I can," Sommars said. "And that's kind of how there are still 13 of us. We all just want to help each other out. We all have a tight bond."

Slaughter knew this senior class was special back in eighth grade when both the 'A' and 'B' squads went undefeated.

"I would rather stay on this team and not play a lot than go somewhere else and average more points and not be going to the state tournament," Slaughter said. "There's no other team at state that is as close as we are. That should help us go pretty far."

Another reason some of the seniors stuck it out until the very end was due to them having some of their best friends on the team.

Klonglan said he is closest with Ingle, Fuller and Plowman and Galanakis is best friends with Slaughter and Vanderlaan.

"I have loved playing with these guys. Even if I didn't play, I wanted to be around this team," Galanakis said. "Some of my best friends are on this team. It's been a dream for all of us to be playing at Wells Fargo since we were young. I'm excited."

Reynolds is homeschooled and has not been with this senior class since fourth grade. He joined the group in high school and is averaging 3.1 points and 2.4 rebounds per contest in 11 games.

Perhaps Reynolds' biggest moment of the season came when he threw down an alley-oop dunk in the substate semifinal win over Fairfield.

"I have gotten so close with these guys," Reynolds said. "It was pretty neat throwing one down. It was a neat experience to get that crowd going. I might try to get another dunk at state if I get in."

Plowman enters the state tournament with per-game averages of 14.8 points, 7.3 rebounds, 3.0 blocks and 1.5 assists. He's also shooting 61 percent from the floor and 74 percent from the free-throw line.

Plowman has the top two performances for blocks in a season in school history.

The current single-season school record is set at the 69 blocks he currently has this winter. His 112 career blocks also are a school record.

Ingle comes into the state tournament averaging 10.6 points, 4.3 assists, 2.1 rebounds and 1.2 steals per game.

The senior point guard has re-written the record books for assists.

His 258 career assists is a school record and the 91 assists he currently has this winter is a single-season school record.

Nick Easley's 89 assists in 2014 was the previous benchmark for a single season and Garrett Sturtz had 250 assists in his varsity career.



Newton seniors Alex Thomason, left, and Teagan Galanakis take part in pre-game warmups at Oskaloosa High School last week before the Class 3A substate championship game against Solon. The Cardinals face North Polk at the boys' state basketball tournament at 3:45 p.m. on Tuesday inside Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines.

Photo by Gary Hanson

While some of the seniors on the roster don't play regular minutes, Carter knows that Plowman and Ingle don't have the seasons and careers they've had without them.

"Ian is a big reason why Cole has had the season he has had," Carter said. "Cole doesn't have the season he's had without Ian. He just doesn't. Brody and Jake go against Al and Mo and they make it tough on them every day."

"We wanted them to know that everyone has value. It was a challenge to get that across because you want to play and some probably feel like they could play if they got the chance."

Thompson, Satterfield and Vanderlaan all have played key roles this season. Thompson is averaging 3.8 points, 2.1 rebounds and 1.4 assists per game, while Satterfield has per-game averages of 5.1 points, 1.6 assists and 2.7 rebounds.

"We've all been together since second grade and everyone is selfless," Satterfield said. "We understand that this is all bigger than one person. We understand our roles on this team. It's easy to get frustrated when you aren't playing. It takes a lot of selfless individuals to be able to stick it out."

Vanderlaan began the season as a starter but moved to the bench in favor of Satterfield. Vanderlaan has seven starts, while Satterfield has started 21 games.

"I'm fine with it. I am

getting more minutes now I think than I was when I was starting," Vanderlaan said. "I'm really happy for everyone. We've put in a lot of time and effort, almost our whole life, and to get the outcome we wanted feels great."

Thompson is thankful the rest of the seniors stuck it out.

He thinks the Cardinals have the best scout team in the state.

"They give up their time and practice with us even though they aren't playing," Thompson said. "They have fulfilled their commitment to the team and that means the world to us. We are so grateful to have this kind of group. It's a family bond that keeps us together."

Carter and his coaching staff deserve a ton of credit for keeping the group together. But it also takes a strong group of parents and pre-high school coaches to steer the ship in the right direction.

"Tom Vanderlaan and Scott Bauer in elementary school talked to us about being the next generation of Newton Cardinals," Ingle said. "This is what we've been dreaming to do. We've been talking about this for a long time and what we've done before has all led up to this."

"This group is special. We aren't just friends. We are family."

Newton is making its first trip to the boys' state tournament since the Cardinals advanced in 4A back in 2017.

Before that, Newton

played at state in 1992, won the state championship in 1926, 1963 and 1964, and qualified for state a total of nine times.

Plowman struggled to put into words what it meant to be playing in the state tournament immediately following the team's win over Solon last week.

He has had more time to think about it.

"I thought about it a lot last night. I didn't really get much sleep," Plowman said the day after the Cardinals qualified. "I'm very happy to be in this situation."

Carter recalled a certain situation with Klonglan during the offseason. And it's just one example of what makes this group of seniors special.

"I had a conversation with Trevor when we were going to play in a weekend tournament during the offseason," Carter said. "I told him I valued his time and if he didn't want to spend his Saturday with us, I would understand. He told me he wanted to come and that this is his family and he wanted to be there for every single game. That's the kind of bond this group has. It's truly special, and I'm happy to be a part of it."

Klonglan does consider the basketball team an extension of his family. It became more of his family two years ago when his mother Kathie died of COVID-19.

"It's a family thing for me. They are my brothers," Klonglan said. "I lost my mom two years ago and it kind of made

me strive to be with a team. Jake always told me even if I don't play that he would get me a shirt. And he got me a shirt. I got the shirt."

Satterfield watched last year's substate championship game loss to Dallas Center-Grimes in a hospital bed as he recovered from one of his surgeries to help with multiple collapsed lungs.

"Today last year I had my second surgery," Satterfield said the day after the Cardinals qualified for state. "To think about that and to know I'm able to play today is a huge blessing."

Tade Vanderlaan gets to end his final season on the basketball court at the state tournament. Just like his older brother Trey did in 2017.

"My brother went five years ago or so and now I get to go. It's crazy to think about," Tade Vanderlaan said. "He always told me this was going to be our year. But he also flexed a bit when we didn't make it last year. But now that we made it, he can't say much and hopefully, we can get a win so I can say something to him about that."

The Cardinals will spend part of their Tuesday morning of the state tournament game at a shoot-around at Drake University's Knapp Center. Reynolds is looking forward to that and something else.

"I think the atmosphere at state will be great. That's a huge gym and we even have good food when we go there," Reynolds said. "I'm looking forward to the shoot-around at Drake, too. That will be awesome."

Brody Bauer said getting as close as the Cardinals got last year served as motivation this season. Now that the team has qualified, he's looking forward to seeing the community and the student section show out at Wells Fargo Arena.

"The Newton crowd has been unreal all year," Brody Bauer said. "I'm looking forward to seeing how many people are in the arena to watch, and I'm excited for our guys to be able to perform in front of a large crowd. We have guys who are ready to step up when the pressure is on, and I'm ready to see how we perform."

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Photo by Gary Hanson

Newton senior Moses Slaughter, right, warms up before the substate final against Solon last week. Slaughter is one of 13 seniors on this year's Cardinal squad which advanced to the state tournament.

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