

The News SPORTS

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Show and Golden Hawk alums score big at snow valley camp



PAUL D. BOWKER/THE NEWS

Former Mid-Prairie basketball coach and alum Don Showalter, right, listens as Golden Hawk alum and former assistant coach Dave Schlabaugh speaks at the Snow Valley Basketball Camp in Waverly.



Paul Bowker
Columnist

The days begin early at the Snow Valley Basketball Camp in Waverly.

First whistle is at 6:15 in the morning.

Alarm clocks an hour before that.

More than 12 hours after that first whistle last Friday, hundreds of boys basketball campers assembled in the fieldhouse at Wartburg College, sat down on the gym floor as the bouncing of basketballs silenced and Mid-Prairie basketball legend Don Showalter grabbed a microphone.

Not a yawn could be seen. Their eyes were wide open.

Coach Show, as he is known to just about everybody not only here in this gym in Waverly and in the gym back in Mid-Prairie but also on every Team USA basketball court in the country, began to talk about FIBA, the governing body for international basketball.

Was this another Coach K story? Another gold medal story?

Or perhaps even a Mid-Prairie story from a Coach Show personal history that led to a book published this summer by Triumph Books: "Cornfields to Gold Medals."

That's the thing about this summer hoops tradition, built by Showalter at an eastern Iowa college where he at-

tended after graduating from Mid-Prairie. Go here, and you're greeted with 57 years of Mid-Prairie basketball history.

Among the 75 coaches joining Showalter in Waverly are Dave Schlabaugh, a Mid-Prairie alum and former assistant to Showalter who is now head men's basketball coach at Cornell College, and Chris Kern, a Mid-Prairie alum who coached alongside Showalter at Mid-Prairie for 26 years.

"We have a great relationship," said Showalter, 70, National Director of Coach Development for USA Basketball and a 10-time gold medal winner. "It's really fun to work together."

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LIVING LIFE ON TWO WHEELS

Kalona resident Caleb Wilson and his son Mason Wilson discover passion for bike racing

BY GIOVANNI CORONEL
The News

KALONA

What started as a way to reinvigorate a life that lacked an outlet for energizing the mind and body turned into something the whole family could become involved in.

Caleb Wilson, a Kalona resident, and his 14-year-old son, Mason Wilson, have become engrossed in the cycling world and it has become not only a fun pastime for them but also a way of life.

"It's become an integral part of our life," Caleb said about bike racing. "It's become part of the community that we spend time with."

Back in 2019 Caleb started to feel he was living an inactive life, and this was not only affecting him physically but mentally as well. Needing a pastime to shake off these unwanted attributes that have adhered to his daily life, he decided to put more effort towards cycling, an activity he has enjoyed in the past.

"I grew up working on a farm, working outdoors. I transitioned to an office job in college and then after that I didn't exercise regularly and I felt like garbage all the time," Caleb said about what motivated him to make a change to his life.

"In 2019 it was really bothering me. I wasn't doing anything regular, just these occasional rides. I just decided that I didn't want to do that anymore and I started riding a lot more in 2020, and a friend of mine convinced me to try a race in 2021."

A naturally competitive person, Caleb did not want to take part in the race if he wasn't going to perform well. This gave him a goal and the discipline he needed to take his training seriously. Despite suboptimal conditions for his first race, he



GIOVANNI CORONEL/THE NEWS

Mason Wilson and his dad Caleb Wilson bike up a dirt road in Kalona. The convenience of these type of roads in Kalona is a great advantage for these two, who train regularly in order to compete in bike races.

discovered how thrilling bike racing can be.

"I did my first race, and it was a winter race. It was a fat bike race and I caught crazy conditions for it. A bunch of snow on the ground but, it was awesome. I just loved it," Caleb said.

When he was just eight years old Mason became interested in cycling, in large part with his dad's enthusiasm for it. The inciting event that put Mason down the path of bike racing was when Caleb planned on participating in the Courage Ride, which wasn't a

race, but an annual bike ride dedicated to improving the lives of those affected by Sarcoma Cancer.

"I told him I was thinking about doing the Courage Ride and [Mason] just got interested in it and he started going out and riding with me on paved roads."

In what was his first group ride event, Mason biked 19 miles in the Courage Ride. He discovered he had an itch for cycling that must be scratched, but it wasn't until his first bike race where he truly became hooked on cycling.

His first race, a mountain

biking event called Sugar Bottom Scramble, took place in Lake McBride. He entered the junior's race, with the ages of those participating ranging from 8-16. Safe to say he thoroughly enjoyed his 45-minute race through the woods.

"That's what got me into it actually. It was that race," Mason said about the Sugar Bottom Scramble. "The thrill of flying with your competitors through the woods. Everything was just super fun and the competition, I did pretty decent in it. It was my first race, and it was very fun and after that I just wanted to race more."

Now that Mason possessed a strong desire for competitive cycling he decided, in his final year of middle school, to give up playing soccer, football, and basketball.

Planning on going from Mid-Prairie to Hillcrest for High School, he won't completely abandon school athletics since he is planning on going out for cross-country, because of its complementary nature to cycling.

"In some ways it's hard for some other kids to understand why you would choose to do that," Caleb said of Mason's choice to focus on cycling. "But it's something that he's been really successful in."

"Over the winter [Mason] did a weightlifting program, did a ton of research on what great training was for the races he wanted to do and put together a whole structure training program. Then this year he's been doing a lot of competitive races."

While these two are fully enraptured with cycling there is always a looming issue anyone would face if they wanted to compete at a high level, finding the time and motivation to train. Fortunately, for the Wilsons, Kalona's gravel roads provide a wonderfully convenient way to strengthen their biking skills.

"If it's not convenient, you won't do it. At least you won't do it for long," Caleb said about training in general.

"During training the biggest challenge is probably staying motivated to train all the time because you have to do a lot of training to compete at a high level," Mason said. "If you want to win, you have to push yourself to stay up there. You can't kind of fizzle off."

Living north of Kalona, it takes about a half mile for the

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Season recap: Highland softball

BY GIOVANNI CORONEL
The News

RIVERSIDE

The 2023 Highland softball team went through a rocky start with a 3-4 record, but they were able to quickly right the ship and put together another commendable summer campaign that ended with an 18-11 record overall, an 11-3 conference record, and 10 Huskies receiving all-conference record.

While up to bat the Huskies produced 218 hits and scored 226 runs. They scored their season high in runs in a 17-1 road game victory over the Winfield Mt. Union Wolves.

Winning every game, they scored 10 or more runs in, Highland reached the double-digit threshold in 12 games this season.

Over the course of the season the Huskies had four players step up to the mound to pitch. As a team Highland gave up 147 hits, 95 runs in total

with 62 earned runs allowed, and delivered 170 strikeouts.

The Huskies held a team to zero points four times this year.

In the first round of the playoffs the Huskies defeated fellow Southeast Iowa Super Conference member, the Lone Tree Lady Lions.

A home postseason game, Highland advanced to the second round by defeating Lone Tree, 9-3, making it three straight times this year the Huskies trounced the Lions.

The second round of the playoffs is where Highland's season came to an end and it was at the hands of a team that was a particular thorn in the Huskies' side all season long, the Wapello Arrows.

Three times the Huskies and the Arrows faced off this year and three times Wapello walked away with the victory. In the SEISC Highland took



TJ RHODES/THE NEWS

The Highland Huskies softball team celebrate a two-run shot by junior Sarah Burton, welcoming home senior Katelyn Waters first on June 23 against the Lone Tree Lady Lions.

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