

# Garrett Rolofson selected as 2020 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year



Garrett Rolofson never considered himself as one of the top athletes at Louisburg High School.

Rolofson grew up playing the game of basketball, but never really had any interest outside of that. Then in his junior year, soccer and golf started to appear on his radar – and in two year's time – became on the best players in the school at both.

During the 2019-20 school year, all Rolofson did was earn first team all-league and second team all-state honors in goal for the Wildcat soccer team. Then was a full-time starter on the Louisburg basketball team and was considered one of the top three golfers on a team that was poised to make another trip to the state tournament.

It has been a wild couple of years for Rolofson, but it ended with him being named as the 2020 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year.

“Receiving the award for the male athlete of the year was a complete surprise to me,” Rolofson said. “I did not expect to be nominated for the award, let alone receive it, and I am honored. This award means a lot to me because it goes to show that all the time and effort you put into working towards your goals in the offseason really does pay off.”

The award, which is in its third year, is to recognize an outstanding LHS student athlete. Louisburg Sports Zone asked the head coaches at LHS to submit nominations and those nominations were then organized and submitted back to the coaches for a vote.

The coaches then submitted their top two choices and the number of votes were added up, which decided the winner.

Along with his all-league and all-state honors in soccer, Rolofson also holds the school record for most victories in a season with 16, second in shutouts with eight and third in saves with 82 in a season. He was a big reason the Wildcats were able to win a school record 16 games in 2019 and earn a league and regional title.

“Garrett was a fantastic goalkeeper and leader for us,” Louisburg soccer coach Kyle Conley said. “He went from not playing for a really long time to Miami County Republic goalkeeper of the year, first team All Frontier League and second team 4A-1A All State in his first year as a starter in our program. He was a tremendous leader and had a work ethic second to none. He, as well as, the other members of our defense helped lead the team to the 2019 Frontier League title and another regional championship. I could not be happier for Garrett as he is very deserving of this award.”



It was Conley who helped convince Rolofson to go out for soccer, in an albeit, very untraditional way.

"I remember I was lifting weights the summer before my junior year when I heard Coach Conley call my name and he threw a basketball at me," Rolofson said. "I caught it and he told me to try out for the soccer team as a goalie. At first I thought he was crazy until I saw the comradery and family the soccer team had built and I got sucked in immediately. My favorite thing about the soccer team was that it wasn't just a team it was a family. Every person on the team was a part of one big family and that was something special.

"From the coaches all the way to the new freshman, they were all welcomed in with open arms. Coach (Michael) Pickman coached me and taught me everything I know about the game from a goalie standpoint. Coach Conley taught me everything I know

about the game and taught us very valuable life lessons that will follow me forever.”

Rolofson also worked his way up the basketball ranks to where he was a full-time starter as a senior and brought a lot of tenacity for the Wildcats as they weaved their way through a difficult Frontier League schedule.

“Rolo has made so many strides athletically throughout his high school career,” Louisburg boys basketball coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. “He’s an incredibly hard worker and turned himself into an explosive, tough athlete. He was our toughest kid on the basketball court this year. He is a high character kid. We are really going to miss his leadership and I have no doubt he is going to be successful in the future.”

Basketball brought an experience that Rolofson won’t soon forget.

“Stepping onto the court on a Tuesday or Friday night with a buzzing student section behind you just gave me the chills every time,” Rolofson said. “The fans, support from the community, teammates and coaches made basketball special. Basketball is the longest season of the year and that provides countless hours with teammates building bonds and friendships that will last forever along with memories to go with it. I think that’s what I enjoyed the most was the friends and atmosphere the Louisburg community brought to the gym on game nights.”





Like soccer, golf almost never happened for Rolofson either. As it turned out, he was one of the big reasons the Wildcats qualified for state as a team a year ago.

The spread of COVID-19 didn't allow Rolofson an opportunity to see how his senior year would have turned out on the golf course, but the game helped change him in a short amount of time.

"Golf was something special, although we didn't get a senior season like we had planned," Rolofson said. "I am still thankful for the year I did get to play as a junior. The spring of my sophomore year I had never once set foot onto a

golf course and was something I could never have seen myself doing until Calvin Dillon convinced me to give it a try. From then on I fell in love with the game, but not only that, it was if every time my classmates went golfing I got invited as well even though I had barely played.

“The countless hours of fun competitions out on the golf courses all throughout the years were the best part about golfing. No matter where we played, how I performed, or how the team performed I always had a great time playing golf and that’s what made the sport so special to me.”

The overall aspect of playing three sports not only gave him confidence in the athletic arena, but it also provided him life lessons and a way to escape the everyday stresses in life.

“Staying active throughout all of my high school career was very beneficial to me not only as an athlete but as a person,” Rolofson said. “Sports have always been a big part of my life and allowed for me to get away from the stress and anxiety of the real world and enjoy the sports I love. I gained a passion for sports throughout high school and new passions for sports I never would’ve thought to try. Most importantly though, I learned the quality of leadership, teamwork and giving effort into everything you do not only in sports but in the classroom and in the real world.”

Sports taught Rolofson a lot of about work ethic, but it was his father’s experience that left a lasting impact on him.

Bob Rolofson suffered a brain aneurysm several years ago, and Garrett watched as his father – slowly, but surely – worked his way back through many obstacles that stood in his way. He saw his father’s strength and dedication and it is something that was contagious to Garrett and gave him motivation.

“Most importantly I want to say thank you to my parents for showing me what it really means to never give up and I think

without them I never would have been able to achieve any of the goals I have achieved this year," Garrett said. "Through my dad's brain aneurysm journey I was shown that if my dad can recover from such a traumatic brain injury, and work as hard as he did to be where he is today, that I can work just as hard. He showed me that I can do anything if I put my mind to it and I really took it to heart. I also want to thank my mom for always reminding me of that and pushing me to do my best in everything I do, not just sports."