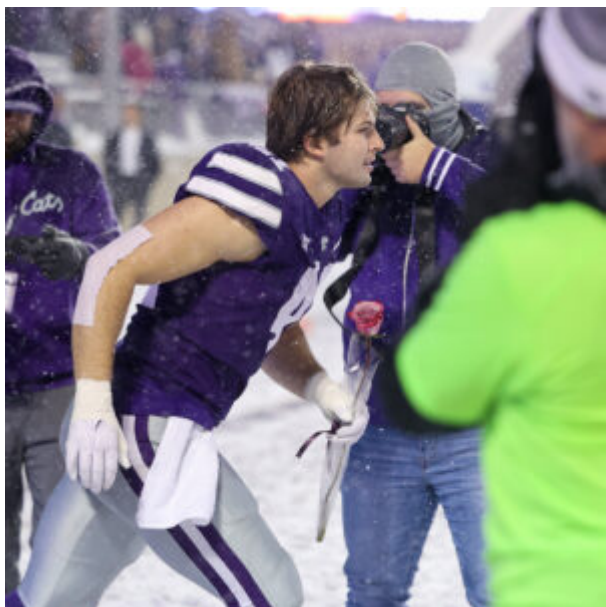


Grateful and humble, Moore reflects on his journey at Kansas State



Kansas State senior, and Louisburg alum, Austin Moore runs onto the Bill Snyder Family Stadium Field on Saturday during Senior Night ceremonies.

MANHATTAN — As Austin Moore stood in the purple-lit tunnel looking out onto Bill Snyder Family Memorial Stadium, all the memories rushing back.

One as a walk-on just trying to make the team, then earning a scholarship and then eventually moving all the way up to a Big 12 Champion and a team captain.

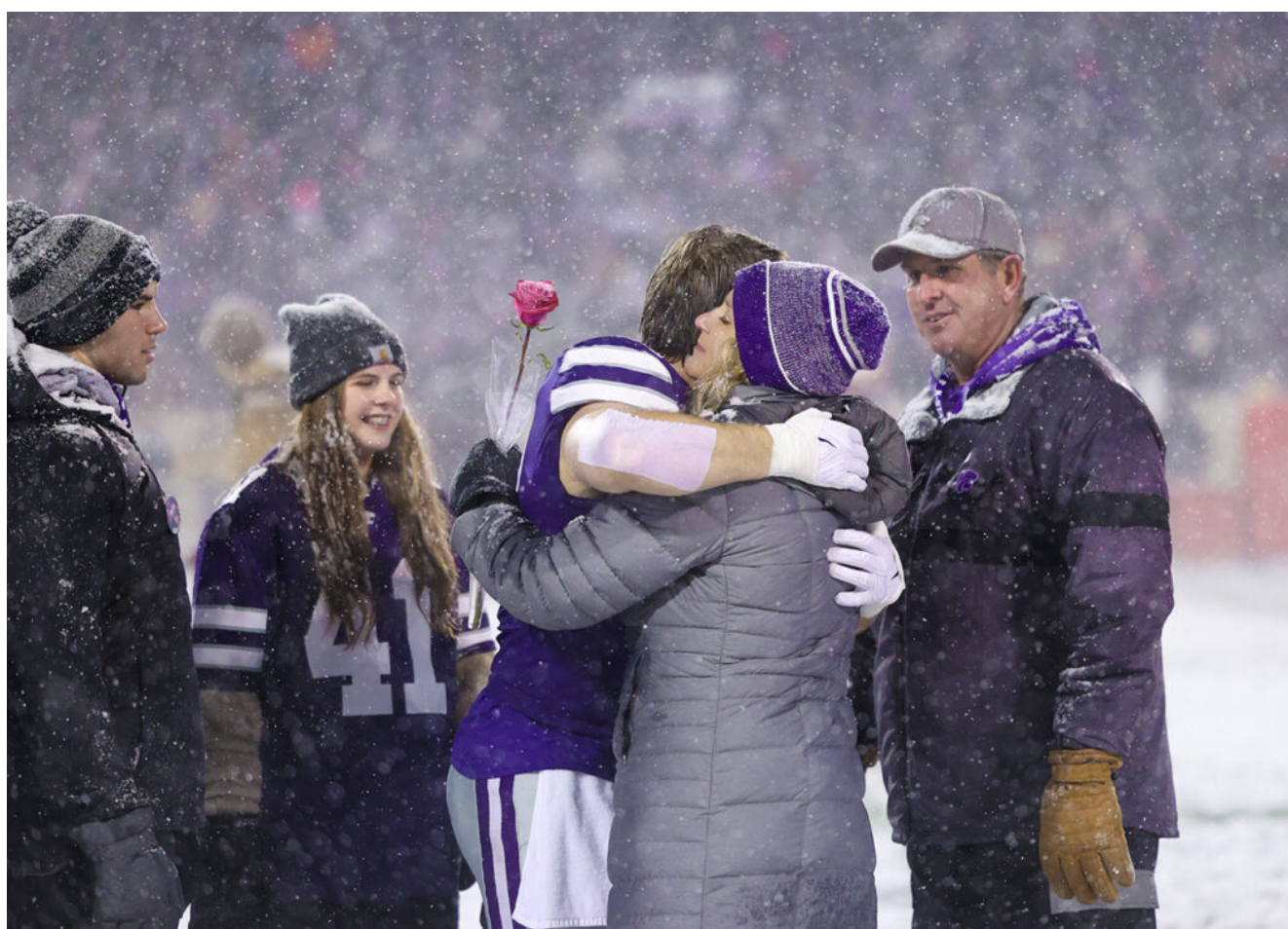
The five years he has spent with the Kansas State football program has been some of the best times of his life. It was, how Moore put it, where his “dreams came true.”

“I was just thinking about my journey here and how grateful I am for everyone,” Moore said. “How grateful I am for my teammates, coaches, fans and I am just grateful for a lot of things.”

At the top of that list is his biggest supporters and fans – his family.

That is who Moore was staring down in the blizzard-like conditions on a rare snowy November night in Manhattan for Senior Night. Down about 50 yards away, were his parents Tommy and Alison, along with his siblings Alyse, Ashton and Adelyn.

So when the public address announcer called his name, Moore found K-State head coach Chris Klieman, gave him a hug and went jogging toward his family.



Austin gives mother a hug on Senior Night while his father Tommy, and siblings, Ashton and Adelyn look on Saturday in Manhattan.

It is what Senior Nights are made for – a chance to thank those people have been so supportive in his journey. Now, that he could be playing in possibly his final home game, it was a lot to digest.

"It is hard to describe," Moore said. "It has been everything I have dreamed off since I was a young kid. My parents and all my family believed in me and it is what I hoped for and envisioned when I decided to walk-on here. I am just so grateful to everyone here and back in Louisburg who have supported me. It has been really fun."

What started out as a fun, memorable day turned somber for Moore and his Wildcat teammates as they tried to process the 42-35 loss to Iowa State in their regular season finale.

It wasn't the way Moore wanted to go out for the final time in front of the Wildcat faithful.



Austin Moore runs in to make a tackle Saturday against Iowa State.

As difficult as the one loss was, Moore's journey was something he will remember for the rest of life.

It all started in 2019 when the Louisburg all-state player

committed to Kansas State as a walk-on and joined Klieman in his first year with the program.

Moore eventually impressed his coaches enough to earn a spot on a scholarship and eventually garnered the nickname – ‘The Machine.’ It started because he didn’t show a lot of emotion and always answered questions fast.

The nickname grew and Moore’s business-like work ethic was contagious and respected by his teammates. He became a starting linebacker his junior year and helped his team to a Big 12 Championship.

As a senior, he was named a team captain and leader of the Wildcat defense – a long way from where he started. He was recently named to the All-Big 12 second team after he finished his senior campaign with a team-high 12 tackles for loss and was second with 59 tackles.



Austin Moore celebrates his fumble recovery in the first quarter of Saturday's snowy game against Iowa State.

"I think before I get here I was probably a little naive to what it was going to be like, Moore said. "There were times here for sure where I wondered to myself if I was going to make it. But I always had older guys here show me the way and people have always believed in me. I am just really thankful for that."

People like his family, former teammates and the whole town of Louisburg rooting for Moore to succeed – even the most die-hard Kansas Jayhawk fans in Louisburg wanted the best for Moore.

It is those fans in Louisburg that have kept Moore motivated the last five years, even through the most difficult times.

"It is really special," he said. "I have people all the time

texting me and things like that. I just hope that I can be a good role model to some of those kids back in Louisburg. I hope that I made some people proud back home.”



Austin Moore barks out a call from his linebacker spot Saturday against Iowa State.

As for what the future holds, Moore still has one more game left, which is a bowl game next month. He currently has one year of eligibility remaining, but is undecided if he will be back in the purple and white next season.

“Yeah I have talked with the coaches, but I am still not 100 percent sure of what I am going to do,” Moore said. “I still have a lot of thinking to do and I am going to talk to my family. No matter what I decide, I am so grateful for everything here at K-State.”

Grateful for a program who gave him a chance to achieve his dream and for all those who helped him along the way.

“I’ve loved every minute of it,” Moore said.