

## **Roe knows football...and basketball...and...**

Picture this: there is a young man juggling two balls who has just started walking down a long hallway with rows of doors opening as he walks by. Walking behind him are family members, friends and mentors cheering him on. He tosses each ball in the air in turn, then pulls them out of the air, the swirling rhythm matching the cadence of his footsteps down the hallway.

Such is life for West Platte senior Erick Roe. Eighteen and life to go, Roe has opportunities after graduation springing up before him, with colleges vying for both his football and basketball skills. He's earned accolades and left records broken like a disco night gone wrong, both on the football field and on the basketball court. His high school football career — during which he was not only a stellar wide receiver but also the Jays' safety, kicker and punter — ended a long road trip away from Weston on a cold November night in Princeton with a state quarterfinal loss; his high school basketball career is in the final quarter and will end somewhere on an undetermined court between now and March.

Roe's prolific athletic career has left him with a big decision to make in the upcoming months, but it is not a decision he takes lightly. He's had offers from the Universities of Missouri and Kansas, from Northwest Missouri and Missouri Western State Universities and from others, and he's mulling all the desired options, including career opportunities in sports medicine, coaching or elsewhere within the athletic field. He's already done some coaching — which he said definitely gave him a different perspective — as he has taken over the reins of his brother Adam's sixth grade basketball team.

"I like the contact in football and it is more physical," Roe said. "With all the running up and down the court, basketball is more fast-paced and a different workout. Getting a college education is very important to me and I want to go somewhere close, and if I can play athletics that's even better."

Roe said he planned to make a decision after the upcoming basketball season is over, and that he plans on concentrating until then on leading his team back to the state playoffs. Last year, the Jays finished their season in the state quarterfinals. This year, several milestones are within Roe's reach, including the West Platte career scoring record (Roe has 1,609 points — Paul Miller scored 1,976 between 1972-75) and the 2,000-point plateau.

As is the case with all good athletes, even the natural ones, Roe's skills have been honed with long hours of practice, year in and year out. He started basketball in the third grade, then took up football in junior high after West Platte coaches saw his potential and encouraged him to come out for the team. And he had his strongest supporter behind him all the way.

"My dad made sure I had everything I needed to play, and we had a goal in the driveway where we played H-O-R-S-E or other games," Erick said of his father, John. "He still says he can beat me, but I don't think so. I hate to admit it, but he did beat me the last time we played H-O-R-S-E last year before he had knee surgery."

Between West Platte basketball seasons, Roe kept busy with workouts with coaches like Scott Wedman, who played with the Kansas City Kings, and Dave Johnson, who coached his AAU team for six years. He played with high quality basketball players from all over the metro area like Clinton Mann of St. Thomas Aquinas, who is going to Iowa State, and played against players like Travis Releford of Bishop Miege, who has signed with Kansas.

"All of our AAU games were played in the inner city and they were real competitive," Roe said. "Most of those guys are going to play college ball somewhere and I'm real glad I got to play AAU ball."

Upon entering high school, Roe tore up the basketball court from day one. He played on three district championship teams, including the 2005-06 team which placed fourth in the state in Class 2 basketball. For his performances, he has received a slew of honors, including being named to all-conference, all-district and all-state teams each year.

“You don’t get an opportunity to coach a player like Erick very often,” West Platte basketball coach Zane Tanner said. “It’s been a lot of fun to watch him grow, both on and off the court. He keeps getting better and because of his athleticism he hasn’t reached the ceiling yet.”

West Platte football coach Danny Brown said that while Roe was inexperienced on the football field as a freshman, his athletic skills and mentors like Adam and Brian Barmann, Eric Humes, Ross Rennie and others allowed him to learn and adjust quickly.

“We’re not in the coaching business to make buddies, but I feel like Erick and I have had a good working relationship,” Brown said. “He practiced hard and worked with Adam and Brian and Ross to the point that he understood the offense and could tell me when he was getting open, then as he got older he would work with the younger receivers.”

While Roe has hobbies like playing video games, fishing and golf (“I’m terrible at golf, but it’s fun”), his budding athletic career may force him to lay off one of his other favorite activities — riding four-wheelers. But his attention has always been focused on basketball and football, anyway.

“Sports has been his whole thing and it has provided direction for Erick,” said his mother, Dana Roe, who works in the office at West Platte High School. “We’ve had to work to keep him grounded, but he’s done a good job of not getting too carried away. I don’t think he realizes how much people have enjoyed watching him play over the years, including his parents, and we’re going to miss that when he’s done.”

Based on how well Erick has played both football and basketball at West Platte, his parents are likely to have plenty more opportunities to watch their son play ball.

## **Local athletes named to all-conference, all-district teams**

Several area athletes were recently honored for their athletic accomplishments this fall by being named to all-conference teams, including:

**Platte County softball** — sophomore Haley Pypes, first team pitcher; sophomore Brianna Corwin, first team catcher; junior Sarah Elliott, first team infielder; sophomore Kelsey Weedin, second team infielder; junior Hilary Brought, honorable mention infielder; sophomore Molly Cantu, honorable mention infielder; freshman Cacy Williams, first team outfielder; and sophomore Morgan Wilkerson, second team outfielder. Elliott, Pypes, Corwin and Weedin were first team all-district selections, while Brought and Williams were second team all-district selections.

**North Platte and West Platte softball** — North Platte senior Jessica Hunt, second base; North Platte sophomore Dakota Hellyer, third base; North Platte senior Addie Buckler, shortstop; and North Platte junior Bailee Testorff, pitcher. Honorable mention selections were West Platte senior Molly Mathews, outfield; West Platte junior Megan Devers, shortstop; and West Platte sophomore Morgan Schimmel, pitcher.

**Platte County volleyball** — sophomore Molley Scanlon and junior Morgan Johnson were named to the MEC all-conference team; junior Lyndsie Sellars, junior Cheyenne Verdoorn and senior Amber Whitmer were honorable mention selections.

**West Platte volleyball** — senior Melissa Clemens, first team; Tara Johnson, second team. Clemens was also a second team all-district selection.

**Platte County soccer** — sophomore Reece Harris, second team goalkeeper; senior Chad Brownsberger, second team forward; senior Larry Block, honorable mention forward; senior Erik Odegard, first team midfielder; senior C.J. Portenier, second team midfielder; junior Dustin Menk, second team midfielder; sophomore Max VanFosson, honorable mention midfielder; sophomore Joey McLain, honorable mention

midfielder; senior Tim Lugo, first team defender; junior Cody Robinson, second team midfielder; and junior Bobby Wilbur, honorable mention defender.

**North Platte and West Platte football** — West Platte junior Ryan Humes, first team quarterback; North Platte senior C.J. Blomquist, first team offensive guard and first team defensive interior lineman; North Platte senior Mitch Giger, first team offensive tackle and second team interior lineman; West Platte senior Erick Roe, first team wide receiver, first team kicker, second team safety and honorable mention punter; North Platte senior John Foster, second team running back; North Platte senior Pat Everett, second team center; West Platte junior Clayton Coulson, second team center; West Platte senior Kyle Elder, second team offensive tackle and first team linebacker; West Platte junior Ben Schlick, second team wide receiver and second team cornerback; West Platte senior Steven Wheeler, honorable mention running back; North Platte junior Shawn Rogers, honorable mention tight end; West Platte junior Zach Oberdiek, second team defensive end; North Platte senior Sam Trave, second team linebacker; West Platte senior John Clouser, honorable mention interior lineman; North Platte junior Nick Domingo, honorable mention defensive end; North Platte junior Adam Shore, honorable mention cornerback; and North Platte junior Wes Johnson, honorable mention safety.