

## Winter Sports 1998-99

## High School Hockey

## Mohawk brothers live hockey

By TOM THOMA  
Of The Globe-Gazette  
MASON CITY

Their life, it seems, is virtually non-stop hockey. Brothers Eric and Tom Harlan are forwards on the Mason City Mohawk hockey team. But their passion for the game extends far beyond the ice.

They talk about it continually at home. They play it on their video games. It's rare when a game isn't on TV. And high school hockey won't be enough; they both hope to play in college.

Asked what the fascination with the game is, and Tom — two years younger and one inch taller than his brother — answers almost with reverence: "There's nothing like it. It's a physical game. It's a fast game. It doesn't stop like baseball and some of those sports. It's always going."

The Harlans was skating in grade school, basically since they were able to strap 'em on (no doubt) with the help of father Bruce and mother Deb. They took to hockey when, says Eric, "a couple of my friends started playing."

"We saw them and we thought it looked pretty cool, so we started playing," he said. "We played defense for a while, but then we started liking the idea of scoring goals, so we thought we'd switch to forwards."

The switch has been beneficial for the Mohawks.

Eric is a hard-hitting senior winger on the Mohawks' first line — "I love to hit people," he says — while Tom, a junior centerman, is a deft puck handler.

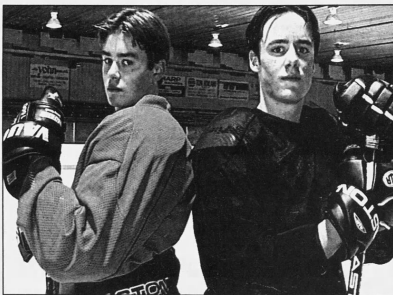
"Both are good hockey players. But they're like night and day on the ice," says their coach, John Lloyd. "Tom is a good puck handler. That's why we've got him at center, because we depend on him to handle the puck a lot."

"Eric is very hard-nosed. If he gets ahold of the puck or if he doesn't have the puck, he's going to the net somehow. He probably puts a little fear in some goalies because they don't know if he's going to stop or not, or what's going to happen."

Eric also is proving to be a good leader on and off the ice, Lloyd said.

"He's starting to give us the leadership off the ice — in the team room — which is what we need," he said.

While they battle together



Globe-Gazette photo by TOM THOMA

Eric (left) and Tom Harlan are making significant contributions to the Mason City Mohawk team this season. Eric is a hard-hitting winger while Tom is a skilled puck handler at the center position.

## THE SCHEDULE

Nov. 27 — Ames, 7:45 p.m., here. Nov. 28 — Waterloo, 7:45 p.m., here. Dec. 4 — Des Moines Capitals, 7:45 p.m., here. Dec. 6 — At Des Moines Oak Leafs, 12:30 p.m.; Dec. 11 — At Des Moines Capitals, 8 p.m.; Dec. 18 — At Ames, 7:45 p.m. Jan. 15 — Waterloo, 7:45 p.m., here. Jan. 16 — Des Moines Capitals, 7:45 p.m., here. Jan. 22-24 — Mason City Varsity Tournament. Jan. 29 — Des Moines Oak Leafs, 7:45 p.m., here. Jan. 30 — Kansas City, 7:45 p.m., here. Jan. 31 — Kansas City, 12:45 p.m., here. Feb. 4 — At Rochester Lourdes, TBA. Feb. 6 — Ames, 12:30 p.m., here. Feb. 7 — At Waterloo, 12:30 p.m.; Feb. 12 — Des Moines Oak Leafs, 7:45 p.m., here. Feb. 13 — Sioux City, 7:45 p.m., here. Feb. 14 — Sioux City, 12:45 p.m., here. Feb. 19 — Dubuque, 7:45 p.m., here. Feb. 20 — Dubuque, 2:45 p.m., here. Feb. 26 — At Des Moines Capitals, 8 p.m.; Feb. 27 — At Ames, 6:45 p.m. March 5-7 — Junior Varsity State Tournament at Sioux City. March 12-14 — Varsity State Tournament at St. Joseph.

for the Mohawks, that natural brother rivalry shows through in practice and in their conversations.

"We're pretty competitive," says Eric, who hopes to play hockey for Northern Iowa while possibly studying business. "Both of us like to find out who can score more and who's better, so we're pretty competitive."

"If I hit him in practice," says Tom, who plans to study medicine, "it gives me something to brag about."

As should be expected, they're generous in their praise of each other.

Tom on Eric: "He's pretty physical out there. He's been playing a lot so he knows what

he's doing. We kind of critique each other every once in a while, so it helps out to have both of us playing."

Eric on Tom: "He's pretty fast out there. He can move the

puck around pretty good. He's a pretty fast skater. I think that helps him out a lot. I'll give him a couple of pointers. He doesn't like that too much, but being a big brother I have to tell him what's up."

Eric the hitter, says his brother can do some hitting of his own.

"He's a pretty good hitter. He can take some people down," Eric says. "He's a little younger, but he does the job."

The Harlans and the rest of the Mohawks have been doing the job quite well as the Mohawks are 5-1 heading into tonight's home opener against Ames.

Neither Eric nor Tom is surprised by the success.

"We've got a lot of young players who aren't that strong but there's a lot of talent," says Eric, "and we pass the puck around and end up getting it in the goal. We're pretty fast."

Tom says the Mohawks "will surprise a lot of people."

"We're just coming together right now, learning to play with each other," he said. "We've been moving the puck around pretty good, and we're getting our stamina back."

Asked if his team was coming together better than expected, Lloyd answered: "Either we aren't playing anybody or they're developing bet-