

THE WAY WE PLAY: QUAD-CITY BLUES



Photos by John Schultz/QUAD-CITY TIMES

Quad-Cities' Alex Lambert (27) and Steven Nicholas, right, defend during Saturday's Midwest High School Hockey League Varsity All-Star game at the Quad-City Sports Center. Lambert is a senior at Rock Island, while Nicholas is a Bettendorf senior.

CHECKING OUT

SENIORS END HIGH SCHOOL CAREER WITH WIN

By S.A.
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QUAD-CITY TIMES

On Sept. 29,

1960, Ted

Williams came to

the plate in the

bottom of the eighth

inning at Fenway Park in

Boston and cracked a home

run in his final major

league at-bat.

John Elway passed for 336 yards

and ran for a touchdown and was

selected the most valuable player in

Super Bowl XXXIII during his final game

in the NFL.

Although he later would return from

retirement, many thought the final shot in the

1998 NBA Finals by Michael Jordan to give the

LEARN ABOUT THE BLUES

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Chicago Bulls their sixth championship would be his last and most defining highlight.

They are the memorable last plays in memorable last games that athletes often dream about having.

Add to the list Kendall Price, Steven Nicholas and Alex Lambert of the Quad-City Blues varsity hockey team.

The three high school seniors had perhaps their greatest moments in their final high school hockey game during the recent Midwest High School Hockey League Varsity All-Star game.

They each had a hand in the come-from-behind victory as their East All-star team defeated the West All-stars 9-7 at the

BLUES | C6

BLUES

Continued from Page C1

Quad-City Sports Center in Davenport.

Price, the Blues' scoring leader this year, could be placed next to the aforementioned Mr. Jordan.

His shot in the third period with 4 minutes, 23 seconds left to play was the game-winning goal.

"It was a great end to my career," said the Riverdale High School senior forward.

"It was fun just being out there and to get the game-winner on top of everything is just awesome."

Defensemen Nicholas and Lambert, who have played hockey together for more than 10 years, were in the game together at the end and helped Price's goal stand up with a couple of saves in front of their net.

"It was great playing with Steve (Nicholas) again and to be playing our final high school game against the best in the league," Lambert, a senior at Rock Island High School, said.

"It was cool that my last game was an all-star game. I really liked the experience, and it was a great way to end my high school career," Nicholas, the Bettendorf High School senior, said.

Granted the three friends haven't stopped playing hockey. They hope their hockey journey and career is just beginning and will continue as they move onto higher levels of play.

Price plans to try out for the Tri-state or Mid West Amateur Hockey team, an all-star squad from Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas.

If he makes it, he'll get the opportunity to play in the Chicago Showcase, a hockey



John Schultz/QUAD-CITY TIMES

Bettendorf senior Steven Nicholas would like to join the junior leagues but also would "like to play for a Division I school."

tournament at the Amateur Hockey Association of Illinois (AHA) Rink in Bensenville, Ill., April 17-22.

The purpose of the event is to allow high school hockey players from around the country who don't traditionally get scouted, because of geographic and budgetary constraints within the scouting circles, the opportunity to compete during a five-day period and be seen by major hockey institutions in North America. It is considered the second-largest scouted tournament in the nation.

"There'll be scouts there from Junior A, colleges, minor leagues and possibly the NHL. If I play in the showcase, you never know what can happen with scouts being in the crowd."

If he doesn't make the Tri-state squad, Price still plans to try to latch on with a Junior A team, which is the level of play between high school and

college. The closest to the Quad-Cities is the Cedar Rapids RoughRiders, but there are teams throughout the Midwest.

"The top colleges recruit from the Junior A Leagues. It would be nice just to see if I can move up to the next level and compete," Price said.

He also has plans of attending Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport.

Nicholas and Lambert also have designs of moving up in their hockey careers. The two have the size to play at the next level as defensemen. Nicholas is 6-foot-3, 200 pounds, while Lambert is 6-1, 210.

"I'll probably look at joining the junior leagues, but I also would like to play for a Division I school, like Minnesota or Wisconsin," said Nicholas.

The Blues' coach, Nick White, thought Price, Nicholas and Lambert played very well in their final game.

"When you've got that much talent on the ice, and it's a wide-open game. I thought all the boys played great," White said.

"I'll miss having them on the team next year, but I'm sure they'll continue to have long and successful careers."

After Saturday's game, Price was emotional, knowing it was his final time in a Blues sweater. Nicholas said he skated around the rink a couple of times after the game, taking it all in and remembering his time on the ice.

Lambert said he was sad knowing his high school career was at an end.

"Yeah, I'm sad knowing it's the last time playing with the guys I grew up with. I'll continue playing hockey, but it won't be the same because I won't be playing with guys I've known my whole life. But we all will have one last great memory."

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Kendall
Price