

Schulte brothers share love of football

Written by Jim Ecker

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Reggie, Bryce and Quinn Schulte used to tumble out of their house in southwest Cedar Rapids when they were younger and play pickup games in the backyard, where the two older boys sometimes pulled rank on their younger brother.

"Quinn being the little kid, sometimes he got picked on just a little bit," Bryce admitted Tuesday. "We were always outside and if we were playing whiffle ball and something wrong happened and Quinn would complain a little bit, Reggie and I would say, 'Well, it doesn't matter. We're bigger than you and we're older than you, so we get to call it.'

"But it was always fun," he added, smiling.

Well, the three Schulte boys have come a long way since those days, although they'll still gather to toss the football around and talk about the game they love.

Reggie Schulte, 22, is a quarterback at the University of Northern Iowa following his all-state career at Xavier High School. Bryce Schulte, 18, has been the starting quarterback for the Saints the past three years and is on the verge of breaking more of Reggie's records. And Quinn, approaching his 16th birthday, is a starting wide receiver for the Saints and one of Bryce's favorite targets.

Quinn Schulte leads the Saints with 27 receptions in seven games heading into Friday night's home game with Vinton-Shellsburg.

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"It's always fun to hear on the P.A. when they say 'Schulte to Schulte' or something like that (after a pass completion)," Bryce said. "Quinn knows what he's doing and he has the advantage of being a coach's son, so he knows the plays. He doesn't mess up a whole lot."

Duane Schulte, their father and Xavier's head coach, made an important career decision many years ago before he and his wife, Sherry, began to have a family. Duane was an attorney, but decided to follow a different path that would allow him to spend as much time as possible with their kids.

Their youngest child, Hope, is an active eighth grade who also enjoys sports.

"Before we even had kids, I can remember talking to Sherry and saying, 'Hey, I'm going to stop practicing law and I'm going to teach and coach so I can have my summers free, and if we ever have kids I can play with them all summer,'" he said. "And that's kind of what's happened.

"And not only during the summers," he continued, "but winter breaks, spring breaks, any break there is, we spend a lot of time together practicing our craft."

Schulte teaches at Xavier High School and has been the head football coach ever since the school opened in 1998, leading the Saints to a 136-64 record, 12 trips to the playoffs and an undefeated Class 4A state title in 2006.

Reggie Schulte passed for 4,002 yards and 49 touchdowns as Xavier's starting quarterback in 2011 and 2012, but Bryce Schulte is getting close to those school records. Bryce has thrown for 3,555 yards and 47 touchdowns as the starting QB the last three years, along with a few spot appearances as a freshman in 2013.

The Schulte brothers rank 1-2 in Metro history in career touchdown passes.

Bryce has already broken Reggie's school record for most touchdowns produced as a passer,

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runner and receiver with 75 in his career (Reggie had 54). He's also broken Reggie's school mark for total offense with 4,168 yards in his career (Reggie had 4,092).

It should be noted that Bryce has played in more games than Reggie, so that will give them something to joke about if the subject of career stats is discussed around the dinner table.

Quinn Schulte has enjoyed a front-row seat for his brothers' exploits through the years.

"It's been fun to see what they've done as I've been growing up," he said, "just to see how they've matured and what they've done in their careers.

"I think I was in the second grade when I first started to really get to play with them, but they were always so much bigger than me. It was just fun being out there with them."

Quinn Schulte said he grew up loving football and absorbing the game from his father and brothers.

"Reggie does a good job. He'll break down film really well," he said. "And Bryce is obviously a great athlete in any sport, so he does a good job of telling me what to look for."

Bryce Schulte was a key reserve on the Xavier basketball team that won the Class 3A state title last winter and is one of the top players on the baseball team.

Duane Schulte said last week that he's already starting to miss Bryce, even though Bryce still has more games to play for the Saints this season as they speed toward the Class 3A playoffs.

"Time goes fast," he said. "Raising kids and coaching are very similar. Sometimes the days are long, but the years fly by. "And that's how I kind of sense it with him. It seems like he's been

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here forever, because he kind of has. He's grown up around it.

"But each week is a little more special, because you can see the end is coming. He's not only a good football player, but he's a good kid."

Reggie Schulte, who is a red-shirt junior at UNI, attends as many Xavier football games as possible when he's not busy with the Panthers. Bryce enjoys having Reggie on the sideline during games, offering insights and suggestions at times.

"Reggie has great insight," Bryce said. "I don't know if I've met anyone smarter in the game of football. My dad as well. I think Reggie brings a lot to the table whenever he helps out. I think he wants to be a coach, too, and he'll be good if he does that."

Duane Schulte is proud of what his sons have accomplished, both as their coach and as their father.

"For them to be where they're at, first of all it's a credit to their teammates," he remarked.

"They've had some great teammates and help along the way. They've also had some great coaches.

"But they've put in their time, too," he said. "It's not like they just show up. They practice their craft. On the weekends, they still throw in the back yard. They throw during the summer, they throw in the winter.

"They love sports," he said, "and I love that they love sports because I kind of get to tag along with them."

There's been another big factor in the brothers' success, Schulte noted.

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"All credit goes to their mother," he said fondly. "Anything these guys do, including our daughter Hope, is a result of their mom."

Bryce Schulte and Quinn Schulte are also starting defensive backs for Xavier. Quinn has also taken a few snaps at quarterback this year and probably will get the chance to be the starting QB next year after playing the position his entire life.

"Next year I'll do whatever my Dad asks me to do," he said. "We'll see what happens."

The Saints, who are ranked No. 2 in Class 3A this week, are 7-0 overall and 5-0 in their district heading into Friday night's home game with Vinton-Shellsburg. The Saints can clinch the division title and a No. 1 seed for the playoffs with a victory Friday.