

Persick wins Metro Spotlight Award

Written by Metro Sports Report

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Xavier senior Ryan Persick is the winner of the Metro Spotlight Award for high school boys this week, the Metro Sports Report announced Sunday.

Persick is the all-state placekicker for the Xavier Saints, who will face Dowling Catholic for the Class 4A state title Friday night at the UNI-Dome in Cedar Falls.

Persick played a major role in Xavier's 31-7 victory over Bettendorf in the semifinals Friday with four PATs, a 37-yard field goal, nine punts for a 42.2-yard average and two touchbacks on kickoffs. He also made two tackles on special teams to help prevent possible touchdowns.

Persick holds five school records for most field goals in one season (10), most field goals in a career (21), most PATs in one season (68), most PATs in a career (119) and most points by a kicker (182).

He's made 21 of 29 field goals in his career (72.4%) and 119 of 122 PATs (97.5%). He's had 166 kickoffs in his career for 8,788 yards and 44 touchbacks. And he's punted 43 times this season for a 34.3-yard average.

Here is our Question-&-Answer session with Ryan Persick:

MSR: What is your favorite individual highlight in sports?

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RYAN: Last year's playoff game against Prairie. It was a close game going into halftime, but we came out the second half and did our jobs.

MSR: What is your favorite team highlight in sports?

RYAN: Making it to the state championship last year was the best experience in my sports career and we are very excited to be back.

MSR: Who has had the biggest influence in your sports career?

RYAN: Coach (Craig) Jelinek has influenced me in many ways. Everyday he drives from Coral Ridge to practice and is always early. You can count on him to do anything. He is my kicking and punting coach and was a first team all-state kicker back when he was in high school. I wouldn't be where I am if it weren't for him and Coach (Duane) Schulte and all the other coaches and my teammates. We are all one big family.

MSR: What are your future goals in sports?

RYAN: I would like to play football in college. I don't know where yet, though.

MSR: What are your favorite classes in school?

RYAN: My favorite class would have to be math. It's a challenging class and it really makes you work hard to get a good grade.

MSR: What has been your favorite community service project?

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RYAN: Xavier once a year has community service day where students go out into the community and rake elderly people's yards for people that are not able to do it themselves. It's a great feeling when you help others who need help.