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## Carey gives Vikings hope for future

By Ryan Nagelhout Niagara Gazette

Quinn Carey is full of potential.

A 6-foot-1 freshman, Carey had the chance to star on the court or in the pool at Grand Island this winter.

“My grandpa taught me to shoot during the summer going into eighth grade,” Carey said. “Ever since then I’ve played more and I’ve grown to love basketball as I watched college and the NBA, so I tried basketball and want to see where it takes me, see where I go.

“It basically came down to what I wanted to do more.”

Second-year basketball coach Nate Beutel was happy to add Carey to the rebuilding Vikings’ roster.

“We are thrilled that he picked basketball,” said Beutel, a Gazette contributor. “We were just thrilled.”

The decision wasn’t easy. Carey’s older brother, Seth, is a senior on the Vikings swim team. His younger brother, Liam, is a sixth grader who looks ready to jump to the JV swim team next year.

“It was a hard decision for him,” Seth Carey said. “Our family was talking about it for months because he’s good at basketball, clearly, but he’s really good at swimming.”

Seth, who swims the 50 and 100-meter freestyle races for Grand Island, said his younger brother “could swim anything” but knows he was happier on the court.

On the floor, Carey is the same type of player. He plays center but often handles the ball behind the arc. The freshman said he’ll “go wherever coach wants me to go.”

Beutel managed to snag a basketball player out of a swimming family after first seeing Carey play this summer at a team camp.

“His first game, we were short some players at the Canisius team camp and I contacted his cousin, Colin Carey, who played on our modified team,” Beutel said. “Canisius is very good and we had five players, so they all started. We ran two little two-away screens for him to get the ball at the top of the key. He knocked down two 3-pointers in our first two possessions against Canisius. At that time I turned to a coach and I said ‘We might

have something here.”

Carey has averaged nearly a double-double as a freshman: 10.8 points and 9.3 rebounds per game. Beutel said it’s a strong start to what he hopes will be an impressive four-year career with the Vikings.

“There’s a board out in front of the gym that lists the top 10 all-time scorers in school history,” Beutel said. “I fully expect him to be on that list, if not be very high up on that list.”

Carey still swims in the morning with the Grand Island Piranhas. Between practices and school, the freshman stays busy.

“He goes morning, noon and night,” Beutel said. “He does (swimming) in the morning, he goes to school, he plays basketball at night. I know he’s active in a lot of other things with his church and being a student. He’s a great all-around kid and we’re thrilled to have him in our program and we hope we’ll have him for all four years.”

Carey said the fitness level necessary to succeed in the pool has helped him contribute big minutes for the Vikings this season.

“The endurance helps a lot,” Carey said. “We work every day in the morning, and we do endurance drills. A lot of discipline that my coaches taught me, I think it’s helped a lot on the basketball court.”

Beutel said it’s tough to take his freshman standout off the floor.

“He’s a ninth-grader, he’s 14 years old and for him to play the amount of minutes that we need him to is another special thing about him,” Beutel said. “He very rarely will ask for a break.”

Grand Island (4-13, 1-12 NFL) has struggled to compete in the Niagara Frontier League at times, but Beutel said things are looking up for his squad.

“We’re playing better,” Beutel said. “We’ve already exceeded our win total from last year. It’s a small achievement, but it is something to build on.”

As the Section VI tournament approaches, Carey said he’s confident the Vikings can surprise someone over the next few weeks.

“I expect us to go out every night and leave it out on the floor,” Carey said. “Win or lose, I want us to leave it all out on the floor. I think that can take us far.”

The Vikings travel to Lockport (7-6 NFL) at 6:30 p.m. today.