



Men's Basketball | 5/7/2015 2:50:00 PM | Shawn Smith, Sports Information Director

## UMC Basketball Completes Class with Illinois Junior College Forward Grygiel



**CROOKSTON, Minn.-** The University of Minnesota Crookston men's basketball team announced the addition of junior college forward Ben Grygiel (F, 6-6 200, Rockford, Ill./Rock Valley College) to a National Letter of Intent to begin playing for the Golden Eagles during the 2015-16 season.

Grygiel is the ninth signee for Head Coach [Dan Weisse](#) and the Minnesota Crookston men's basketball program, completing Weisse's first full recruiting class in the Maroon and Gold. Grygiel is the third junior college recruit of the class joining **C.J. Polk** (G, 6-1 176, Milwaukee, Wis./North Platte Community College) and **Riley Rice** (F, 6-6 230, Mullen, Neb./North Platte Community College).

"Ben comes from some very successful programs at Boylan Catholic High School and at the collegiate level at Rock Valley Community College," Weisse said. "The success of the Rock Valley team under Coach Doty speaks for itself. Ben's team won the Division III National Championships his freshman year and helped lead the team to a runner-up finish this season. Ben was a big part of what his team did. Ben is a very competitive guy and adds a lot of versatility to our team being able to play the three and four positions in our system. His ability to shoot and spread the floor will benefit his teammates. Ben is someone that understands what it means to be a winner and I am very excited to have a guy like that in our program for the next two years."

The three junior college signees join six in-state high school preps who have signed with the Golden Eagles. UMC's in-state class has been labeled by Northstar Hoops Report as one of the strongest in-state classes. The group includes four players ranked among the top 45 players in the state of Minnesota for the 2015 class. The class includes 24th-ranked **Kobe Critchley** (G, 6-0 190, Roseville, Minn./Roseville Area H.S.), 34th-ranked **Chase Knickerbocker** (F, 6-6 175, Annandale, Minn./Annandale H.S.), 35th-ranked **Nate Lorenz** (F, 6-7 210, Breckenridge, Minn./Breckenridge H.S.) and 42nd-ranked **Connor Gamble** (G, 6-0 155, Stillwater, Minn./Stillwater Area H.S.).

In addition, the Golden Eagles added a pair of Northwest Minnesota hoopsters with **Aaron Hollcraft** (G, 5-11 175, Crookston, Minn./Crookston H.S.) and **Darin Viken** (G, 6-2 190, Fosston, Minn./Fosston H.S.). Giving UMC two highly acclaimed local products who are coaches are excited to see grow in the system.

All signees are contingent upon admission to UMC and compliance with NCAA rules, including certification by the NCAA Eligibility Center. Everyone released today has signed their National Letter of Intent prior to release of information.

### Ben Grygiel/F/6-6 200/Rockford, Ill./Rock Valley College

Grygiel appeared in 31 games as a freshman at Rock Valley College, averaging 9.3 points and 4.5 rebounds per game. In addition, he was a 35.2 percent three-point shooter and an 83 percent free-throw shooter. Grygiel put up 24 points on 10-of-16 shooting from the field against Harry S. Truman College. Against Harper College, Grygiel had 27 on 10-of-15, including 5-of-5 from beyond the arc. As a sophomore, averaged 12.8 points and 6.2 rebounds and shot 38.3 percent from beyond the arc and 76.1 percent from the charity stripe. Grygiel tallied 23 points including five treys against Mid Michigan Community College. He had 24 points against Wilbur Wright College. Grygiel led the Golden Eagles to a 31-4 mark and the NJCAA Tournament where they lost in the National Championship game to Richland College during his sophomore year. Grygiel was a First Team All-North Central Conference pick and named to the NJCAA National Tourney Team. As a freshman team went 30-5 overall, winning the National Championship. Played high school basketball at Boylan Catholic High School, where he was All-NIC 10.

Grygiel is the son of Theresa Wesseln and was born July 25, 1995. Grygiel plans to major in business management.

"Ben is a talented forward who UMC will enjoy for the next two years," said Rock Valley Community College Head Coach Craig Doty. "His ability to play above the rim, as well as knock down perimeter shots will allow him to be a nice play in the NSIC.

For more information, visit the Golden Eagle Athletics website at [www.goldeneaglesports.com](http://www.goldeneaglesports.com).

Follow the Golden Eagles on Facebook at Golden Eagle Sports and on Twitter at @UMCAthletics.

The University of Minnesota Crookston is a NCAA Division II university located in the Red River Valley of Northwest Minnesota. UMC sponsors 11 intercollegiate athletic teams with membership in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate conference (NSIC) and the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA). The NSIC is a 16-team conference with schools situated in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska.

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### 2015-16 UMC Basketball Roster

- Connor Gamble/G/6-0 160/Fr./Stillwater, Minn./Stillwater H.S.
- C.J. Polk/G/6-0 170/So./Milwaukee, Wis./North Platte C.C.
- [Derrick Redd, Jr./G/6-0 180/Sr./Menifee, Calif./Paloma Valley H.S.](#)
- [A.J. Walton/G/6-4 190/R-Fr./Oak Hills, Calif./Oak Hills H.S.](#)
- Kobe Critchley/G/6-0 160/Fr./Roseville, Minn./Roseville Area H.S.
- Darin Viken/G/6-1 165/Fr./Fosston, Minn./Fosston H.S.
- Ben Grygiel/F/6-6 200/Jr./Rockford, Ill./Rock Valley C.C.
- Aaron Hollcraft/G/6-0 160/Fr./Crookston, Minn./Crookston H.S.
- Riley Rice/F/6-6 200/Jr./Mullen, Neb./North Platte C.C.
- Chase Knickerbocker/G/F/6-6 180/Fr./Annandale, Minn./Annandale H.S.
- [Micah Hollowell/G/6-1 180/Jr./Owensboro, Ky./Owensboro H.S.](#)
- Nate Lorenz/F/6-7 200/Fr./Breckenridge, Minn./Breckenridge H.S.
- Ibrahim Clisse/F/6-4 200/R-So./Plymouth, Minn./Robbinsdale Armstrong H.S.
- [Gable Smith/F/6-7 200/R-Fr./Lodi, Wis./Lodi H.S.](#)
- [Jim Warmack/F/C/6-7 230/So./East Grand Forks, Minn./East Grand Forks H.S.](#)

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### PLAYERS MENTIONED ▾

<b>#10 Derrick Redd, Jr.</b> G / 6' 0" / Redshirt Junior	<b>#44 Gable Smith</b> G/F / 6' 7" / Freshman
<b>#54 Jim Warmack</b> F/C / 6' 7" / Freshman	<b>#30 Micah Hollowell</b> G / 6' 3" / Freshman
<b>#12 A.J. Walton</b> G / 6' 4" / Freshman	

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