



Football | 8/30/2018 10:17:00 AM | Shawn D. Smith, Director of Athletic Media Relations

The Golden Eagle Tribune: The Unheralded Life of a Specialist



In the third edition of "The Golden Eagle Tribune", a new feature in which Minnesota Crookston student-athletes get to tell their first-hand story, we feature a guide into the life of being one of the unheralded members of the special teams for the Golden Eagles. [Zach Greenberg](#), a senior long snapper, takes us through the life of a special teams player.

Kicker. Punter. Long Snapper. These are all positions that are not commonly associated with all of the hardships and glory that come with the sport of football, but nonetheless are vital to the success of any team at any level. My name is [Zach Greenberg](#) and I am one of six specialists for the Golden Eagle football team. I am entering my senior year at Minnesota Crookston and have had the pleasure of long snapping over the last three years. Our specialist unit consists of two kickers, two punters, and two long snappers. Punter, [Stephen Day](#), and Kicker, [Jake Newman](#) and myself are the veterans of the group having been on this team for the last three or four years. Our underclassmen consist of long snapper [Stephan Reed](#) along with our freshman kicker/punter duo of [Jared McLemore](#) and [Nathan McRoberts](#). The daily life of a Golden Eagle specialist looks a little bit different from that of the rest of our "glory" position teammates. Bear with me as I do my best to paint you a picture of all of the ins and outs of being a Golden Eagle Specialist.


For me, football has been a constant in my life for as long as I can remember. I have experience playing multiple positions on the field throughout my career on both sides of the football. During my sophomore year in high school, my head coach along with my father had me try to be my team's long snapper. At first, I was a little weary because I was already starting on both offense and defense. I went along with it anyways and after a few practices, I began to excel in the position. Jump ahead three years of high school and three years of college, I now have six years of snapping under my belt with my senior season just getting under way. After Minnesota Crookston, I hope to continue long snapping in the Canadian Football League.


If you look past the quarterbacks practicing their progressions, defensive lineman working on hand fighting technique you will be able to find us, stretching or doing some light ab work in the north end zone of the offensive practice field. It is this downtime during practice for where we face some resentment, as downtime is not a luxury that the other position groups on the team are able to afford. "How's the stretching going specialists?" "Did you get your twenty minutes of practice done yet?" Jokingly sarcastic remarks often come our way throughout practice, but as a whole, we enjoy hearing it because the acknowledgement makes us feel appreciated amongst the rest of our teammates.

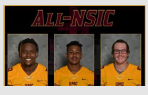
While we do have a little bit of downtime, rest assured our coaches keep us busy. One of my main roles at practice is spotting the ball for the offense during 7-on-7 and the team sessions. I have been doing this ever since I was a freshman and have had the help from other specialists over the years as well. Stephan (Reed) and I have a running joke that we are the "ball spotting coordinators" of the Golden Eagle Football team. As specialists, we serve as scout team players against either the O or the D. I enjoy being on scout team because it allows me to stay active at practice and see the game from both sides. The life of a specialist is not very eventful. We don't catch passes or run for touchdowns like skill players, we don't have to suffer the trenches like the linemen, and we don't have to be the special part of the football team. Coach Brandes, one of our coaches, once said "Specialists, we're not needed until we're needed." This perception to teammates as well as our coaches can be a little bit of a challenge. We need to help and people don't really pay much attention to us. In the final moments of a tie football game, where everyone really begins to pay attention. Whether it be a punt from our own three-yard line, or going in to attempt, a forty-yard field goal, or a game-winning field goal. For more details, please visit our privacy policy.


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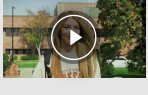
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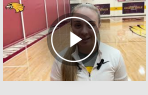
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other hand, if we mess up, it all falls on our shoulders. We show up every day with knowledge of this, but it doesn't change how we approach the way we play. The thrill of running through the blow up tunnel, the hopes of singing the Minnesota Rouser after a win, and being there for our teammates successes are all reasons why we do what we do. These are reasons why we are Golden Eagles, and reasons why we are #ForTheBrand.

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PLAYERS MENTIONED ▾

#37 Stephen Day

K/P / 6' 1" / Redshirt Senior

#47 Jake Newman

K / 6' 1" / Redshirt Senior

#80 Jared McLemore

K / 5' 10" / Freshman

#44 Zach Greenberg

LS / 5' 11" / Senior

#59 Stephan B. Reed

LS / 6' 1" / Redshirt Sophomore

#94 Nathan McRoberts

P / 6' 4" / Freshman



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