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WILL KINCAID, TRIBUNE

Legacy's Nick Kupfer is known for making circus catches.

Saturday, the Sabers' senior standout announced he's taking his talent for turning in highlight-reel grabs to GrandForks.

Kupfer became the first Legacy High football player to commit to an NCAA Division I school when he Tweeted his commitment UND. The 6-foot-3, 175-pound wide receiver drew interest from several of the NCAA Division II schools in the area -- including the University of Mary -- but it was an easy call in the end for the Fighting Hawks' fan.

"UND's been my dream school since I was younger," he said. "I've been talking to them for a couple of months. We've had multiple Zoom calls and it's gone really well."

The academics were also a good match for Kupfer, who plans to study engineering.

"It all lined up," Kupfer said. "Having the opportunity to do something new, to get out of my comfort zone was a big reason."

In the zone sums up Kupfer's season in the high-powered Sabers' offense.

Through four games, he has 16 receptions for 345 yards and four touchdowns. With his long wing span, Kupfer's catch radius has provided for some highlight-reel catches which light up social media.

The circus grabs are not by accident.

"Well, I think it's like anything else you just try to work on it a lot at practice," he said. "I've played with good quarterbacks and good teammates and obviously that's important."

Kupfer is a three-sport standout at Legacy. He's also a key contributor on the basketball and track teams, with the fall and winter sports in close competition for the top spot on his totem pole.

"It's between basketball and football," he said. "I like them both."

Chris Clements' young Legacy program has cranked out several college players already, but being the first to go D-1 is meaningful to Kupfer.

"It's cool because it shows kids from our school can get to that level," he said.

Kupfer and the Sabers are facing a critical three-game stretch to end the season. At 1-3, winning out is essential to have a shot at the Class AAA playoffs. Their next game is Oct. 9 in Mandan against the Braves.

"I think we just need to mesh together, especially on defense," he said. "We're definitely still confident. We know we have good players, we just have to go out there and get it done for four quarters in our last three games."

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