

Curt Monson

give to Dave Thune

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Thune enjoying outstanding high school hockey campaign

Dave Thune floats like a butterfly and stings like a bee — a highly intelligent bee.

Thune is Fargo South's classy high school hockey center. He's probably the best center in the state.

At 5-feet-7 and 152 pounds, Thune can't be accused of overpowering his opponents. In fact, just the opposite is true.

Once the puck is dropped to start a game, Thune's presence isn't immediately discernible. He does not dominate a game despite the fact his statistics are second to none. All Thune does is beat you.

As the game wears on, Thune picks up the flow and then makes his move. He is especially dangerous when the game is in its waning moments. That's why South has won 13 games and lost only four so far this season.

Thune has a penchant for the BIG goal.

A year ago Thune scored 30 goals and 35 assists to break the Fargo-Moorhead point record of 62. With four regular-season games and tournaments remaining, Thune is already far ahead of last year's record pace.

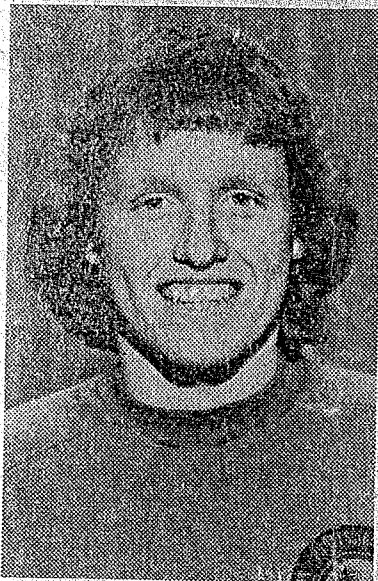
A relentless skater who never seems to tire despite a burdensome amount of ice time, Thune has scored 29 goals and 30 assists for 59 points. His career totals as a four-year letterman at South are impressive: 82 goals, 87 assists for 169 points.

Finesse, combined with a fine hockey sense, not to mention a pinpoint shot, make Thune lethal around the net. Thune's balance is also remarkable and so is his ability to know what he can and can't do. Because of his size, you won't find Thune playing the body or trying to intimidate.

Plays both ways

The most impressive part of Thune's game, however, isn't his scoring ability. It is his willingness to play both ends of the ice.

Thune takes a turn when the Bruins are trying to score on the



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power play with a man advantage. He's also on South's penalty-killing unit when the Bruins are a player short. Both receive an equal amount of attention from Thune.

"I get a lot of ice time," Thune said. "It all depends on how our guys act; whether or not we're getting penalties. I don't mind, though."

A year ago Thune was ineffective in the state tournament because of a back injury. Most players wouldn't have suited up. Thune gave it a shot but it was obvious he wasn't the same. The injury has healed and South's top hockey player is looking forward to his fourth state tourney Feb. 24-26 at Grand Forks.

"We've finished fourth for the past three years," Thune noted. "This year one of the Fargo teams will do it (win the title). This is the best South team I've been on."

Versatile athlete

Thune's athletic talents aren't limited to hockey.

Last spring he finished second in singles in the North Dakota high school tennis tournament. In that sport, as in hockey, Thune's intelligence (he is a strong B student) plays a big role.

Another key factor in Thune's athletic growth has been the support rendered by his family.

His father, Wallace, a long-time member of the Fargo police force, hasn't missed a South varsity game home or away since his son started playing hockey. Neither has Florence, Dave's mother.

Fitting work schedules and family activities around hockey — Dave says the family is very close — isn't something new to the Thunes. In fact, it's old hat.

Four brothers — Wally Jr., Roger, Jeff and Dennis — preceded Dave at either South or old Fargo Central. All were hockey players. Dave says he is compared to Wally Jr., who returns from his home in California each winter to watch Dave play. The other brothers live in the area and make most of the Bruin games.

Things might not be so easy for the Thune family in the future. Dave says he wants to play hockey and tennis for Colorado University, which is located at Boulder.

That's an 855-mile trip. One way.