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# All-Central New York hoops star within reach of school record. But, 'It's not the end goal'

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Cicero-North Syracuse's Andrew Benedict has over 1,500 career points and is withing reach of setting a school record this season. (Scott Schild | [sschild@syracuse.com](mailto:sschild@syracuse.com)) Scott Schild | [sschild@syracuse.com](mailto:sschild@syracuse.com)



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By **Jack Belanger | Contributing Writer**

If you ask Kyle Martin, he knew right away Andrew Benedict was no ordinary player.

The Cicero-North Syracuse boys basketball coach saw Benedict score 15 points in the first quarter of the first game of the 2021 season.

Martin said he instantly became excited about what the freshman could do in the next four seasons.

"We knew right away," Martin said. "After seeing him score in that first quarter, we literally said, 'Yeah he's going to score 1,500.'"

Martin's prediction became a reality this season. On Jan. 17 Benedict scored his 1,500 career point against Baldwinsville. He became the second player in program history to reach the milestone.

Mike Brown, who played his high school ball from 1988-1992, currently holds the Northstars' career points record at 1,926.

While that number is achievable for Benedict, he said he is more focused on winning games.

"There's always a chance (of catching Brown)," Benedict said. "But it's not the end goal. Our goal is obviously sectionals and on from there. But if it happens, it happens."

Benedict's scoring gets the attention but Martin is more impressed with his contribution in all areas of the game.

The 2023-24 All-Central New York boys basketball player of the year finalist leads the Northstars in rebounds, blocks and steals, and is second in assists.

"He does a little of everything for us," Martin said. "He was a shooter as a freshman, now he is an overall well-rounded player. He's just enhanced every aspect of his game. It's been a lot of work to get to this point."

Even before Benedict played a game for C-NS, Martin saw something special.

Just hired as head coach for C-NS in 2020, Martin was at a basketball clinic in Horn Gym in Syracuse when the quiet eighth-grader shooting 3s caught his attention.

"Right away he didn't miss. I was like, 'This kid is going to be a stud,'" Martin said.

While Martin remembers being blown away that day, Benedict remembers his first encounter with his future coach differently.

"I was scared of him at the time," Benedict said. "He yells a lot and I wasn't ready for that."

Fast forward five years, the senior and his coach have grown closer. While Martin continues to shout from the bench, Benedict is no longer fazed by it.

"It's almost like a have family-type relationship," Martin said. "We've been around each other so much. I know what he's thinking and when he's having a bad day."

Benedict said his close relationship with Martain has translated to the success of the court.

“We have gotten to trust and depend on each other during games,” he said.

Becoming his school’s all-time leading boys basketball scorer is an achievement that Benedict said he could not have pictured as a freshman.

“Four years ago today, if you told me (I would have 1,500 points), I would have been shocked,” Benedict said.

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