

Nicholas Lilly:

He helped hold this group together and the result was a lasting memory

By Bruce Smith
Matchup

One of the requirements of the saxophones section leader this year should have been a bottle of glue.

Extra strength, it turns out. Not that it would do much good. But when you consider the time section leader Nicholas Lilly spent practicing with the Bingham Marching Band, then playing the saxophone, clarinet, flute and who knows what else? It was a full-time job.

"It's one of the larger sections of the band and Nick has done a great job with them," said band director Darin Graber. "It was nice to have him in a leadership role."

Two members of the saxophone group left the squad during the season. In order to hide the holes they created, they were replaced by Josh Vincent and a talented eighth grader, McKenzie Lepley. As the season progressed, they didn't miss a beat and the results more than pleased everyone.

"I had to help hold the section together," said Lilly. "The new people didn't know the routine. I had to know my drill exactly, but I had to pay more attention to what my section was doing. I spent a lot of time watching video."

Like the rest of the band, the saxophones got off to a slow start but had earned a lot of respect by the end. Lilly said the highlight of the year was clearly the Bands of America competition in St. George.

"The standing ovation we got from the other bands ... it was surreal."

It was a perfect way to end the season and, in Lilly's case, his Bingham Marching Band career.

Lilly started playing the saxophone in fifth



Nicholas Lilly made a difficult decision to stay with the marching band and it led to a year full of excitement.

grade because he thought the instrument looked interesting. By high school, he had established his talent. But it was during his sophomore year (through his experience with the Bingham Jazz Ensemble) that he found a love for the saxophone and, more specifically, jazz music. He said it wasn't until late in his second marching band season that he loved the marching band as well.

"I almost didn't do it," he said. "This year, it was especially tough. I have four AP (Advance Placement) classes. Band is difficult, but it's worth it. I have no regrets."

"For the (band) department, he's the real deal," said Graber. "It would be easy for him to skip out on Marching Band, but he does the whole package."

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BINGHAM MARCHING BAND: Saxophones



ABOVE (left to right): Jaden Miner, Joshua Vincent, Marlee Olsen, Cameron Heaps, Chuck Robinson, Eric Thorne, Alex Romero, McKenzie Lepley, Nicholas Lilly, Michael Tyler, Daniel Baird, Jillian Hilton, Daylen Jacob Miller, Trent McMillan, Austin Broadhead, Skyler Knadler.

MIDDLE LEFT: Marlee Olsen

MIDDLE: Jaden Miner

MIDDLE RIGHT: Trent McMillan

BELOW: McKenzie Lepley

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Most of Lilly's best high-school memories involve band. Prior to this year, he said his favorite memory was performing a solo in the Peaks Jazz Festival at Westlake High School.

"It was a big deal and I won an award," he recalled.

Lilly said he liked to show his personality during the Marching Band's shows. In fact, he said the saxophone members liked to boast they had the most personality of any of the groups. Lilly's trademark included wearing a black-and-blue checkered bandanna during performances.

It helped his hat fit better.

"I just thought it looked cool," he said.

Lilly said he planned to continue his band career after graduation, but wanted to focus more on jazz. He planned to attend Utah State University and major in pre-veterinary medicine. He also hoped, of course, to minor in music, and occasionally play in local coffee shops.

