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He's still growing. And, no, he doesn't play miniature golf. But Conrad Luczynski is a 7-foot-3 center of attention in basketball for Bartlett

By Paul Johnson for Aurora Beacon-News



Bartlett's Conrad Luczynski (54) defends against Geneva in the first half of a nonconference game in Geneva on Tuesday, Nov. 29, 2021. (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

This is nothing new to **Bartlett's Conrad Luczynski**.

The senior center was listed at 7-foot-2 on the roster before the season began, and he's already up to 7-3. Where this will end, even he doesn't know.

"I'm still growing," Luczynski said. "I don't know when to stop. It's been going on my whole life, so I'm used to it. I never stop growing.

"I feel like that's my motto for life now."

Luczynski is more than just the tallest boys' basketball player in the state, though. And his performance so far this season has been an eye-opener.

He nearly had a quadruple-double in the season opener against Metea Valley. He scored 33 points against Wheaton Academy. He had 10 points, 20 rebounds, eight blocked shots and five assists in Tuesday's 63-58 loss to Larkin.



Bartlett's Conrad Luczynski (54) passes around Elgin's Victor Rivera (15) and Micah Giovenco (25) during the fourth quarter of a game on Friday, Feb. 19, 2021. (Brian O'Mahoney / The Beacon-News)

“He can finish, he can pass it, he can rebound, he can run the floor,” Bartlett coach Jim Wolfsmith said of Luczynski. “And he’s 7-foot-3. He’s not tripping over his feet. He’s gotten stronger.”

Luczynski, a deft passer, also is finishing stronger around the rim. He has a jump shot he shows off in warm-ups but hasn’t unleashed consistently in games.

Defensively, Luczynski is a rebounding machine who shows tremendous body control while blocking shots.

“Finishing around the basket, I go up stronger now,” Luczynski said. “I started putting some weight on me. My jump shot, a lot of guys don’t know I have that. It’s tough to guard. Once I get to show that off, it will be great.”

Luczynski prides himself on being vocal defensively, directing traffic around him while he protects the rim.

“I like to communicate with my team,” Luczynski said. “Defense goes both ways. It turns into good offense. You make a big play and get a basket on the other end.”

That trait hasn't gone unnoticed by rival coaches, either.

"That's where he's underrated — the defensive side of the ball," Larkin coach Deryn Carter said. "We couldn't simulate it, and it bothered us."



East Aurora's Stephen Dorsey (10) tries to grab the ball away from Bartlett's Conrad Luczynski (54) during the Upstate Eight Conference Tournament game in Bartlett on Saturday, March 13, 2021. (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

"He looks to be a great leader. He's vocal on the defensive end, which is huge. He has a presence on both sides of the ball."

While Luczynski has been the star attraction every time Bartlett takes the court, one thing that has eluded him is solid offers from colleges.

Luczynski said he has spoken to coaches across all levels of men's basketball and prep schools, even getting a call this week from top-ranked Purdue.

The offers, however, haven't rolled in yet.

"If there's a more under-recruited player in the state in the last 10 years, I'd like to know who it is," Wolfsmith said. "We have teams that are interested and talking, but no one that has said, 'Get him on campus. We want to offer him.'"

"It's really odd. He checks all the boxes. For whatever reason, they haven't seen him."



Larkin's Dontrell Maxie (22) defends Bartlett's Conrad Luczynski (54) during an Upstate Eight Conference game in Elgin on Tuesday, Dec. 7, 2021. (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

Luczynski has aspirations of playing for a major program, but for now, he's going with the flow, in the same way he has dealt with questions about his height for 17 years.

"I used to joke around a lot," Luczynski said. "People would ask if I played basketball, and I'd say I play miniature golf."

Luczynski said he has goals of averaging 25 points, 15 rebounds, five assists and five blocked shots. If that happens, expect those offers to begin in earnest.

"I think this year is going as well as it could be," he said. "I'm having a lot of contact now. It's starting to roll.

"We'll have to see where it is at the end of the season. I don't think there's a limit to how well I can play."