

Soccer Captain Drake Reeves Is Proud To Represent Granite's Heritage, Is Stillwater Senior Living Male Athlete Of Month

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October 16 2023 1:46 PM



GRANITE CITY - Drake Reeves, a senior who's also one of the captains for the boys' soccer team at Granite City High School, is a very encouraging and positive team leader who helps keeps his teammate's spirits up during matches and practices, no matter the situation.

The young team has at times struggled through a 2-9-2 campaign after a 3-0 loss to longtime rival Collinsville on Oct. 12 at Gene Baker Field in Granite. The match was the inaugural Paz Cup, named for former Warrior goalie Alex Pax, who was diagnosed with liver cancer recently and will eventually need a transplant.

Paz now lives in Collinsville, where he owns a successful and popular photography business and is often seen shooting pictures of Kahok and Warrior sporting events and community activities. Both communities bonded together to play the match as a fundraiser for Paz and his family, and the entire evening was a success.

Although the Warriors were outscored on the evening, the players worked hard and never surrendered, typical of a Granite City sporting team. And Reeves, who plays for his uncle, Ryan, another Granite soccer alum, is proud of his teammates.

"I feel good," Reeves said in a post-match interview. "I feel really proud of my team for the effort for the full 80 minutes. I told them before the game, no matter what the score is, just always give 110 percent."

Which the Warriors did, striving for the entire match.

"Right, yep," Reeves said. "Each game, we're getting better. I'm really proud of my team and it's been a rough year, but we're getting there."

Reeves was also proud of having played in the benefit match for Paz and his family and also against a longtime rival who has had many thrilling and exciting matches in the past, which are still being remembered to this day.

"It's really cool," Reeves said. "He used to play for Granite and I'm proud to play for Granite City. It was really cool how Collinsville and Granite could come together and fundraise and support Alex Paz and play this game for him and the Paz Cup. That's really cool. I'm glad I got to be a part of that."

Reeves also feels privileged to play for the Warriors and represent their legacy and tradition on the field named for Baker, who died on Aug. 27, but whose influence is still felt on the program and the team.

"It's changed a lot since back then," Reeves said. "But I'm still really happy to be part of the Granite City soccer program."

The Warriors next play in the IHSA Class 3A playoffs, opening with a regional semifinal against top-seeded O'Fallon at Belleville West's Bob Goalby Field. Reeves is optimistic that the Warriors will get on a hot streak and help return the team to its glory days and win a state championship for the first time since 1990.

"Well, we've got to beat O'Fallon," Reeves said with a laugh. "So, I believe in my team 100 percent. I've told them every single day that, like, we've got this. We've just got to keep our heads up and play for each other, play 110 percent every game. And I think we can do it."