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## CHASKA HIGH SCHOOL

# Lights, camera, action

## Ryan Paul is brainchild of Chaska Hawks Broadcast Network

BY ERIC KRAUSHAR  
scores@swpub.com

When Chaska boys basketball hosted then No. 1-ranked Edina Dec. 19, the large and at times raucous crowd inside the gymnasium wasn't the only audience for the second top-10 win for the Hawks in a five-day stretch.

Online, nearly 1,600 views, some watching live, some catching a replay, watched and listened through the eyes and voice of Chaska High School junior Ryan Paul and the Chaska Hawks Broadcast Network.

"It's no good. Chaska takes down No. 1. ... A 66-63 final. Chaska has beaten the No. 7 team in the state, and now the Edina Hornets," called Paul as a final attempt hit the rim, sending the Hawk students spilling onto the court in celebration.

What started as the Chaska Basketball Report, a place to jot down some thoughts and statistics on the freshman basketball team in 2015, has quickly become a go-to destination for Chaska basketball and hockey fans during the winter, and at times baseball in the spring.

"I've been more appreciative than I have been surprised. The support that I have received from the community has been far more than what I ever could have imagined," Paul said. "Now, if you would have told me two years ago that I would be at this point that I am today, I would have probably just said no. But I am very happy with where I am now and very thankful for everyone that has helped me along the way."

### A TEAM EFFORT

Paul is quick to point out the success of the Chaska Hawks Broadcast Network is largely based on the efforts of many.

Chaska High School students Colin Jacobsen and Taylor Hansen have taken the reins with most hockey webcasts. Max Hanninen leads the crew behind the scenes as head producer along with Jack Archer and Nolan Hansen.

Danny Johnson handles camera duties with Owen Manthe the network's graphics guy.

Broadcast through The Cube, the production isn't what you'd expect from a high school-student run group. And it only continues to get better as the season heads toward exciting finishes.

"There is a certain rush that you feel when it's time to go live. Now, I still am only broadcasting on a very small scale, but there's still that feeling that you get when



*Above* – Chaska Hawks Broadcast Network founder Ryan Paul, left, interviews Hawks junior Connor Krenos following a win over then-No. 1 ranked Edina in December.

*At left* – Chaska Hawks Broadcast Network crew Colin Jacobsen, Taylor Hansen and Ryan Paul call the season opening boys hockey game versus Holy Angels in December.

PHOTO BY ERIC KRAUSHAR

you hear the countdown in your ear. I often will prepare for days before the broadcast so everything should just flow when it is time to go live," Paul said.

"A lot of my broadcasts are just me solo, so it's really just like having a conversation with hundreds to thousands of people, who aren't talking back."

### IN THE BEGINNING

The Chaska Hawks Broadcast Network had its origins as a basketball report. First for freshman games in 2015-16, but soon for all levels, including varsity.

Paul followed the team so closely through its state run last winter, he was asked to pen a column about his take of the season for publication in the Chaska Herald.

"I was a freshman in high school and I started to attend

my friends' ninth grade games. A couple of games went by, and I started this Excel spreadsheet that I formulated to take and calculate the stats from the game. Then I started writing articles as a way to display those stats that I had recorded. I made a website to publish the articles, and the rest is history," Paul said. "So in a way — yes — this was a way for me to stay involved because now I travel with the teams and do most of the same off-court activities as they do."

The transition from a written-based website to a video-based publication was an easy decision, Paul said.

"I found that the audience was more interested in actually watching the games. It was also a way for me to actually do something during the game. Because you (Eric Kraushar) do such a great job for

the Herald, I found that expanding on what was already there is a better way to get the most attraction rather than going against existing publications," the high school junior said.

### EXTENDING THE COVERAGE

Recently, the Chaska Hawks Broadcast Network reached a milestone, 50 webcasts in total.

That number will increase rapidly as the team attempts to broadcast from all remaining basketball and hockey contests. Injuries and illness to the varsity boys hockey team has meant Jacobsen, a senior, has been elevated to the top team, so his ability to do play-by-play has been limited of late.

"I would love to expand to all of the sports, but at this point it isn't really an option. This project is still really close to me person-

## Catch the Hawks

Upcoming Chaska Hawks Broadcast Network dates

**Thursday, Jan. 11:**  
Boys Basketball vs Orono (7 p.m.)  
Boys Hockey vs Bloomington Jefferson (7 p.m.)

**Saturday, Jan. 13:**  
Boys Hockey vs Chanhassen (3 p.m.)

**Tuesday, Jan. 16:**  
Boys Basketball vs St. Louis Park (7 p.m.)

**Friday, Jan. 19:**  
Boys Basketball vs Bloomington Jefferson (7 p.m.)  
Boys Hockey vs Bloomington Kennedy (7 p.m.)

ally, so I don't want it to become more of a business than what it is today," said Paul. "It is awesome that the community has been so supportive, with donations and sponsorships. It has really allowed me to expand to where I am today."

Paul also thanked Chaska Activities Director Jon Summer and Chaska High School for always being supportive, allowing him the opportunity to sit courtside with his crew for the match-up with No. 1 Edina.

"It felt like a section game. We had a full crew there, the gym was packed, and we took down the No. 1 team. It was just a ton of fun to see everyone around the community show the pride and emotion for the team," Paul said of the moment.

He also pointed to a come-from-behind overtime win for Chaska boys hockey over Benilde-St. Margaret in 2017 as one of his favorite moments.

### THE FUTURE

Paul regularly puts together highlight packages from most broadcasts, posting them to his Twitter feed.

The responses to them as well as his hype videos for the teams before the season starts generally read something like this.

"Watch out, ESPN." Paul certainly has a future whether it's on camera or behind the scenes.

"I would like to go to school and study sports media as this is something I am extremely passionate about and feel that I could do as a job and really enjoy. I am still a junior so we still have my senior year to see how far CHBN can go and really open myself up to other opportunities in the field," Paul said.

Visit [chaskabasketballreport.com](http://chaskabasketballreport.com) to view the live broadcasts and archived game coverage.