



Her Final Farewell



A Word From Coach Foley

INTRODUCING THE 2024 SENIOR CLASS ... KATELYN CRUZE

Katelyn Cruze .. this is a tough sendoff to write because I feel like we should have so much more time with you. From missing a semester, to missing a season, to most improved, to captain and all things in-between ... I will always value our moments and time together. You are tenacious, you are driven, you are emphatic, you are a great teammate & leader, you are a great student, you have been everything we could ask for throughout your four years with us here on and off the floor.

With four games to go in her senior season ... Katelyn currently has played a total of 73 games and 1,300 minutes in a Cardinal uniform, scoring 373 points, grabbing 333 rebounds and holds a 54% field goal percentage. That FG% is currently sixth all-time in program history. With all of the outstanding players that have competed in this uniform, that is no small feat — to be Top 6 in a career category. Katelyn has started a total of 57 games, including 49 games in a row. Katelyn has gone toe-to-toe with some outstanding post players in the MIAC over those 73 games, and will be remembered for her physicality and intensity inside... along with the occasional side eye!

Katelyn also holds a 3.74 cumulative GPA going into her last semester as a secondary education & history major. This major can be extremely time-consuming, especially going into her senior year, as she was away from campus completing her student-teaching. For the first semester, she would be in a classroom teaching all day, then have class at Saint Mary's, and then come to evening basketball practice/games, before completing lesson planning & assignments — all to start the process over again the next day. I have tremendous respect and admiration for Katelyn's being able to be successful in all these areas. It is another testament to her drive and motivation to be at her best. As a student-athlete Katelyn also was named Academic All-MIAC & CSC Academic All-District in the 2022-2023 season.



Katelyn will be missed on and off the floor in our program. I am so excited for Katelyn's next chapter, I have been blessed to be a part of her journey at Saint Mary's and am very thankful for that. You are going to make an outstanding educator and leader of young people. I hope that you continue to share your love for the game of basketball with the next generation of our sport!

Katelyn Cruze ... CONGRATULATIONS...I will miss you greatly but am excited to have you join our Cardinal Women's Basketball Alumnae Family. Once a Cardinal, Always a Cardinal. Love you Cruze!



Brooklyn Paulson #20

Year

Senior

Position

Forward

Major

Secondary Education
History

Hometown

Litchfield, Minn.

CAREER BY THE NUMBERS

Year	GP	FG-FGA	3PT-FGA	FT-FTA	REB	PPG
2020-21	52	0-2	0-0	0-0	1	0.0
2021-22	25	24-52	0-1	8-13	72	2.2
2022-23	25	71-122	0-1	45-68	153	7.5
2023-24	21	46-84	0-0	38-49	107	6.2
Career	73	141-260	0-2	91-130	333	5.1

Katelyn Bids Farewell

TO MY FAMILY: First, I love you guys so much! You helped me achieve my dreams of playing college basketball by spending countless hours and plenty of money on bringing me to camps growing up. You always believed I was capable of being a great player. For that I am forever grateful. I appreciate how many games you are able to be at supporting me, Spending a whole day driving to and from home games just to watch me play basketball. Even in high school, you guys were at all the games you were able to be at. Not everyone has a family that is able to do that and I am so lucky that I do. You have pushed me to be a better player without pushing me away from the sport. Mom and Dad, you two have shown me what a good work ethic is and what it takes to go for something and give it your all. No matter how well I play I know you guys will be there to give me a hug after, and sometimes a hug from your parents is all you need to feel better.

Courtney, Gio, and Fae - Thanks for giving the sweetest niece ever and I am so happy she was able to make it to a few of my games in my last season. Thank you for being supportive and understanding.

Coach Skaar: I remember the first time I ever saw you. We were watching film in the classroom and I walked in and you were sitting in the back. I was thinking, who is this random guy in the back of the room? Little did I know how much influence that random guy would have on my life. You helped me grow so much as a basketball player, but more importantly, as a person. You are such a great role model for all of us. You have shown me what it's like to care for players. You always show up. You are always there to answer our questions, talk through things, or just give us knucks. Whenever we play I always know I can approach you and you are right there to help me find a solution. I also know that no matter what, you believe in me and want to see me succeed. You treat us like family and even welcome us to yours #team-dad. That means so much to all of us. The player I am today is thanks to you and all your hard work. I am so lucky SMU hired you my freshman year!

Coach Foley: If it weren't for you I wouldn't be playing college basketball. Thank you so much for taking a chance on me and allowing me this opportunity. Your support throughout the years has been greatly appreciated. My first visit here was my first time meeting with you. I

See **KATELYN BIDS FAREWELL**, on the next page

KATELYN BIDS FAREWELL, from the previous page

remember you had looked up the type of player I was and said that there was room in the program for a player like me. I honestly couldn't believe it. I had not heard that from the other schools I reached out to. I am so grateful you gave me the opportunity because it brought me so many relationships and experiences. There are so many little things I can thank you for, but above all else thank you for giving me the chance!

Ashley & Brooklyn: My senior captains! I have missed you guys so much during this season! Thank you for setting a great example as captains and leaders. You guys showed me what it takes to lead a team and help me grow as a player. The advice you two gave me during our time together helped become the player I am today. I am so lucky to have been your teammate and play basketball with you.

Izzy and Lyss: ROOMIES!!! This year was gonna be our year! Last year we all got so much better so I just knew this year we would be unstoppable together. Unfortunately that was not how it unfolded. I am so sad I wasn't able to play with you guys for my last season. Lyss, you improved so much last season and you were dominating in our early practices this season. I was so excited to play with you this season because I knew how well we played together. I am so sorry you didn't get the chance to score on every big in the MIAC this year. Izzy, girl no one can stop you and I am so sad that was taken away from you. I have missed playing with you so much because I just know that you are gonna get past your defender or hit a three when we need it most. Even though I have loved playing basketball with you two and have missed that so much this year, I am even more thankful for our friendship. I am so happy basketball brought us together. Even through all the hardships, I wouldn't have traded it for anything because I wouldn't have gotten to know you two. Love you guys and let's have a good spring in 319!

Maggie and Teagan: TEAGS! I am so happy we were able to be teammates and become friends! I have missed you so much this year but I am so happy you are in the right place for your career. You are such a boss girl, out there living and getting her

degree (soon). I always appreciated how hard of a worker you are. I am so happy Saint Mary's brought together a Litchfield kid and a Brownnton kid. I am lucky to have gotten to know you and become friends. Maggie, I am gonna miss you so much! I love playing with you and I love being your friend. I know I can come to you with anything and you will always listen and support me. Your friendships means more to me than I can even explain. You made my time at Saint Mary's so fun! I'm so happy basketball brought us together. I will cherish all our memories we made over the years. You have improved

See KATELYN BIDS FAREWELL, on the next page



so much the last two years, I just know your senior season is gonna be a good one. Love you two!

Zoe, Grace, Maddie, Riley, Lindsey, Anelise: You guys are a fun group! You are so unique and bring so many assets to the team. 201, you are so fun to be around and can always make me smile. Lindsey and Anelise, I'm very glad you decided to come to SMU this year. You two were a great addition to the team. Keep working hard and don't take your time for granted it, goes by faster than you think. Love you guys. And Zoe, I loved playing two sports with you over the two year. Kick ass in softball!

Grace K, Vicky, Kali: I am so happy I got to know you guys my last year! You are all so fun to be around. You can make me laugh like no one else. Grace, you are such a hard worker and give a 110%, and as a senior I really appreciate that! Keep up the good work! Vicky, man I love playing with you. You make me laugh so so much. Guarding you in practice is a love hate relationship. You always crack a joke, but then you hit with a Vicky special! Keep working girl and you are gonna be unstoppable! Kali, I'm so grateful you joined basketball! I love playing with you. We work so well together and I'm so grateful for the experience. You make me smile so much. You are a big ball of energy! You are gonna be an all star someday if you keep working hard and don't rush your moves! I love all three of you guys and you are all so special!

Ali: I'm so happy you decided to be a part of the team! You do so much for us and I am so thankful for you. You are incredibly helpful and selfless. Also, you're freaking hilarious! I am so happy I got to know you Wuser! Love you girl!