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Section B
Saturday,
December 13,
2025

WWW.MEDINA-GAZETTE.COM

ALL-GAZETTE: FOOTBALL



AARON JOSEFCZYK PHOTOS / TRISHA KRAKOWSKI ILLUSTRATION

Highland senior Casey Myser is the 2025 Gazette MVP for football.

Generational talent

Myser's superstar reputation helped Highland's offense excel

Rick Noland
The Gazette

Those who don't closely follow the Highland football team might think running back Casey Myser had a better season as a junior than he did as a senior. They'd be wrong. Though many of his statistical numbers were down, it was largely because the Hornets (12-1) played two fewer games and were so dominant in reaching the Division II, Region 6 final for a third straight year that the 6-foot-2, 215-pound Myser often didn't play in the second half.

Because Myser was so good whenever he was needed, he is now a two-time Gazette MVP in football after sharing the award with teammate Carson Noonan last season.

Gazette MVPs

Casey Myser (H)	2025
Carson Noonan / Casey Myser (H)	2024
Danny Stoddard (M)	2023
Danny Stoddard (M)	2022
Drew Altar (M)	2021
Luke Hensley (M)	2020
Jack Grice (W)	2019
JaKe Rogers (H)	2018
Joey Haughman (W)	2017
Jimmy Daw (M)	2016
Trevor Thoms (Bru)	2015
Steven Froyk (Bru)	2014
Bruce Kinzey (H)	2013
Jack Kinzey (H)	2012
Jack Snowball (W)	2011
Jason Suggs (M)	2010
Aaron Maslowski (H)	2009
Chris Snook (H)	2008
Sean Bedevatsky (Bru)	2007

Gazette MVPs

Dustin Zielskewicz (Bru)	2006	Dave Savick (BR)	1985
Anthony Lanzara (Bru)	2005	Ron Sercy (M)	1984
Mario Cosic (Bru)	2004	Scott DeMarco (Bru)	1983
Paul Macko (W)	2003	Gary Peyton (Bru)	1982
Daneri Cereschno (Bru)	2002	Lee Bullington (Bru)	1981
Mike Kudla (H)	2001	Rich Gency (Bru)	1980
Ben Vujan (W)	2000	Ron Brant (Bru)	1979
Mike Hoover (W)	1999	Jim Reynolds (W)	1978
Jim Lavery (M)	1998	Dan Gray (BR)	1977
Dave Harris (Bru)	1997		
Dan Herbert (M) / Frank Berzansky (Bru)	1996	All-Gazette Team Captains	
Darian Miszkewicz (Bru)	1995	Scott Chrislip (C) / Jim Otanick (W)	1972
Demetrius Harris (Bru)	1994	Richard Brown (H) / Jim Ross (C)	1971
Scott Gasper (C)	1993	Al Kerie (Bru)	1970
Cory Carlson (C) / Lance Hanson (C)	1992	Gary Green (H)	1969
James Farley (Bru)	1991	Jim Rantll (H)	1968
Jason Riddle (BR)	1990	Ken Luttrier (H)	1967
Andy Sutandar (M)	1989	Paul Moore (Bru)	1966
Tom Dubs (Bru)	1988	Larry Rohrer (C)	1965
Todd Grabowski (Bru)	1987	Tom Becker (W)	1964
Tom Sercy (M)	1986	Ken Schiase (H)	1963

The 18-year-old was also a two-time D-II first-team All-Ohio pick in the sport, as well as a D-III first-

team All-Ohio selection in baseball as a junior, when all he did was lead Medina County in batting average

(.508), on-base percentage (.620), slugging percentage (.814), OPS (1.430) and triples (3).

"He was one of a kind," Highland football coach Mike Gibbons said. "His ability to do everything makes him so dynamic. He's a big, strong kid and he's fast, so he can run the ball inside or outside. There's so much to like about him, and that's obviously why he had the career he had. "His body of work throughout his career is completely amazing. He's broken pretty much every record in Medina County, but he only had so many opportunities this year because he only played the first half in pretty much all the games. Had he played all four quarters his numbers would have been astronomical, and what he opens up for the rest of our team can't be quantified. He was every bit as important to our team as he was last year."

See **MYSER**, B2

MYSER

From B1

As a junior, Myser rushed for 2,130 yards and 39 touchdowns while adding 577 yards and seven TDs receiving. As a senior, he had 1,268 yards and 24 TDs rushing and 194 yards and three TDs receiving.

The difference is he touched the ball 275 times rushing or receiving in 2024 vs. 157 in 2025. His rushing average actually increased from 8.4 as a junior to 8.6 as a senior, while his average yards per touch dropped only from 9.8 to 9.3.

"I obviously had a great (junior) year, but I didn't want to let it get to my head," the unassuming Myser said. "I knew I had to stay in the weight room because it wasn't just going to happen again. I knew I had to put in another great season or people were going to say I took the offseason off. I didn't want people to think that was a one-year fluke."

"I feel like I'm a lot better than I was last year. Just looking at pictures and film, I look a lot faster and stronger. It's just that we were killing teams in every aspect of the game and not just grounding and pounding. Three-hundred-yard games are fun, but it's also fun seeing all my friends succeed. It's fun seeing those dudes getting their scores and their touchdowns."

Over his four-year career — he played mostly on special teams as a freshman — Myser set county records for points (552), total touchdowns (92) and rushing TDs (80) while finishing third in rushing yards (4,847). He also set county season records for points (276), total TDs (46) and rushing TDs (39). For good measure, he holds school marks for rushing yards in a season and career.

"His talent is phenomenal," Highland quarterback Grady Gibb said. "What he's able to do with the ball in

Casey Myser career statistics

YEAR	ATT	RUSHING		TDS	RECEIVING		
		YDS.	TDs		NO.	YDS.	TDs
2025	147	1,268	24	10	194	3	
2024	254	2,130	39	21	558	7	
2023	179	1,309	16	7	133	2	
2022	17	140	1	0	0	0	
TOTALS	597	4,847	80	38	885	12	

Note: Myser also had 11 kickoff returns for 310 yards and one punt return for minus-10, giving him 647 touches for 6,032 all-purpose yards.

his hands is amazing, but what's cool is how he handled himself. He's not a cocky player by any means, and that's been awesome to see."

Growing up

Myser was always one of the best athletes in Highland's class of 2026, but when he hit a growth spurt in fifth and sixth grade, he went from an animal to a total beast.

"He just manhandled people," Hornets slot receiver Lucas Gerding said. "He had long arms and you just couldn't reach him. In sixth grade he hurdled a kid in a tackling drill we were doing. That was probably the craziest thing I've ever seen."

Added Gibb: "I remember in youth he hit this quarterback from Stow so hard I never thought the kid would get up."

Myser, a defensive end at the time, laughed when the latter play was mentioned and recalled it as well as any of the runs he made in high school.

"He was rolling out and I was running full speed behind him," he said. "For whatever reason, he just turned around. To this day, that's probably the hardest I've ever hit someone."

When he started playing football as a kid, Myser was used mostly on the offensive line or at tight end.

"I mainly just blocked," he said. "About fifth or sixth grade they moved me to running back because I hit a huge growth spurt. I was ginormous

in sixth grade, probably 5-9 and about 150 or 160 pounds."

Myser also played baseball throughout his youth, and took up basketball and track and field in seventh grade. On the hardwood, he was basically a power forward who played defense, grabbed rebounds and committed a lot of fouls because he wanted to block every shot. In track, he was the rare combination of a sprinter and thrower and set a middle school record in the shot put.

In eighth grade, he decided to wrestle and lost just four matches despite not really knowing what he was doing.

"I wrestled because my stepbrothers (2025 graduate Brady Bendau and classmate Cody Bendau) wrestled," he said. "They were bigger, so they taught me big-guy moves. I was just double-legging or single-legging and tossing people. I wasn't trying to set people up. I'd just go out there and try to tackle you."

Myser can now bench press 315 pounds, deadlift 465 and squat 510, but he also runs the 40-yard dash in 4.6 seconds, making him a rare blend of power and speed.

"It's amazing," Gerding said. "I honestly think it's generational."

College decisions

Myser not only has to decide on a college, he has to decide what sport he will play.

Though he made it fairly clear early in his junior year that he preferred

to pursue baseball in college, some schools still have expressed interest in having him play football.

Myser has football scholarship offers from D-I Mercyhurst and D-II Ashland, while Ohio University has offered him preferred walk-on status. A number of Football Championship Subdivision programs have contacted him, but he's still leaning toward baseball, where he bats and throws left-handed.

In addition to talking to a number of schools in the South and most Mid-American Conference programs for baseball, Myser already has a scholarship offer from D-I Oakland (Mich.) University.

"I'm definitely keeping both options open, but I think baseball has a longer future for me than football holds," he said. "It's definitely hard to get a baseball scholarship. You have to have the right coach see you on the right day."

Should Myser decide to go the football route, Gibbons is of the opinion he's a D-I player, despite the fact the running back spent his summers playing baseball rather than attending college football camps.

"I think he should be (a D-I player) on his talents alone," Gibbons said. "He's a very special player."

Making memories

Regardless of what sport he pursues in college — or if he goes someplace that will allow him to play both — Myser has compiled a ton of memories at Highland as he prepares for his final season of high school baseball.

"In eighth grade I was the biggest and fastest dude at all times," he said. "Then in ninth grade, playing a little bit of varsity, I was getting tossed around like a dummy. One time against Toledo Central Catholic, I went back to catch a kickoff and I muffed it. As soon as I picked it up, an arm went straight into my Adam's apple. It hurt so bad I couldn't breathe."

There were some hard hits over the next three seasons, but none like that one. Myser knows exactly who to thank.

"Our line that (2024) year was just moving dudes all over the place," he said. "I didn't do it by myself. They were moving people and our receivers were blocking people."

After graduating four offensive linemen from a team that went 13-1 in 2024, the Hornets had to rebuild up front but didn't miss a beat. Myser will be eternally grateful for the work that group put in.

"Those boys took it personal," he said. "Spencer Marquis was skinny last year, but he did exactly what he had to do to be our starting center. He was a monster this year. Every day at lunch I'd go up to him and say, 'Are you eating, bro?' He'd have two lunches and a protein shake. I was so proud of him."

The same is true of guys like Josh Messina, Highland's lone returning starter up front, Wyatt Sitz, Cody Bendau and Thomas Fearn.

"I love all those dudes," Myser said. "I didn't think I could build the same relationships I had last year, but that wasn't true at all. I may have gotten even closer to them. We grew so tight this year."

The fact he had four seasons to develop that bond with teammates is what Myers will treasure and remember the most.

"We may not always be the biggest team or the fastest team or have the most D-I (college) commits, but we have the most heart," he said. "It was the best four years of my life."

"The friendships I made with everyone, from freshman year to senior year, I still talk to the dudes I was friends with from every year. It's such a brotherhood, Highland football. Everyone cares about everyone. Those friendships will last a lifetime."

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