

LEGENDS OF THE GAME...

BRYCE DREW • Valparaiso (1994-98)

Bryce Drew had his choice of major colleges recruiting him out of high school, but decided to stay at home instead and join his father, head coach Homer, at Valparaiso. What followed was a remarkable four-year run that culminated in one of the most indelible moments in NCAA Tournament history.

Bryce joined a Crusader squad in 1994-95 that had finished above .500 just once in its Division I history and immediately helped lift it to new levels, being named the Mid-Continent Conference Freshman of the Year while helping lead the Crusaders to both the Mid-Con regular season and tournament championships. The honors piled up for Bryce, as he earned All-Conference honors all four years, including Player of the Year accolades twice. He also was named to the All-Tournament Team all four seasons and was three times the Mid-Con Tournament MVP.

But, as with any team, the NCAA Tournament is the goal. Bryce helped lead the Crusaders to the tournament each of his final three seasons, and as a senior in 1998, provided the moment that cemented him as a Valparaiso basketball legend. Trailing by two points against fourth-seeded Ole Miss with 2.5 seconds left and the length of the court to travel, 13th-seeded Valparaiso ran "Pacer" to perfection, with Bryce on the back end of the play hitting the game-winning three-pointer for the last of his 22 points, giving Valpo a 70-69 upset victory. Bryce went on to score 22 points in the Crusaders' second round game as well, an 83-77 overtime win over Florida State, as Valparaiso made its mark on the college basketball world.

