

# Aidan Krames' epic catch:

## *life skills student finds his play as Spartan football wide receiver*

Alex Tey  
@mvhsoracle.com

One moment in the second half of a home football game in early November, Aidan Krames, number 87, bolted from the line of scrimmage, then, several steps later, stopped abruptly and turned around — a well-practiced hitch route — just in time to catch a pass from the quarterback for an eight-yard gain.

The players on the sideline went wild. In fact, one coach later said it was the most excited they had been all season.

Krames' catch may have been the most dramatic single moment of his season, but it had been months in the making — the work he did to accomplish that play showed far more what football means to him.

Long before he was catching passes in competitive play, he started the season unfamiliar with the process of lining up before starting a play, let alone running routes and making plays. Since he had never before

played on a high school football team, Krames had to work to pick up on the routines and procedures of the team.

Krames took it upon himself to get better when struggling to learn the position of wide receiver during preseason practice, even writing himself a guide of his routes and studying to commit the plays to memory.

Support from his peers helped him progress as well, according to Diane Esparza, Krames' Life Skills teacher. His teammates congratulated him on his successes and remained supportive when he made mistakes.

On one occasion when Krames was having difficulty learning a particular play, his teammates refused to give up on helping him learn. Instead, they reminded him of his route and encouraged him to execute the play better. On the next rep, Krames lined up for the snap, ran the right route, and caught the pass.

Esparza said that the coaching staff's approach to instruct-

ing Krames was also integral to his success. Despite his inexperience and difficulty learning football, they consistently coached him as they would any other player.

"They didn't treat Aidan like he was any different," Esparza said. "They treated him like one of the members of the football team, and that was the only way he was treated."

Krames' head coach Shelley Smith said he enjoyed coaching Krames, whom he described as highly respectful, very coachable, and never hesitant.

"He was always, 'Where do you need me, Coach?'" Smith recalled.

Whether running tackling circuits or practicing receiving routes, his passion for the sport was consistently evident in the way he prepares for games. He is less preoccupied with the competitions themselves, though, than the practices leading up to them.

"If we lose, then it's in the

past and we move on to our next game," Krames said.

Esparza says she saw Krames' forward-looking perspective reflected in her interactions with him in the classroom.

"Win, lose, or draw, he would come in on Monday and be psyched for the next week, even if they lost," she said.

The focus and determination he showed as a first-time high

school football player brought out the same in his peers; Krames' teammates on the football team said that they drew inspiration from his dedication.

"He jumped into it so well, and the fact that he was just so focused and determined ... when we see someone else doing it, we're like, 'Wow, we should be on that same level,'" co-captain Sami Katwan said.



Alex Tey

**KRAMES:** Described as a highly respectful and very coachable football player.