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Irondale's dynamic duo competes Wednesday at state ski meet

By **DAVID La VAQUE**, Star Tribune

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Three years ago, Alpine skiers **Andrew Perry** and **Jack Stang** were eighth-graders who helped push Irondale to a surprise appearance at the state meet.

Now juniors, the duo qualified for the state meet as individuals. The meet takes place Wednesday at Giants Ridge in Biwabik. Irondale's **Hailee Warnke** also qualified for state on the girls' side.

Stang, whose older brother, **Nick**, won a state championship in 2008, put his season in jeopardy when he got frostbite in December.

"He forgot to dry his ski boots and then had to ski in a competition when it was negative degrees," Knights coach **Tim Shasky** said.

Stang took fifth at the Section 4 race at Wild Mountain. Perry was not among the top 10 finishers, but qualifying skiers from the top two teams, St. Thomas Academy and Minnehaha Academy, were not counted toward the 10 individual skiers, allowing Perry, 12th, to make the cut. Shasky said Perry's place on the Big Hill is warranted.

"He struggled at our first race but from then on

was our most consistent skier of the year," the coach said. "He definitely earned it; he's the hardest worker we have."

Speedskaters go to nationals

Five Mounds View high school students and members of the Midway Speedskating Club will compete in two national events this month.

Aron Chlebeczek, Connor Kennedy, Alex and Kyle Ronchak and **Conor Theisen** head to the North American Speedskating Championships this weekend in Salt Lake City. Then they are off to the U.S. Junior National Speedskating Championships from Feb. 19 to 21 in Milwaukee.

Retro night at Totino-Grace

The Totino-Grace girls' basketball team is going old-school for its girls' and boys' doubleheader Feb. 11 against Fridley.

Girls' coach Shannon Hartinger said the game will be "Retro Night" in which the coaches, fans and players will dress like their predecessors -- including tube socks for the players. Throwback sodas will be sold at the concessions and 1970s music will be played during warm-ups and time-outs.

Groovy.

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