



# Kevin Huerter

## Finds a Home on an NBA Team

### COVER STORY

By Jenna Caputo

Photos by SuperSourceMedia.com

When Kevin Huerter first started playing basketball on his Fisher Price “Grow to Pro” hoop at around two years old, his family had no idea that “pro” was really going to happen. Now entering the NBA with the Atlanta Hawks after the exciting announcement this past June, Kevin and his athletic family are on an unexpected ride that has garnered an immense support from their hometown.

Tom and Erin Huerter, Kevin’s parents, were both born and raised here in the Capital District. Tom attended

Burnt Hills/Ballston Lake School district and Erin lived in Watervliet and attended Catholic Central High School in Troy. They both attended Siena College for their degrees, where they met. Eventually, they were married at the Siena Chapel on campus and decided to buy their first house in Clifton Park after falling in love with the area. Erin worked for Pioneer Bank for 26 years and for the last 19 years, Tom has owned Huersch Marketing Group based in Green Island, NY. Tom played basketball as well, attending Siena on a full athletic scholarship, but they didn’t realize that their whole family would end up involved in the sport.

When they were little, Kevin and his brother, Tom, Jr., played for hours in their living room on the Fisher Price hoop or out on the hoop in the driveway. Kevin quickly joined other organizations, starting with the Clifton Park YMCA program on Saturday mornings. He played travel basketball for Clifton Park through the Capital District Youth basketball league, then played high school level as a seventh grader in Gowana Middle School. He was on the freshman team in 7th grade, joined junior varsity in 8th grade and then switched to varsity for the rest of high school. In addition to his school team, Kevin also played Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) basketball through Albany City Rocks and for Hoop Nation, a program that Tom helped start with four other friends when their boys were in 2nd and 3rd grade. There weren't many opportunities for AAU in the area, and they wanted something that all of the kids could play in. Fielding 13 teams each season, the program was a great success and eventually merged with Albany City Rocks.

Competing in the Elks Hoop Shoot Free Throw contest at 10 years old, Kevin won each competition throughout New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania before ultimately losing just before the national competition. In his junior year, the team won the Class AA NYS Basketball championship. His brother was also on the team with him that year, which made it an extra special win for the Huerter household before Kevin went to Maryland to play college basketball with the Maryland Terrapins.

While basketball is his first love, Kevin also played baseball competitively since he was four years old, first for the Clifton Park Baseball League, then for Shen. While playing for the Clifton Park Knights, his team worked their way to compete in two World Series when Kevin was 12 and again at 14. In 2016, his senior year at Shen, his team won the Class AA NYS Baseball Championship.

While he has been on a whirlwind basketball ride, Kevin was forced to take a step back after injuring his right hand during a game for Maryland this past February. Initially,



he thought he had just jammed his pinky finger, but after examination, they realized it was a pulled ligament. Treatment was only to rest it while the ligaments healed. Because of this forced break, he ultimately attended the NBA Combine in May, but after shaking so many hands and getting repetitively squeezed at the exact location of the injury, his hand worsened and he went to a specialist in New York City to be evaluated. The ligament was actually completely separated from the bone and he started his summer with surgery to reattach it. The full recovery period was 12 weeks and Kevin is now eager to get out and play again. He is looking forward to starting the season with the Atlanta Hawks and is hoping to find a way to get on the court quickly.

The whole experience has been surreal but the support of the community has been much appreciated by Kevin and his family. "It's been a long road that came really quickly," says Kevin. "I didn't expect to be where I'm at this early in my life. But every court I've ever stepped on I always felt like I belonged and I expect to do that at this level too. The support has been overwhelming at times, especially when I'm home. I don't always realize the support when I've been away, but when I come home and do community events, you realize all the people that follow you and have your back."

Meanwhile, his family continues to play back at home. Tom, Jr. (21) is now a junior at Siena, majoring in Management on a full athletic scholarship with the Siena Men's Basketball team. Their sisters, Meaghan (15), a sophomore at Shen, plays varsity girls basketball, AAU





AAU season. Having their kids play professionally was never something Tom and Erin talked about while the kids were growing up. They focused on working hard, always improving and just being able to compete on the current teams they were aspiring to make at the time or the team they were currently on. It wasn't until NBA agents started reaching out to them during Kevin's time with Maryland during his freshman and sophomore years that they realized he might have the potential to play professionally.

"The whole experience has been surreal and a whirlwind," says Erin. "To watch Kevin have the success he's experienced at such a young age has been unbelievable. We are very proud of how he handles himself. As the kids have grown up, we've tried to prepare them for the different scenarios they could find themselves in, whether it be interacting with friends, teachers, coaches, adults, etc. With Kevin interacting in the NBA world, these are uncharted waters for all of us and he's had to figure things out on his own pretty quickly. I think the family as a whole has enjoyed the past few months. It's incredible how many local people are very supportive of Kevin and say things to all of us. Flying to Atlanta to meet the Hawks' General Manager and Head Coach and tour the practice facilities was something we all did together. It was really neat to be able to do that as a family and be supportive of Kevin in this next phase of his life."

The Huerters are proud of all of their hardworking kids as they wait to see what happens this upcoming season in each of their respective teams and upcoming tryouts. In the meantime, they enjoy playing with their four year old labradoodle, Charlie. He has his own "voice" that keeps them laughing. "We've created a persona of him that is lazy and not so smart, but he observes everything," says Kevin. "He brings a lot of joy to our family. He is well loved!" ■

Basketball for Albany City Rocks and Junior Varsity girls lacrosse; and Jillian (14), a freshman at Shen, also hopes to play varsity girls basketball, AAU with Albany City Rocks and modified girls lacrosse.

Tom, Sr. continues to coach, most recently finishing coaching Meghan and Jillian in their spring/summer

Do you know a neighbor who has a story to share? Nominate your neighbor to be featured in one of our upcoming issues! Contact us at [jcaputo@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:jcaputo@bestversionmedia.com).

*The S. SAXON Co.*  
**Local Family-Owned Business**  
**Special Pricing**  
 30% Discount on Opals & Pink Tourmaline  
**October Opal**  
*"the stone of Faithfulness & Confidence"*  
 1524 Rt 9  
 OVER 30 YEARS in the Diamond Industry Clifton Park, NY  
 518-630-5243 | [www.ssaxonfinejewels.com](http://www.ssaxonfinejewels.com)

In Transition? Moving? Downsizing?  
**Free Consultation!**  
 CALL OR EMAIL TODAY!  
 518-339-7361 | [Holly@SeniorMovesNY.com](mailto:Holly@SeniorMovesNY.com)  
 We move people, not just boxes. Assisting Boomers & beyond make lifestyle changes without the stress.  
 holly pajak's **seniormovesbydesignny**  
 we handle the details