

Beckman commits to Nebraska baseball team

Written by Jim Ecker
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Trey Beckman of Cedar Rapids Prairie has decided to join the parade of Metro baseball players to the University of Nebraska.

Beckman, a left-handed outfielder, hit .337 with one homer and 28 RBIs for Prairie this season as a sophomore. He is scheduled to be the starting quarterback for the Prairie football team this fall as a junior.

Beckman impressed the Nebraska coaches at a hitting camp last winter. That led to the Cornhuskers scouting him at Perfect Game showcases, tournaments and games. "They started following me and I guess they liked what they saw," he said Thursday.

Beckman attended a Nebraska baseball game in early March and met with Coach Darin Erstad, who invited him to join the program. He plans to enroll at Nebraska with the incoming class of 2015.

"Coach Erstad called me into his office and told me they were offering me (a scholarship)," he said. "When they told me, I was the first kid in the class they'd offered so far."

Beckman remembers thinking "Wow!" when Erstad offered him a spot. Beckman said he had to process the information, then accepted the offer in June.

"I knew that's where I wanted to be," he said.

Beckman will become the fourth Metro baseball player to join the Cornhuskers in recent years, joining Jon Keller (Xavier), Chad Christensen (Washington) and Austin Christensen (Kennedy). Keller and Chad Christensen are playing in the minor leagues now and Austin Christensen will

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be a redshirt sophomore at Nebraska this season after undergoing Tommy John surgery.

Derek Burkamper, a pitcher from Muscatine, is joining the Cornhuskers this season.

"It's kind of a pipeline," said Beckman. "They know that kids from here are interested in going there and we're interested in going to Nebraska, so it works out well."

Beckman attended a game in Lincoln, Neb., in early March and was impressed with the crowd.

"I was there for the very first home game on March 2nd," he said. "It was 37 degrees and there were still 2,700 people there. That's pretty impressive."

The Nebraska coaches told Beckman they like having players from the midwest.

"They told me they were looking at blue-collar kids that can go out there and play," he said. "If you're playing in an environment like Lincoln in early March where it's 35 degrees, I bet a kid from Florida is not going to do very well out there. You have to be used to the cold a little bit."

Beckman is happy to know where he'll be going to college, even though it's still two years away.

"It's a lot of pressure off me," he said. "I can just go out there and get better and not worry about impressing everyone and impressing myself. I know what they want me to do and I know what I need to do."