

Coe baseball hauls in 15 new players

Written by Jim Ecker

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Coe baseball coach Steve Cook still grimaces when he's asked about missing the NCAA Division III World Series by a single game this season, but his new recruiting class for the 2016 campaign helps ease the pain.

The Kohawks finished 34-14 this year and reached the regional finals, but they lost two games to Wisconsin-La Crosse in the championship round after beating them earlier in the tournament and then saw La Crosse finish second in the World Series.

The Kohawks know that could have been them at the World Series, but now Cook is anxious to put a new club together after suffering some heavy graduation losses that claimed eight seniors and three of his top pitchers.

There will be plenty of spots for new players in 2016 and lots of competition for playing time. The Kohawks have lost six prominent starters in AJ Reuter, Jack Hoffmann, Connor Alberhasky, Michael Goerdts, Cole Tomlinson and Jory Heckenberg.

"You never know how it's going to shake out, but I think we got a lot of help," Cook said about his freshmen. "I feel good about some of the kids and their potential impact early, but I feel like pitching is one of the biggest wild cards at our level.

"We feel good about their potential, but we'll see how quickly they jump in."

Cook signed three Metro products with Colton Knox of Jefferson, Nolan Arp of Xavier and Cameron Frazier of Jefferson. He also signed several talented area players with Kevin DeLaney of Iowa City West, Travis Bowman from Clear Creek-Amana and Nolan Weber of Cascade.

Knox helped Jefferson win its first Mississippi Valley Conference title in 10 years by hitting .376 and doing a good job on the mound (2-0, 1.56 ERA). "He put together a really nice senior year,"

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said Cook.

DeLaney, a fleet outfielder, helped Iowa City West reach the championship game of the Class 4A state tournament by hitting .477 with three home runs and 34 RBIs. Cook said DeLaney blossomed as a ballplayer this year after flying a little under the radar.

"He's a nice player. A really nice player," said Cook. "By the time his senior year was done he was a Super All-State player, so we're really excited about him and his possibilities. He'll have a real shot to play."

Weber helped Cascade finish 38-4 and reach the state championship game in Class 2A as a catcher and infielder.

Arp is a versatile infielder and catcher. Frazier is a good outfielder.

"I'm really happy with the class," said Cook. "There's definitely opportunity for them. They've heard that message loud and clear."

NEW RECRUITS

Sam Acheson-Adams, P/INF, Albuquerque, N.M.

Nolan Arp, INF, Xavier

Samuel Aspelmeier, INF, West Branch

Travis Bowman, P, Clear Creek-Amana

Jacob Burns, P/INF, Gilbert, Ariz.

James Christ, P, Midlothian, Ill.

Kevin DeLaney, OF, Iowa City West

Liam Fitzpatrick, C, Lindenhurst, Ill.

Cameron Frazier, OF, Cedar Rapids Jefferson

Thomas Kahle, INF, Glenview, Ill.

Zach Kammin, P, Woodstock, Ill.

Colton Knox, INF, Cedar Rapids Jefferson

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Ricky Reed, INF, Plymouth, Minn.

Lucas Robbins, P/INF, Manteno, Ill.

Nolan Weber, C/INF, Cascade