Sports

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Whitson Signs Letter of Intent to Play Golf

MAY 16TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Whitson Signs Letter of Intent to Play Golf

Advance, Missouri - Brian Whitson, a senior at Advance High School, has signed a letter of intent to play golf at John A. Logan College located in Carterville, Illinois.

He is the son of Marvin and Pam Whitson.

Whitson led the Hornets to the team title at the Class 1 sectional tournament last week at The Oaks at Tan-Tar-A in Osage Beach, Missouri, and a spot in this week's MSHSAA state tournament.

"I have been playing golf with my dad since I was able to walk and hold a golf club," Whitson stated. "Through the years, I have also played several other sports. I have been involved with basketball, baseball, and football. Although I enjoy each of these sports, I seem to have excelled in golf the most."

"My ulitmate goal is to earn a degree in Education and eventually become a coach myself. I have been blessed with several great coaches in my life and I would like to some day help others to reach their fullest potential in the sport of their choice," continued Whitson.

John A Logan's golf program for men is one of the best in the country and the Volunteers are a two-time National Champion! There were second in 2010 and third in 2012. Two members of the Volunteers men's golf team have claimed national medalist honors. Marceio Rozo in 2010 and Filip Timmerman in 2011.

The Volunteers have made 12 consecutive appearances in the NJCAA National Tournament and never finished lower than 8th place. They are also the reigning Great Rivers Athletic Conference and Region 24 Tournament Champions. Logan College has produced the last nine individual Region 24 Tournament medalists and 16 Volunteers have earned All-American Honors.

Shown in the photo standing from left to right: Advance Golf Coach Neil Miles, John A Logan College Coach Tom Ferris, and Advance Athletic Director James Hamlin. Seated from left to right are Marvin Whitson, Brian Whitson, and Pam Whitson.

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Bearcats Blister Potosi in District Semifinal

MAY 13TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Bearcats Blister Potosi in District Semifinal

Dexter, Missouri - The Dexter Bearcats finally got their opportunity to play Potosi in the Class 1, District 1 Semifinal today on their home court. Severe weather all week kept pushing the match back. Top-seeded Dexter won three doubles matches and the first two singles matches to secure their 5-0 win.

Varsity Doubles:

No. 1 Ethan Flowers/Addison Moore (D) def. Kyle Ziegler/John Rubb (P) 8-1

No. 2 Zach Potts/Joshua Kohlbaker (D) def. Aaron Wright/Colin Boyer (P) 8-1

No. 3 Jacob Crumley/Will Brehmer (D) def. Gabe Adams/Eli Hampton (P) 8-5

Varsity Singles:

No. 2 Zach Potts (D) def. Dylan Wilson (P) 6-1, 6-1

No. 5 Tyler Stevenson (D) def. Colin Boyer 6-3, 6-1

Dexter (10-2) is the defending District Champion and will take on Notre Dame (5-7) in the District Championship on Friday, May 13th at 2 p.m. in Dexter.

Notre Dame is ranked #3 and defeated #2 seeded Arcadia Valley 5-3 on Wednesday, May 11th.

Dexter has played Notre Dame twice this season according to head tennis Coach Kurt Lovelady. Dexter beat Notre Dame 8-1 in both of those matches.

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Chandler Young Signs to Play Baseball at Freed-Hardeman

MAY 12TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Chandler Young Signs to Play Baseball at Freed-Hardeman

Dexter, Missouri - Chandler Young became the latest in his family to sign a national letter of intent to play baseball at the college level. His older brother Chase, a 2013 Dexter graduate, is currently competing on the baseball diamond at Freed-Hardeman University. Chandler will join him in the fall.

"It is awesome," Chandler Young said. "it is something you kind of strive for whenever you are a kid. My brother Chase signed when I was a freshman. I saw him sign and knew at that moment I really wanted to compete at the college level and see how I could perform."

"My dad has coached baseball and has been very successful at it," continued Young. "I have also seen my older brother achieve on the field. It is the sport I have seen my family have success with growing up and I have always felt like the baseball diamond is where I can be very successful.

Longtime head baseball coach Brian Becker has had both brothers on his varsity squad. "Anytime one of your players signs a letter of intent to go to college you are always proud of them," commented Becker. "I am extremely proud of Chandler. He is a kid that has put in a lot of hard work and deserves to reap the benefits of that."

Becker recalled Chandler's ability to deliver at the plate under pressure since his very first high school at-bat. "His first varsity at-bat I had the bunt sign on and he missed a bunt," Becker said. "He had two strikes on him so I called him down to the third base coaching box and said, 'You better find a way to get on base.' and he got a base hit.

Young has served many positions on the field. He has been extremely versatile as a corner infielder, outfielder and a pitcher. He hopes to keep his options open as he heads off to college.

"It is kind of undecided right now," Young said. "I am looking to play a corner infield or outfield position. But I would also be interested in pitching as well and haven't ruled that out."

Coach Becker thinks hitting could be Young's best asset at the college level. "I would say in college he would probably be a better hitter than anything because he has got a really good stroke at the plate and I think he will do well down there."

Freed-Hardeman is an NAIA school that competes in the American Midwest Conference in baseball.

"It is a great place," stated Young. "It is a Christian college and it is a small college so class sizes are smaller and education is a big factor for me. They also have a winning program that is currently ranked nationally. They are second in their conference right now and hopefully they can build on that in their tournament. It is a successful program as well that offers good academics."

Young plans to major in Psychology and minor in Business at Freed-Hardeman. "I hope to open my own practice, contract out to people, obtain customers and build a business."

Shown in the photo seated are from left to right Christine Young, Chandler Young, Marty Young. Standing from left to right are Cody Boyer, Derek Urhahn, and Brian Becker.

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Brittany Brown Signs to Play Volleyball at Crowley's Ridge College

MAY 12TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Brittany Brown Signs to Play Volleyball at Crowley's Ridge College

Dexter, Missouri - Dexter High School senior Brittany Brown signed her letter of intent to play volleyball at Crowley's Ridge College in Paragould, Arkansas and will have the opportunity to rejoin her sister Ashley Brown on the court next season.

"I am very excited," stated Brown. "It is going to be more challenging, just like transitioning from middle school to high school volleyball, It is just another step."

Brittany's sister Ashley is currently a setter in volleyball at Crowley's Ridge. Head volleyball coach Barry Wheeler is excited to land both girls on his team.

"Brittany is a great player and I am very excited to have her come and play for us," Wheeler said. "With her sister being there it helped quite a bit getting her to come here. She will have a shot to start right off the bat as a defensive specialist for us. We are banking on her being able to play right away. She can get to a lot of balls that kids cannot get to and it is fun watching her."

Brittany has played the position of libero most of her high school career under the leadership of Coach Carmen Morgan. She has also enjoyed a fair share of success her senior year winning the SCAA Tournament and SCAA regular season titles for a third straight year. She was also selected SCAA Co-Defensive Player of the Year.

"I am really excited for her and the program," stated Dexter head volleyball coach Carmen Morgan. "Brittany is a tenacious player. She gives effort every day, even in practice games. She is a go-getter that never complains. She is the kind of player you love to coach."

"Defense is a game within a game," continued Morgan. "It is a state of mind. Brittany has that defensive state of mind. She will step in there and never let a ball get past her. She is quick and agile."

Morgan said that Brittany displayed her defensive abilities time after time in a drill called 21 in their regular volleyball practices. "We have a drill that we do called 21 where you have to touch 21 balls thrown/rolled to you," said Morgan. "The balls are rolled everywhere fast and slow. It is all about foot speed and they have to touch them before the balls roll out of bounds. Brittany would always go last and she would always get every ball. She would touch every one without me throwing an extra ball and she would get every ball."

Brittany said her most memorable moment on the volleyball court was winning a District Title in 2014. "Now that was really cool!"

Crowley's Ridge College competes in the National Christian College Athletic Association in women's basketball, volleyball, and softball. It is a four year college.

Wheeler is enter his first season as head volleyball coach at Crowley's Ridge. he served as head coach at Houston High School before coming to CRC.

"I am bringing in 12 freshmen with three returning players off of last season's squad. These 15 players will be the most they have ever had on a team and I was able to bring in five players from the area in Missouri where I came from," stated Wheeler.

"They only had 7 players last year, but managed to qualify for regionals and that is a pretty big deal with only seven kids."

Brittany said she is unsure about a major, but is considering a degree in the medical field, perhaps nursing like her mom.

"I may want to do something with nursing, maybe," Brown said. "My mom is a nurse and Ashley is wanting to be a nurse, maybe I will follow in their footsteps."

Shown in the photo are seated from left to right: Regina Brown, Brittany Brown, and Johnny Brown. Standing from left to right are Barry Wheeler, Joyce Kitchens, Ashley Brown, Bill Kitchens, and Carmen Morgan.

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McKuin and Reynolds Sign to Play at Williams Baptist

MAY 12TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

McKuin and Reynolds Sign to Play at Williams Baptist

Dexter, Missouri - Seniors Melanie McKuin and Dakota Reynolds will have the opportunity to continue working on the basketball court next season. Both signed a letter of intent to play at Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas.

"It feels pretty good," commented Reynolds. "I know that I will know someone. We have been playing since the third grade together and we know how to play together on the court. We should be able to work well down there."

"When we were in the fifth grade, we were playing a high school in AAU ball," continued Reynolds. "She passed the ball to me and I shot it for the win, and we won by one point against a high school team as fifth graders!"

Melanie McKuin also recalled a memorable moment of her high school basketball career when she ran offensive sets in a clutch situation with Reynolds.

"There are always those big time games when Dakota and I work best," stated McKuin. "I dribble-penetrated and hit her for a three and it just goes in! That's one of the best things, us working together and getting points for the team. That's been my favorite thing!"

Melanie and Dakota were very impressed with the campus atmosphere at Williams Baptist College and head girls basketball coach Carol Halford was happy to sign the both of them.

"It certainly is a bonus to get two in one day," Halford said. "That's rare. I was thinking back and I think maybe one other time in my 33 years I have been at Williams Baptist I have had a double signing. I signed a couple of kids out of the Little Rock area one time, but that is the only other double signing I can recall."

When asked about the college atmosphere, Reynolds said, "When I went to visit it was a very pretty campus and the people were very welcoming. The coaches were great and there are some great people down there. It is not too far away and I just fell in love with it."

"I just wanted to continue to play basketball and develop my skills some more. It felt like a place where I was supposed to be. It just kind of clicked with me," McKuin added about their visit.

The girls have had quite a bit of success at Dexter High School. The Lady Cats won four District Titles, advanced to two CoMo Final Fours and compiled a varsity record of 93-25 in their four years at Dexter High School under Coach Chad Allen.

Melanie McKuin has had the opportunity to play all five positions for the Lady Cats. This year as a senior she experienced playing at center after a teammate suffered an injury and was out for the season.

"Playing the five spot this year was a really big challenge for me," McKuin said. "Now I have played every position in basketball, which has improved my game overall."

Dakota Reynolds has primarily played point guard most of her high school career.

Both ladies exhibit skills that made them attractive recruits Halford said of the two seniors. "I like McKuin's length. She will continue to get better and better at the next level," continued Halford. "She will probably develop more core body strength and add a little more weight possibly. I also like her athleticism, the wya she runs the floor and her ability to defend several different positions.

"We like Dakota's speed, quickness, ball-handling, ability to shoot the three-ball and the way she can see the court and find people in the corner," stated Halford.

Both ladies have already had experience playing against elite talent in the United States. They have been members of the Hoopsters Basketball Academy for the last four years.

The Hoopsters Basketball Academy is comprised of excellent and talented players from Missouri, Arkansas, and Tennessee who compete in tournaments throughout the Midwest over the summer months.

"In our traveling ball we play against college-level competition," commented Hoopsters Basketball Academy head coach Spencer Hoffman. "That's what the kids that do the traveling ball want to experience. When we do these exposure events, it gives our players a barometer of what they need to improve on and where they fit in against college-level talent."

"Both of these girls are extremely hard workers," Hoffman said. "Williams Baptist is getting two really good basketball players, but more importantly they are adding two quality kids and two quality families to their program. They are going to be an attribute to whatever they are involved with at Williams."

Williams Baptist College is a four-year Christian liberal arts college and is known for its academic excellence and personal attention. Student-to-teacher ratio is 13 to 1 with over 500 students attending the main campus. They compete in the American Midwest Conference in women's basketball.

"It is a small liberal arts college that is pretty family-oriented," Halford said. "We have small classrooms and people know you by name. I think both of these ladies felt comfortable with that situation. at the same time, it is academically challenging. We have got between 25 to 30 degree programs right now. it is also very competitive as far as athletics."

McKuin said she wanted to work towards becoming a pharmacist, while Reynolds said she wanted to work towards a degree in sports medicine.

"I want to go into pre-pharmacy and continue on to pharmacy school," stated McKuin. "I have always had an interest in medicine. When I was in middle school, my cousin was a pharmacist, and I was able to shadow her and I loved what she did and decided that is what I want to do when I grow up!"

"I love sports so much and want to stay involved with it," Reynolds said. "I know how injuries are and I want to help other people out with them."

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