

## RoughRiders count 22 college commitments

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 24 September 2014 16:47 - Last Updated Wednesday, 24 September 2014 16:55

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The young men who play hockey for the Cedar Rapids RoughRiders gather here for a year or two to improve their skills before heading off to some of the most prestigious colleges in the United States.

They'll attend Dartmouth and Yale, Penn State and Notre Dame, Northeastern and Providence, New Hampshire and Miami of Ohio, along with Western Michigan, Michigan Tech, Clarkson, Mankato, Vermont and St. Cloud State.

There are 26 players on the RoughRiders roster as they head into Saturday night's season opener against Dubuque at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena, and fully 22 of them have already committed to college. The other four will join them before long.

"With all the guys and prestigious institutions, I really have to be on my game because they're real smarter than me," RoughRiders Coach Mark Carlson joked at a preseason press conference Wednesday. "So if I'm not explaining things the right way I'm going to be in trouble."

The RoughRiders can skate, but they also can study and get good grades. They've already proven that, or they wouldn't be playing in the United States Hockey League and they wouldn't be headed to a Division I college after that.



"Growing up, my dream was to play college hockey anywhere," said Charlie Curti, who has

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committed to Yale and plans to enroll there next fall. "But once you realize you could combine the two - you can get a great education AND play college hockey - it's too good to be true.

"It's like the best of both worlds," said Curti, a defenseman from Mound, Minn. "You get to challenge yourself in both areas. It's a dream come true, for sure."

Andrew Oglevie, a forward from Fullerton, Calif., has always wanted to attend a top-flight college for athletics and academics and feels he's hit the jackpot with his commitment to Notre Dame.

"My family has always stressed being a good athlete, but also being good in the classroom as well," he said. "When I was choosing my university, I thought it was very important to choose a university I could go to and get a really good education.

"It's been that way since Day 1 for me, so nothing is going to change when I get to college."

Oglevie plans to enroll at Notre Dame next year. He's thought about majoring in pre-med, but realizes hockey and pre-med could be a tough combination and might switch to a business degree instead.

Yale has produced presidents, senators and statesmen, but Curti does not think he fits that mold.

"I don't think I'll be a president or anything," he said, laughing. "I don't think I'm qualified to do that."

Curti is thinking about a major in environmental biology, but is keeping an open mind. In any case, he has a more immediate goal in mind before getting to Yale.

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"I want to have a real strong year here with the guys and then head off to school," he remarked.