

Harrison Barnes enjoys Zach Johnson Classic

Written by Jim Ecker

Monday, 01 August 2011 20:13 - Last Updated Monday, 01 August 2011 20:38



The tall young man in the golf cart looked familiar Monday at Elmcrest Country Club in Cedar Rapids.

It was Harrison Barnes, back home in Iowa after playing basketball at the University of North Carolina this past year as a freshman.

Barnes interrupted his summer vacation in Ames to attend the Zach Johnson Foundation Classic.

"Yeah, I'm a golf fan," he said. "Hopefully, I'm going to be playing with these guys in a few years. I just came here to support Zach and his foundation."

Barnes could become one of the celebrities for this event in years to come. He'll play for the Tar Heels this year as a sophomore, but there's a chance the 6-foot-8 forward will turn pro after this season and enter the NBA draft.

Barnes led Ames High School to consecutive Class 4A state titles in 2009 and 2010, then helped North Carolina reach the Elite 8 of the NCAA tournament this past March and finish

Harrison Barnes enjoys Zach Johnson Classic

Written by Jim Ecker

Monday, 01 August 2011 20:13 - Last Updated Monday, 01 August 2011 20:38

29-8. He averaged 15.7 points and 5.8 rebounds for the Tar Heels.

Barnes considered entering the NBA draft this past spring, but elected to return to school.

"College is great. I have no regrets," he said. "I enjoyed my first year at Carolina and look forward to a big second year."

Barnes was named a prep All-American at Ames and the national Player of the Year by several organizations as a high school senior in 2010. He said he's been working this summer to improve.

"Primarily ballhandling, but everything in general," he said. "This year I'm just looking to be as consistent as I can be in all areas."

Barnes returned to Ames on July 23 and will be home for four weeks, returning to Chapel Hill, N.C., on Aug. 20. He said he's focused on the college basketball season, not the NBA.

"There's so much we can do this year," he said. "I just hope we can reach our potential. That's all I'm focusing on."

Linn-Mar High School senior Marcus Paige has committed to North Carolina and plans to join the Tar Heels for the 2012-13 campaign. Barnes would be a junior then, if he's still in school.

"I've known Marcus a little bit, just playing against him in tournaments and stuff," Barnes said. "The last time I saw him was a while ago, so I'm sure he's changed since then."

"But the last I remember he's a very good distributor and a very athletic player. He'll definitely add a lot of dimensions to our offense."

Harrison Barnes enjoys Zach Johnson Classic

Written by Jim Ecker

Monday, 01 August 2011 20:13 - Last Updated Monday, 01 August 2011 20:38
