Courtney Strait calls Truman State a perfect fit

Written by Jim Ecker
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Courtney Strait was a few minutes late for basketball practice at Cedar Rapids Kennedy Tuesday afternoon, but she had a good excuse.

Strait signed a national letter-of-intent with Truman State during a ceremony in the Kennedy cafeteria and needed a little extra time to thank family and friends.

"Usually when we're late we have to run, but I think they'll be OK with this," she said, smiling.

Kennedy honored three of its athletes Tuesday as Allie Hutcheson signed to play volleyball at Northern Colorado, Brigham Stewart signed to play golf at Butler and Strait signed with Truman State.

Strait, a 5-foot-9 guard, averaged 15.7 points, 6.7 rebounds, 3 steals and 1.5 assists last year as a junior. She made third team all-state in Class 4A, hit 42.9 percent of her 3-pointers and shot 80.7 percent on free throws.

Kennedy Coach Dennis Roloff thinks Strait has improved since last season, thanks to rigorous training and a summer of top-notch competition for Team Iowa in AAU basketball.

"Courtney looks fantastic," Roloff said. "She's had a good summer and a good fall."

Strait said playing for Team Iowa in major tournaments has helped her improve. "I feel like I've

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gotten a lot better," she said.

Strait visited Truman State for the first time in October and thought it might be a good place to attend college and play basketball. "The second time, when I met the players, I knew this is where I wanted to be," she said.

She called the NCAA Division II school in Kirksville, Mo., a "perfect fit" for what she wanted in college.

Strait wanted to pick a college before the high school season begins next week. Olivia Meier, who played for Kennedy last year, picked Upper Iowa before the 2010-11 campaign began, and Strait saw how Meier was able to relax and enjoy her senior year in high school.

"I wanted to get that weight off my shoulders," she said. "I can play my game and not have to worry about people watching me."