

Herman picks Coe for football, wrestling

Written by Jim Ecker
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Conner Herman believed in keeping busy at Cedar Rapids Jefferson with a full schedule in football, wrestling, show choir and a part-time job at Target.

It won't be much different when he enrolls at Coe College this summer, although he'll probably cut back on the singing.

Herman said Tuesday night he'll play football and wrestle for the Kohawks, which will make him a busy athlete at the NCAA Division III school in northeast Cedar Rapids.

Herman's older brother, Jeremiah, also plays football at Coe, so they'll be teammates this season. Jeremiah Herman will be a junior for the Kohawks this year.

Herman narrowed his college choices to Coe and Luther. He wrestled with the decision for more than a month before deciding to stay close to home for college.

"I just looked at it from all angles," he told the Metro Sports Report. "I'll be able to be here with my family, because they're a big part of my life and they've supported me and all my decisions. And playing with my brother for a couple of years on the football team will be nice. It just felt like the right place."

Herman won the Class 3A state wrestling title at 215 pounds this year and was a first team all-Mississippi Valley Conference pick in football last fall as a defensive end.

Herman made his final decision to attend Coe this week, then faced the unpleasant task of calling all the coaches who recruited him for other schools.

"It sucks, but it's the only way to do it," he said. "I don't think it's right just to send an e-mail or a text message or something like that, when you're this far into the process and they've been

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recruiting you for so long."

The phone calls to Coe's coaches were a lot easier.

The Jefferson High School football and wrestling teams did not enjoy much success this year, but Herman will be joining national powers when he joins the Kohawks. The Coe football team has compiled a 19-4 record the last two years and made two trips to the NCAA Division III playoffs, and the wrestling team finished fifth in the D-3 national tournament this year.

"It's just great to be able to go on and try to help Coe the best way I can," he said.

Herman has been recruited as a defensive end for the Coe football team, but he'll have to make a decision on his weight class for the wrestling squad. He wrestled at 215 for the J-Hawks this year, but he'll have to wrestle at 197 pounds or heavyweight in college. There's nothing in between those two weights.

"Would 197 be tough to get to? Yeah, it would," he said. "I struggled to get down to 215 this year. But would it be impossible? No.

"I just want to see how it all plays out. We'll just see where the chips fall, I guess. I know they have a great wrestling program up there and they have tough guys in their lineup."

Herman wrestled at heavyweight for Jefferson as a junior before trimming to 215, where he felt more comfortable.

He compiled a 38-2 record this year and set Jefferson's career record for most pins. He did that despite competing with a torn labrum in his right shoulder, which he taped for matches. He had surgery in mid-March to repair the injury.

Herman enjoyed performing with Jefferson's show choir and might join a choir or glee club at

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Coe, but said he won't be heavily involved with singing at Coe due to football and wrestling.

"It would be hard to juggle the three things around at the next level," he said. "It's going to be tough to let that go. I love choir as much as anything. It's brought me new friends, new experiences."

Herman said he's interested in the athletic training program at Coe as a possible major.