

Mahmens casts lot with DII champs

Written by Jim Ecker

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Linn-Mar senior Mac Mahmens has accepted a scholarship to play football at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, which won the NCAA Division II national title this past season with a 15-0 record.

Mahmens visited Minnesota-Duluth this weekend, was offered a scholarship Sunday morning and accepted Sunday afternoon. Certain of his decision, he called one of Duluth's assistant coaches with the news while driving back to Iowa with his father.

"I knew that's the place for me," Mahmens told the Metro Sports Report. "It's awesome up there."

Mahmens is a 6-foot-2, 285-pound lineman who played offensive guard, defensive tackle and defensive end for Linn-Mar this past season. He said Minnesota-Duluth plans to put him in the middle of the offensive line at center, which is where he played for Linn-Mar in 2009.

Minnesota-Duluth also won the NCAA DII national title in 2008 with a spotless 15-0 record, giving the Bulldogs two national titles in the last three years.

"I always wanted to play for a team that's a national championship contender," Mahmens said. "That's my dream right now."

Minnesota-Duluth beat Delta State, 20-17, for the national title this past season.

Minnesota-Duluth is coached by Bob Nielson, a Linn-Mar graduate who has won 79 games in eight years at Duluth. The Bulldogs have won four straight titles in the Northern Sun Conference.

Mahmens started for Linn-Mar for three years and helped turn the program around. The Lions

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finished 0-9 in 2007, then Bob Forsyth became the head coach and the team went 3-6, 9-2 and 8-3 in 2008, 2009 and 2010 with Mahmens on the varsity.

"When you used to think about Linn-Mar, you'd think it was just a basketball school and the football team was nothing," said Mahmens. "Now Linn-Mar is known as a basketball and a football school."