

Woods signs with Heartland for baseball

Written by Jim Ecker

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Upon further review, Corbin Woods has decided to stick with his original idea to play baseball in college and not try to become a collegiate football player.

Woods has signed a letter-of-intent to play ball at Heartland Community College in Normal, Ill., where he'll be an infielder or catcher.

Woods committed to Heartland last summer, but then he and the Xavier Saints enjoyed a magical season in football and he had second thoughts.

Woods caught 59 passes for 1,169 yards and 15 touchdowns and helped the Saints reach the championship game of the Class 4A playoffs. He was named first team all-state and entertained thoughts of playing football in college instead of baseball.

"It made the decision a lot harder than I planned," he said. "It kind of put second-guesses in my mind, but I think everything worked out."

Wayne State, an NCAA Division II school in Nebraska, and St. Thomas, a D-III college in Minnesota, were interested in Woods for football (along with other D-3 schools), but he did not receive any Division I football offers. That made the decision easier.

"My goal was to play Division I baseball and be a Division I athlete, and I think the best opportunity to do that is baseball," he said.

Heartland has one of the top junior college programs in the country, and Woods hopes to succeed at Heartland and then move to a Division I school in the future.

"Baseball has always been a part of my family," he said. "I wanted to continue my passion and love for baseball and I thought Heartland would be a great place to carry on with my love for

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the game."

His brother, Nate, played Division I baseball at Belmont University and played in the minor leagues. His father, Curt, played baseball at Iowa State. One of his uncles, Mike Boddicker, pitched in the major leagues.

His late grandfather, Ken Charipar, played in the minor leagues and was a successful American Legion coach and assistant coach at Iowa.

Woods hit .371 with three homers and 27 RBIs as the starting third baseman for Xavier as a sophomore in 2011. He hit .300 with two homers and 24 RBIs as the starting shortstop last year and also had a 3-3 record and 4.16 ERA on the mound.

He said Heartland sees him as a catcher or infielder. "It really doesn't matter as long as I get the opportunity to play," he said.

Woods is relieved to have made a final decision about his future.

"There was definitely a lot of confusion," he said. "Now that I've made my decision, it's so much easier to go about finishing up my senior year. It wasn't easy trying to make up my mind."

Woods also plays basketball at Xavier and has been a season-long starter.