

Nearad repeats as National Player of Year

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Kirkwood Community College center fielder Taylor Nearad has been named the Schutt Sports/NFCA National Junior College Player of the Year for the second straight season.

The award goes to the top player at any level of junior college softball, including NJCAA I, II, III, Cal JC and NWAC.

Nearad, who is from Solon, led the nation in hits (112), doubles (35) and runs scored (106). She hit .516 and finished fourth in the nation in homers (19) and sixth in RBIs (80).

Nearad shattered a long list of school records during her two years at Kirkwood. She hit .561 for her career with 257 base-hits, 66 doubles, 19 triples, 49 home runs, 209 RBIs and 220 runs.

Kirkwood led the nation with 55 victories this season and reached the Junior College World Series.

Nearad, who is also an outstanding defensive player in center field, has a scholarship to continue her softball career at Iowa State.