

Proffitt Signs With Brevard

Written by Mike Kelly

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Watauga High senior Matt Proffitt signed his National Letter of Intent with Brevard College, a Division II school and a member of the South Atlantic Conference on Monday. Proffitt, who wants to be a pharmacist, batted .307 last season with three home runs and 24 runs-batted-in. He was also spent quite a bit of time on the mound as a spot starter and a relief pitcher for the Pioneers. He's a three-year varsity player.

"They're primarily looking at me to play center field," he said. "But if I'm called on to pitch, I will. I know I'll be pitching for coach (Pete) Hardee quite a bit this year. So, I'll get a chance to work on my skills there a little more. It might give me a chance to pitch for Brevard next year.

"But they like my ability to run down the ball in the outfield. I'll do what they need me to do. I've worked hard to get here. I've always wanted to play college baseball, and I get to do it where I grew up, in the mountains. I just love the area."

Proffitt is the third Pioneers' player to sign with a college in the last 12 days. Ryan Turner signed with the Naval Academy on November 9, and Max Linville signed with Western Carolina on November 15.

Brevard struggled last season. They were 14-28, and the Tornados only won five games in the SAC finishing in last place. But that doesn't concern Proffitt.

"You have to start somewhere," he said. "I really like the coaching staff. They're young guys, and they seem to relate to the players real well. They've offered me an opportunity. They've finished last two years in a row, but they're growing. I hope to make a contribution when I get there. I feel I'm strong defensively, but I've got to improve my hitting. They'll help me do that." And Proffitt admits playing for Hardee, a very demanding coach, has been a blessing.

"It really has," he said. "I really love coach Hardee. He knows how to motivate the players, and how to prepare us. Playing for him has really prepared me for the next level. I'm use to the four hour practices. It's given me a strong work ethic, and that's given me a chance to play at the next level."

The Pioneers were 18-10 last season. They won the Northwestern 3A/4A Conference tournament for the first time since 2000, and they made it to the sectional finals before they were eliminated by Porter Ridge.

"We had a great team last season," Proffitt said. "And I'm confident we'll do well this season. Coach Hardee will make sure of that. I'm looking forward to my senior year."

The Pioneers open the season Tuesday, February 28 at A.C. Reynolds.