

Kassouf Named District IV Player of Year

Written by Staff Reports
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The accolades just keep pouring in for Daniel Kassouf. The Appalachian State University senior was named the District IV Player of the Year by the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association on Friday. Kassouf, who played at North Davidson High School and transferred in from Belmont-Abbey College in Charlotte (in 2009-10), batted .339 this season with 16 doubles, a school-record 17 home runs and 66 runs-batted-in. He had a .635 slugging percentage and a .405 on-base percentage. He was also ranked nationally in home runs, RBI, batting average and slugging percentage. He led the Southern Conference in home runs, RBI and in total bases; he was tied for sixth with a .356 SoCon batting average.

Kassouf was not selected in the Major League Baseball Draft this week, but he is close to signing a minor-league deal. Of his 79 hits this season, 34 were extra-base hits. Kassouf had six RBI in four post-season games at the Charlottesville (Va.) Regional.

The honor recognizes Kassouf as the year's best college baseball player in the states of Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. Kassouf was one of the nation's top power hitters in 2012, ranking 10th nationally in home runs, 11th in RBI and 16th with 148 total bases. He also finished with a gaudy .339 batting average and made a serious run at the SoCon triple crown, leading the league in all three triple-crown categories (batting average, home runs and RBI) as late as April 21. Spread out over the course of a 162-game Major League Baseball season, Kassouf's power numbers would translate to 47 home runs and 181 RBI. A first-team all-conference honoree, Kassouf was also one of 35 semifinalists for the NCBWA's Dick Howser Trophy (National Player of the Year) and one of 30 semifinalists for the Golden Spikes Award (USA Baseball's top amateur player).

Kassouf is the SoCon's first NCBWA District Player of the Year in the 13-year history of the award. Previous District IV honorees include Mark Teixeira (Georgia Tech - 2000), Khalil Greene (Clemson - 2002), Dustin Ackley (North Carolina - 2007), Gordon Beckham (Georgia - 2008) and Danny Hultzen (Virginia - 2011).

Kassouf led the nation in all divisions with 29 home runs in 2009 during his sophomore year at Belmont Abbey. He was also ranked fourth nationally with 90 RBI; he led the Crusaders with a .370 batting average and 23 doubles; and he helped Belmont Abbey reach the 2009 Division II College World Series. He was named the Southeast Regional Most Outstanding Player after hitting .563 (9-for-16) with three doubles, three home runs, 10 RBI and seven runs scored in the Crusaders' four-game sweep through the regional that gave them the first D-II CWS berth in school history. And he was an all-conference, all-region and All-America honoree.

Photo Courtesy: Daniel Kassouf, ASU Athletics