

Woodward joins Fort Hays track program



Louisburg High School graduate Jarod Woodward is getting ready to take the next step in his track career as he signed on with the Fort Hays State track and field program to throw the shot put. Woodward is a two-time state qualifier for Louisburg and had a personal best throw of 53 feet this season.

Jarod Woodward's track future changed for the better during Louisburg High School's home invitational back in late April.

It was there when Woodward let loose for a personal best throw of 53 feet in the shot put, which was one of the top marks at the time in Class 4A. Not only did it win him the competition, but the throw caught the notice of some college coaches.

About a month later, Woodward was signing with an NCAA Division II program. The 2016 LHS graduate committed to throw for the Fort Hays State track and field team next season.

"I am just beyond excited," Woodward said. "I think it is just a great opportunity for me. Fort Hays is a great fit and has a great agricultural program, which is what I want to do, so it is just the best fit all the way around."

Woodward, a two-time state qualifier in the shot put, was familiar with the Fort Hays track program as he watched his cousin compete for the Tigers in a meet last year. He had the

chance to get to know some of the coaches and what their track program was all about.

When the Fort Hays State staff saw Woodward's mark, they reached out to him following the regional meet in May and offered him a scholarship then.

"When I was around the program back then I could tell it was the perfect fit for me," Woodward said. "The coaches were great and I know my cousin was enjoying his time there. Plus Fort Hays is a small school so it was a perfect fit to me and that is what I was looking for."

Track in college wasn't always a sure thing for Woodward and that wasn't his main focus. His priority was to get ready for college and his major of animal science.

"Really, I always wanted to go to Kansas State and be the first in my family to go to college," he said. "That was the dream for me, but Fort Hays is a great school as well and it really worked out for the best."

School and track won't be the only thing on his schedule once he reports to Hays. The rodeo coaches at the college have also approached Woodward about joining the rodeo team.

"It has been awhile since I have done rodeo, but I am looking forward to getting back in it again," he said. "With my body build, they thought I could do steer wrestling so I think that can be fun. I report on Aug. 15 and it really can't get here soon enough. I am just ready to get down there and get started."