

# Stone excited for opportunity with Ottawa



Louisburg High School senior Dalton Stone recently signed his letter of intent to play baseball at Ottawa University. Stone is seated next to mother Annie Goode and stepfather Paul Goode. Standing (from left) is Louisburg coach Joel McGhee and Ottawa assistant coach Zach Gerch.

As Dalton Stone was looking through options of where he wanted to play collegiate baseball, he had his fair share of choices.

Stone scrolled through his email, and read through all his options, but one school stood out among the rest.

The Louisburg High School senior signed his letter of intent on April 13 in front of family and friends to play baseball at Ottawa University. Stone couldn't have been happier with his decision.

"It is a great feeling to know that I am fortunate enough to play at the collegiate level," Stone said. "There are kids that work hard every day, but they just don't have the talent to play college ball and those are the ones you feel bad for, because there are kids out there that have the talent and don't want to put the work in.

"A lot of NAIA schools were emailing me, but Ottawa is the one that just stuck out for me. I got along with the coaches

really well and I just like the environment. I think it will be a great fit for me.”

Stone, a starting pitcher for the Louisburg baseball team, hopes to do the same one day at Ottawa. The coaches informed Stone he will likely start at the junior varsity level as a freshman, but also has the chance to pitch some varsity innings as well.

He knows the competition will be tough to crack the Braves’ rotation, but he is looking forward to the challenge and is ready to get to work.



**Dalton Stone brings home a pitch during a game earlier this season.**

“As a freshman, they told me that I have the chance to come in and pitch a few innings at the junior varsity and varsity level,” Stone said. “They recruit somewhere around 90 kids, so

JV is their developmental team for the varsity and they told me I have a chance to see some varsity time as a freshman if it works out and hopefully I can do that.

“Since T-ball, I have been in love with the sport. I knew I have always had the ability, but it is about putting the work in and wanting to do it. I know the coaches like what I have, but I just have to go out there and show it.”

Although Stone had different opportunities to play elsewhere, he was sold on the school and program after making two visits. He also realizes that a spot won't be given to him.

“I really liked both of them,” Stone said of the visits. “I feel that it is going to be a great fit for me. They are doing a lot of heavy recruiting right now and I feel like there are going to be some incoming freshmen that are going to compete and I feel like I am going to be one of those. I am just going to give it my all and see where that takes me.”

Stone currently has 15 strikeouts in his four starts on the season for the Wildcats and has appreciated his time with the Louisburg program and his teammates.

“It has been incredible,” he said. “You can't take this back. All my teammates have been there for me. I pitch in a lot of games and Blake Ruder has always been there to pick me up and say positive things to me before I go out and start. He just wants me to stay positive, because if I get down then the whole team can get down too so it is great to have that support.”

Stone, the son of Greg Stone and Paul and Annie Goode, plans to major in business while at Ottawa, following graduation in May.