

Belcher excited for opportunity at Missouri Southern



Louisburg senior Bailey Belcher made it official Wednesday when she signed her letter of intent to play soccer at Missouri Southern, a Division I program in Joplin, Mo. Belcher has scored 62 goals in her two seasons with the Wildcat program.

When it comes to choosing a college, it can be one of the more stressful decisions in a student athlete's life.

They want to find the right home, the perfect team and the best fit possible. Sometimes, those decisions won't be made until Signing Day approaches.

That wasn't the case for Bailey Belcher.

"I actually made my decision in September so I have been waiting awhile," Belcher said. "I told the coach and he was like well you can't sign until February, which surprised me a little bit. I just wanted to get it out of the way then, but I am glad the time is finally here."

The Louisburg High School senior made it official Wednesday when she signed her letter of intent to play soccer at Missouri Southern, a Division II program in Joplin, Mo. With

that signature, Belcher is excited for what her future holds.

“It was a pretty hard decision,” Belcher said. “I went to a lot of camps over the summer and a lot of schools started looking at me and giving me offers. It was easy to weed out the ones that didn’t have what I needed for school. Then when I narrowed it down, Missouri Southern just had the best offer for me. The class sizes were where I wanted them to be and I feel I have a better chance to play there.”

Belcher drew a lot of interest from other programs and for good reason. She has scored 62 goals over the last two seasons for Louisburg, to go along with 16 assists.

She has also earned first team all-Frontier League honors the last two seasons and has also been named to the all-state first team twice during that span.

“Bailey has an incredible work ethic and determination,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “She creates a goal and wants to achieve it. Her hard work and dedication do not just show on the pitch, but the classroom as well. One of her biggest assets is her ability to lead by example. She has her senior season left to play, but it’s nice to see her have her future taken care of.”



Bailey Belcher signed her letter of intent Wednesday to play soccer at Missouri Southern. Seated next to Bailey are her parents Tera Brooks and Jimmy Belcher. Standing (from left) is Louisburg head coach Kyle Conley and assistant coach Michael Pickman.

Missouri Southern, which finished with a 5-9-4 record in 2017, felt like the right fit for Belcher when she made her visit to the campus. Belcher, who also had offers from schools like Rockhurst, saw early on that Southern was the place for her.

“The campus itself is super nice and they have a bunch of new facilities and the people there were just overly nice and I just felt that I could fit in there,” Belcher said. “All the girls in the soccer program were really great as well and they were pretty laid back and very welcoming.

“Both of the coaches seemed to work well with the players better than what I saw with the other schools I visited. They care about what happens to you and want you to be successful no matter what you want to do.”

It became evident to Belcher early on in her life what she

wanted to do in college – play soccer.

“I have been playing since third grade,” she said. “I have always liked it and soccer has been my favorite since I was little. I have tried other sports, but it is just not the same. Playing in college has been a dream for me.”

Her passion for the sport was evident the last two seasons with the Louisburg girls program. She has helped the Wildcats to back-to-back regional titles and a fourth-place finish at state last year.

For Belcher, her time with Wildcat team has meant a lot to her and she is looking forward to one final run this spring.

“Honestly it is the best team I have played for,” Belcher said. “Sure, it is not a club team or one that plays in a lot of big tournaments. A lot of the teams up in the city, they are not close. The team we have here is a family and we will do anything for each other. It has always been that way no matter what and that is what I enjoy the most.”