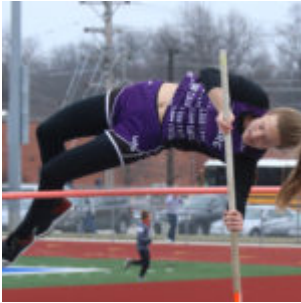


# Holtzen ready to soar to new heights at Northern Iowa



Louisburg senior Isabelle Holtzen is ready to take the next step in her pole vaulting career as she recently signed her letter of intent to pole vault at Northern Iowa next season.

Isabelle Holtzen has already broken the school record in the pole vault and earned a state medal, and for most athletes, that would be enough.

Not for Holtzen, in fact, she is ready to take another big leap forward.

On April 11, in front of a big gathering of family and friends, the Louisburg High School senior made it official as she signed her letter of intent to pole vault at the University of Northern Iowa – a Division I program.

“I am really excited to be able to sign because I just love pole vault so much,” Holtzen said. “I can’t really put into words how much fun it is for me, so it is really exciting to be able to continue to do something that I love so much. Northern Iowa is a great school and the coaches and my teammates are great as well. It is a great atmosphere and I think it is going to be an awesome experience.”

Holtzen took up the sport in the eighth-grade and has fallen in love with it. It has shown.

Last season as junior, Holtzen broke the 15-year-old school record with a mark of 11 feet, 1 inch, and last week broke her own record at the Anderson County Invitational when she cleared 11-6.

She has qualified for state in each of her three years of high school and medaled seventh at state last season. Holtzen hopes to possibly break her record again and add to her medal collection.

“I am really hoping to get 12 foot this year, and I know that is a high goal, but I am hoping I can achieve that,” she said. “Even without that, I want to go back to state and place again.”



Senior Isabelle Holtzen signed her letter of intent with the Northern Iowa track program on April 11 in front of family and friends. Sitting next to Isabelle are her parents Michelle and Craig Holtzen. Standing (from left)

**are Louisburg track coaches Andy Wright and John Reece.**

It was following her junior season where Holtzen decided she wanted to take her pole vaulting career to another level, which is when she began looking at places that, not only fit her athletically, but academically as well.

As a business major, she wanted the chance to achieve both dreams and found that Northern Iowa was the perfect fit for her.

“That happened for me after the last track season, over the summer,” Holtzen said. “There was a moment where I realized where I loved pole vaulting and I realized that I am not ready to be done with it. I still wanted to go to a bigger school, and there were a lot of things I still wanted to consider.

“The business school has really high placement rate for kids graduating, so getting both the track and school was really what sealed the deal for me. I know there aren’t a lot of kids that have the opportunity or chance that I have. I am really blessed to have this opportunity.”

Although she has yet to complete her high school season, Holtzen is looking forward to the opportunity to vaulting for the Panthers. She had a chance visit the campus and enjoyed the coaching staff, including the team’s vault coach.

“What stood out the most to me was that the coach there was a really experienced vaulter, and he has vaulted 18-foot plus,” Holtzen said. “This year he had a freshman who improved a lot and was a conference champion. He is a good coach and he knows what he is talking about.

“I showed the coaches a video of me pole vaulting and he said there were a lot of areas that I can improve on and that is going to help me get new heights and I am excited to see what I can do.”