

Tucker ready to take next step in football with Emporia State



Louisburg senior Kiefer Tucker, who earned first-team all-league honors last season, is excited for his opportunity with the Emporia State football team.

Kiefer Tucker remembers the exact moment and time when he fell in love with football – at soccer practice.

Tucker was in first grade, and like many other kids his age, he was learning how to play soccer when he looked around and noticed some other kids at a flag football practice.

“I told my parents I wanted to play football, so the next day they took me over to the practice and I was on the team,” Tucker said. “I have loved football ever since.”

As it turned out, that day put Tucker on a course that would eventually give him the opportunity to play the sport he loves on a high level.

During a signing ceremony on Feb. 6, in front of family, friends and teammates, the Louisburg High School senior

made it official as Tucker signed his letter of intent to play football at Emporia State University.

"This really means a lot," Tucker said. "It is going to be sad that I won't be able to play football anymore with the same guys I have played with since first grade. Even with the ones starting in high school, I made a lot of memories with them too. It will be sad to see that go, but I still love the game and I am excited to have the opportunity to continue to play it. I am excited to see what the next four or five years have for me and see how the program will develop me."

Tucker enjoyed the family atmosphere with the Louisburg program and he was looking for the same type of fit in college. It didn't take long for Tucker to find it with the Hornets.

While on a campus visit, Tucker listened to the players and coaches talk about the program and he knew it was going to be the right landing spot for him.

"When I first went there, they told me that they have this brick that they give out to players who that week showed toughness, character, had a good attitude and showed that family is more important than anything," Tucker said. "Right when they said that, I was sold. I really believe that all the players follow that mantra and you can tell that by hearing them talk. They had some bad years, but they are

grinding now and they are on the up and up. It will be fun and it is a good town. Emporia just felt like home."



LHS senior Kiefer Tucker signed his letter of intent with Emporia State on Feb. 6 to play football next season. Sitting next to Tucker is his mother Debbie Hardy and standing is Louisburg head football coach Robert Ebenstein. Not pictured is Kiefer's father, David Tucker.

Tucker will line up on the defensive side of the ball for Emporia State and he expects to play a little different position in college. Tucker, who lined up at defensive end for Louisburg, will do some of the same at Emporia, but the coaches also see him as a walk-up linebacker in certain situations as well.

Tucker was among the leaders on the line scrimmage for the Wildcats as he helped pave the way for more than 3,500 yards of total offense. Defensively, Tucker was a force from his defensive end position as he recorded 55 tackles, three

tackles for a loss,
three forced fumbles, a fumble recovery and a sack.

His season helped him earn first
team All-Frontier League on both sides of the ball and he was
also honored with
an all-state selection as well.

Despite his success in high school, Tucker knows it is going
to take him awhile to get acclimated to the college level.

"It will take a little time for them to teach me up and get a
little more size on me, but I am fine with that," he said.
"Everything is a process and I am not going to go in there and
be a starter as a freshman. I fine with grinding for a couple
years, and then when my time comes, I know I will be ready."

As for his time in Louisburg, life
under the Friday night lights and the relationships he has
built is something
Tucker won't soon forget.

"It meant
everything," Tucker said. "These guys are my friends. When I
came to Louisburg
in kindergarten I didn't know anyone. I truly
believe that the Louisburg football program made me who I am
today. The coaches
taught me everything I know and it taught me to be strong
minded and how to
deal with problems.

"Most importantly it has taught me how to be a good teammate
and
help the community that supports you and how to be man.
Football is a
brotherhood and is something you never forget."