Brueggen excited to swim at Division I level with Northern Iowa



Louisburg senior Sabra Brueggen will swim at the Division I level next season as she signed with the Northern Iowa swim and dive program.

Two years ago, Sabra Brueggen found herself at a crossroads.

During her sophomore year, Brueggen tore her ACL, which left her with surgery and months of rehab. For someone that liked to play multiple sports, it was a tough pill to swallow.

Brueggen loved to swim, play softball and basketball and knew that one day she would have to choose one when her college days came calling.

As it turned out, the injury helped Brueggen decide what sport

she loved the most – swimming.

The Louisburg senior, who is a decorated state swimmer for the Wildcats, signed her letter of intent to compete at the highest level. Brueggen signed with the University of Northern Iowa, a Division I program in the Missouri Valley Conference.

“Swimming in college hasn’t always been my dream,” Brueggen said. “I grew up playing multiple sports and it was always challenging trying to figure out what sport that I wanted to compete in at the next level. However, facing the adversity my sophomore year of tearing my ACL allowed me to recognize that swimming was a huge part of my life and that I wasn’t ready to give it up. It allowed me to understand how much of a passion I had toward the sport which opened the door for the college search process and ultimately allowed me to commit to swim at the Division 1 level.”

Brueggen had a few options to choose from, but Northern Iowa stood out among the rest. She joins a Panther program that has had a lot of success in the Missouri Valley Conference and was a good fit for her.

“I chose UNI because of the campus and team atmosphere,” Brueggen said. “The close knit and supportive team made me feel at home, while the coaches made it a competitive environment for all the girls.

“Choosing UNI as my home for the next four years was a tough decision because my college search process was full of many other memorable college visits, making my decision even more challenging. However, I know that I made the right choice because of the team and university culture that I can’t wait to be a part of.”



Louisburg senior Sabra Brueggen signed her letter of intent last month to join the University of Northern Iowa swim program. Seated next to Sabra is her mother Acacia. Standing (from left) is her brother Brayton and her father, Shane.

The Louisburg senior has certainly made an impact on the Wildcat girls swim program in its short 5-year existence.

In her first three years, Brueggen has racked up four state medals and holds numerous school records. It is that same type of success that she hopes to bring to the Northern Iowa program.

“Going into a program that is having as much success as they are is extremely motivating and exciting,” Brueggen said. “With seniors that are breaking decade old school records, the team and individuals placing at the conference championship meet, and the success of the team’s academics excites me for my future athletic and academic career at UNI.

“I am super excited to see what I can bring to the team. As for the certain events that I will be competing in, although my backstroke events have always been my focus, I will have a variety of other opportunities to compete in other events as well. My goal is to always challenge myself to compete to the best of my abilities and to continue to achieve personal best times in my events. I also hope to secure a position in multiple relay events.”

Although she has had a lot of success at the high school level, Brueggen has also thrived at the club level. She has been in the water since a young age, which has helped her become a college swimmer.

“I have been swimming since the age of two,” Brueggen said. “I was once the toddler swimming across the pool scaring all of the lifeguards because I was so little. My journey to get to where I am today, however, was not always easy. The commitment to practicing almost every day of the week on top of all of my other sports, spending countless hours in the water, and the demanding expectations I set for myself made the pool a place where I could always challenge myself and be proud of how far I’ve come.

“This has further fostered a confidence in me to get to where I am today and I feel ecstatic to be able to say that I am a committed athlete to the University of Northern Iowa. This accomplishment would not have been possible without God’s plan and all of the support from my family, teammates, and coaches of Gerri Hart, Gavin Hagar and Rob Kenley.”

As for what she hopes her final year of high school holds, Brueggen is looking to break more records and bring home more state hardware.

“I am looking forward to my senior season and the opportunities we have to compete with our relays at the state level again this year,” Brueggen said. “With the experience we

have in all of our seniors, I am excited to see what we can accomplish not just as a team but individually as well.

“Personally, I am hopeful for two more top 8 individual finishes at state to end my high school swim career on a high note. I am excited to take on this final year of high school swimming with these girls by my side, along with coaches that have supported us every step of the way.”