



Inman to continue softball career with UI Springfield

By MIKE MONAHAN Staff Writer | Posted: Monday, December 6, 2010 10:12 pm

CHAMPAIGN - Sam Inman, a 2009 graduate of Okaw Valley, has signed a National Letter of Intent to continue her softball career at the University of Illinois at Springfield. Currently, Inman is a sophomore at Parkland College where she earned plenty of honors, including being named to the NJCAA Division II All-Region 24 softball team and a second team all-Mid-West Conference player as well as receiving All-American honors.

"I visited Quincy University and talked with the coach at St. Ambrose (Davenport, Iowa), but they really didn't interest me that much," said Inman, a three-sport athlete at Okaw Valley. "I really like UIS. It is closer to home and it is a nice campus. I just really liked it. The coach (Mat Mundell) came to a couple of games last spring and really seemed interested. I felt like he really wanted me to come play for him."

UIS, a school with an enrollment of 4,711, is in its second year of competing at the Division II level after making the move from NAIA. The Prairie Stars are in their second year of competing in the 15-team Great Lakes Valley Conference.

"Sam is the lone junior college player in the 2012 class," said Mundell, a graduate of Normal. "She is a difference maker for us. She is coming off a freshman year where she was named an All-American. She is the rare combination of speed and power in the middle of the lineup and a go-get'em center fielder with a ton of range."

Last spring Inman helped the Cobras, coached by Chuck Clutts, who earned Co-Coach of the Year honors for Region 24 and the M-WAC, and hit .386 with 13 home runs and 64 runs batted in. She stole 23 bases out of 23 attempts for the 47-18 Parkland team that finished in ninth place in the nation.

"I can't say I thought I would be that successful," said Inman, an accounting major. "I didn't know I would be starting center and batting third or fourth and accomplish so much. It is pretty cool to be going on to play. I can't say I imagined myself playing at the next level. I have to get in the weight room and run and just improve myself."

In the summer Inman helped the Central Illinois Girls' Softball Association 18-and-under team to third place in the National Softball Association tournament.

Attending UIS this year is Danielle Abbott, a junior from Momence, who played at Parkland last year, batting behind Inman. UIS is to lose five players after this season.

"I talked to her about UIS," said Inman. "We both played in the outfield. She was really helpful in talking to me about UIS."

Last year the Prairie Stars were 14-32 overall and 6-22 in the GLVC, a conference that includes Indianapolis, Quincy, Lewis, Northern Kentucky, Missouri-St. Louis, Missouri S&T, Wisconsin-Parkside, Southern Indiana, Drury, Bellarmine, St Joseph's College, Kentucky Wesleyan, Maryville and Rockhurst.

"I hope I can help improve the program," said Inman who played UIS last fall.

Inman earned Illinois Coaches Association first team honors at Okaw Valley as a sophomore and a senior. She batted .607 as a senior for the 17-11 Lady Timberwolves and in three years had a .582 average and has overcome a torn anterior crucient ligament suffered in November of 2007.

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