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## 2020 DHS Sports Spotlight Haden Hillis

APRIL 23RD 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Dexter, MO - Haden Hillis is the 18 year old son of Tory and Darren Hillis and brother to Rhylan Hillis. He is also the grandson of Ron and Jo Bloemer and Gladys Hillis and Bruce and Lynn Hillis.

He is a member of the National Honor Society, Student Council, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Sr. Beta and FCLA. He has also played on the football team three year, basketball team three year and baseball four year.

Haden was one of the original members of the Spartans Baseball team and won state two years and has been playing some type of summer baseball now going on 11 years. You could say Haden love the game!

What are Haden's most memorable moments in high school baseball? Throwing a no hitter in the first JV game of his freshman year against Kennett and throwing another no hitter hi freshman year in his first varsity debut against Notre Dame!

When asked how has the COVID-19 affected you this year, Haden said, "It has definitely taken away memories that I as well as every high school seniors across teh country will never get back. It truly makes you put into perspective that you shouldn't ever take anything fro granted."

"Haden Hillis is the toughest kid I know. He played the entire football season this year with a torn quadriceps muscle, and started every single game," commented Dexter High School baseball coach Drew Pixley. "Last football season, he broke his collarbone twice,

and hated to have to come out of the game. That quality in him will take him a long way in life, being able to battle through tough times."

"Haden was our team leader on the diamond. He's not a very vocal kid, but he's tough, always has a great attitude, and competes HARD. Those are qualities, that combined, would make a desirable player on any team," continued Pixley.

"Hillis would be a very pivotal pitcher in our rotation. He has natural cut to his fastball, which isn't typical. But it was very effective when he stayed low in the strike zone. Even through his leg injury, he was able to lift from the waist up and I thought he had a tremendous winter in the weight room. He's definitely able to handle the bat better and could have possibly been a heart of the lineup type of player."

"I was really excited coming into this season to see how Haden would bounce back, and I know he was too. To see their season end like this is saddening, but I know these kids will take on their next challenge the right way. I will miss all of these seniors, and their teammates will too," stated Pixley.

Haden wanted to add that he has a great respect for all of his coaches. Coach Aaron Pixley was his reason for getting back involved in football, a sport Haden also loves. "He is always a positive on the football field."

"Coach Drew always believed in us and we were set to have a memorable senior year on the baseball field," stated Hillis. "Coach Cody Boyer was the first text received with encouragement and support when I heard "NO SPRING SPORTS!"

"Coach Becker has helped coach me since I was in the 2nd grade," continued Hillis. "He has always believed in me. I will miss all of these coaches and I appreciate all of them as well.

Haden's future plans after graduation is to attend the University of Missouri - Columbia and major in accounting.

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