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# DHS Cross Country Athletes Earn Academic All-State Honors

APRIL 24TH 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

## DHS Cross Country Athletes Earn Academic All-State Honors

Dexter, MO - MTCCCA announced its Academic All-State runners. Dexter High School had six athletes to earn these honors.

Athletes must be nominated by their head coach who must be a current member of MTCCCA. Each athlete must have competed in a State series meet of which a district, section or state meet satisfies that requirement. Each athlete must meet one of the following criteria: 25 or higher on the ACT, 1150 or higher on the SAT or 3.6 cumulative GPA at the end of the fall semester.

"I am very proud of their hard work on the course and in the classroom," commented DHS head cross country coach Leonard Morse.

Athletes are Margo Nea, Madison Slaton, Andrew Ellinghouse, Alanie Lacy, Sophia Chasteen, and Kalyn Traw.

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## 2020 DHS Sports Spotlight Haden Hillis

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### 2020 DHS Sports Spotlight Haden Hillis

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 for 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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## 2020 DHS Sports Spotlight Mason Keena

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[2020 DHS Sports Spotlight Mason Keena](#)

Dexter, MO - Mason Keena is the 18 year old son of Paul and Melanie Keena.

He is the grandson of David and Betty Fleming and Melba Keena.

Mason is a member of Top 10%, National Honor Society, Student Council, Sr. Beta Club and Future Business Leaders of America. He has also played baseball, football and wrestling for the Bearcats.

When asked about his most memorable moments playing baseball, Mason said, "Playing every summer with my friends and winning State back-to-back years on the SEMO Spartans."

With the COVID-19 (Coronavirus Epidemic) Mason's spring sports baseball season was cancelled. "COVID-19 has affected my Senior year by requiring me to stay home and get a job. Take online classes and hang-up my Bearcat baseball uniform for good."

"Mason Keena is a kid that doesn't say much and always has a smile on his face," commented Drew Pixley, head baseball coach at Dexter High School. "He's a kid that has had to deal with so many injuries and illnesses and never once complained. I didn't get the pleasure to have him as a part of our baseball team last year (my first head coaching year) because he was battling Mono from wrestling season. We had a chat about that and both came to the conclusion that sitting out last spring to rest would be the best option for him moving forward. That was probably very hard for him because he is very competitive."

"Coming into this spring, it was a relief to know I would have a player like Mason that could play a few different positions and help mentor our young catchers. I feel like he was excited about the role he was going to take on especially the fact that he was going to pitch. We were looking forward to what this spring could have brought these kids."

"I feel terrible for all of the seniors," continued Pixley. "But I know that the senior group I would've had this spring would have battled their butts off. In reality, our team would've had to grind through this season, play smart, and look to multiple kids to carry this team. Mason Keena would have been one of those kids. He's dependable, works hard, and is very intelligent. I am sure going to miss having him next spring."

Mason's future plans after high school are to attend the University of Missouri - Columbia.

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## Silver Sox Baseball Tryouts Set for May 4th

APRIL 20TH 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Silver Sox Baseball Tryouts Set for May 4th

Sikeston, MO - Looking for some summer baseball fun? The Silver Sox will have tryouts on May 4th. With the extended shut down from Governor Parson the original date of May 3rd had to be extended.

Please be at VFW Baseball Field on Monday, May 4th. 6 p.m. 13-14 year old (born in 2006-2007) 7 p.m. for 15 - 16 year olds (born in 2004-2005)

On May 5th at 6 p.m. for 17, 18 and 19 year olds born 2001, 2002, and 2003.

To follow them on Facebook [CLICK HERE](#) and [LIKE their page!](#)

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## MSHSAA Board Approves Changes to Summer By-Laws Decision

APRIL 17TH 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

MSHSAA Board Approves Changes to Summer By-Laws Decision

***MSHSAA Board Approves Changes to Summer By-Laws Decision opens door for possibilities to summer time contests***

Columbia, Mo.- The Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) Board of Directors voted to grant relief of portions of the MSHSAA By-Laws that include summer limits on contact between coaches and student-athletes, at its April meeting on Thursday, April 16th.

Dependent upon approval from local and state health officials, the MSHSAA Board voted to make the summertime dead period and the summer limits on contact optional for the summer of 2020. MSHSAA By-Law 1.5 requires member schools to establish a period of nine consecutive days beginning on a Saturday and lasting to the second following Sunday, in which no contact takes place between school coaches/directors of MSHSAA-sponsored activities and students enrolled in the member school, or who will be enrolled in the member school during the next school year.

With Thursday's decision, a school may choose to comply with this "dead period" or to allow teams to hold activities. This decision also relieves portions of By-Law 3.15.3 and 3.15.4, which limits teams to 20 days of contact during the summer. Member schools may allow teams to have more than 20 days of contact in which any coaching or instruction in the skills and techniques of any sport takes place.

"The abrupt changes that took place to our normal system of education this spring, have our schools pleading for access to students this summer," said MSHSAA Executive

Director Dr. Kerwin Urhahn. “The membership asked about what possible flexibility and modifications to by-law restrictions that could be offered. If there is no local, state, or national clearance for safe contact with students, then any allowances dealing with summer will be moot. But, in an effort to be prepared for what we hope is possible, this action was taken to grant some relief for the member schools.”

In other action, the Board of Directors voted to allow seniors to be viewed as enrolled students through the summer, which allows them to represent their high schools in summertime interscholastic competition. This relief of By-Law 3.15 is designed for this summer only.

“Hopefully, this will allow schools to play contests against other schools to provide closure and recognition for students and allow teams and kids to play together this summer,” said Urhahn.

At this point, no action was taken to alter any other sections of By-Law 3.15, or the fall no contact period (3.15.1.b) that is scheduled to take place between August 3, 2020 and August 9, 2020. All summertime activities remain optional for students, attendance or participation could not be required.

“The first thing that needs to be clearly understood is that all decisions about anything summer-related – be it contact, access, practice, games, conditioning, etc. - must first be approved, cleared and deemed safe by the CDC, State and Local Health Departments, the Governor, and local Mayors” Urhahn concluded. “The end of social distancing and ‘safe at home’ is still not clearly visible yet, and summer activities may not be possible due to the covid-19 pandemic and its own timeline.”

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