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The Stony Brook Admissions Blog

An inside look at the Stony Brook University undergraduate admissions process and the transition into the first year of college, as seen through the eyes of Chris D'Orso, Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions.

About Me



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TUESDAY, MAY 06, 2008

Seawolves in the Pros: Nick Abel, Part I

I had the opportunity to exchange some e-mails with New York Mets prospect Nick Abel, a Stony Brook alumnus. Here's the first part of our discussion:

Chris D'Orso: Why did you choose Stony Brook?

Nick Abel: I chose Stony Brook primarily for its academic reputation, more specifically the Health Sciences Program. As far as baseball was concerned, Coach Senk approached me in High School and more or less told me that he would give me a chance to compete for a spot on the team but nothing was guaranteed. Also being that this was the only D-I school that showed any interest in me, it seemed to be best fit for me.

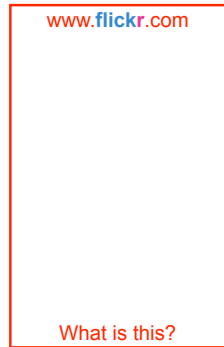
CD: What do you miss most about your time here?

NA: I would have to say that I miss being an active part of the University. Three words....Health Sciences Program! Enrolling in the HSC: Emergency and Disaster Management Program was the best decision that Lauren Brown, Tracey Thompson (my academic advisers), and I made during my stay at Stony Brook. The instructors/teachers I met in this program had an overabundance of experience, knowledge in their field of study/work, and passion to teach their students. This made my experience in the program unforgettable. Strength Coach David Van Dyke allowed me to take my strength training to a new level with his strong kinesiology background. And I have to thank Coach Senk for giving me an opportunity to play at Stony Brook.

CD: There were a handful of your teammates who also signed professionally in 2006. Do you stay in touch with them? How are they doing?

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NA: I keep in touch with all of my teammates Andres Perez (Yankees), Kris Bakey (Cardinals), Matt Devins (Devil Rays), Andrew Larsen (Royals), and Matt Restivo (Evansville Otters). From what I know they are all doing very well and are all still chasing the dream with me.

CD: Who have you learned the most from, either as a pitcher or about the game in general?

NA: I would have to say that I learned how to play the game of baseball through my high school coaches Keith Sachs and Mike Ninovaggi, as well as Matt Senk in college. But the key to my development had to be my work with Rob Steinert. Rob and I met through my friend Greg Voegler, 2001 Diamond Award Winner.

I was cut from the baseball team in 10th grade, didn't play in 11th grade and my friend Greg approached me before my senior year of high school and told me how much Rob Steinert has helped him develop as a pitcher and eventually into the most dominant pitcher on Long Island in 2001. I took his advice and was blown away. I was fairly new to pitching and Rob single handedly changed my life. I was a kid with a good arm, planning on becoming a regular college student and he changed me into a pitcher would eventually get a Division 1 baseball scholarship to Stony Brook University.

It didn't end there! Rob and I kept in touch but didn't work together after I left for college until my senior year. In my final season at Stony Brook I was approached by a scout after playing summer ball in the NECBL. The scout said that he saw potential in me but I need to refine my mechanics and pitch more efficiently. So who did I call, Rob Steinert. I told Rob what the scout said to me and explained to he how much it would mean to me if I could have an opportunity to play in the Major Leagues. He said to me, "Are you ready to work?" I responded "Just tell me when and where!"

That conversation at 11pm on a cold November night was the start of something great. That night I drove to his facility an hour away and worked with him till 1am. After that night, I had two lessons scheduled with Rob a week until the end of my season. All the lessons were at midnight and one lesson was always on Thursday night, the notorious party night at college. I wanted an edge on my competition, so I thought if I was learning how to pitch on the nights they were partying, I would gain two days of quality work each week on my competition. By the end of the season I was getting calls from 12 different major league teams and eventually signed with the New York Mets. Rob's methods of instruction and passion for making me reach my potential were truly one of a kind and contagious. His facility closed at 10pm, we worked out at 12am, which meant he was taking time out of his free time to help me make baseball my career. His selflessness and generosity matched up with his biomechanical knowledge of pitching are pure genius.

Thanks to Nick for the answers, and I'll have more from him again tomorrow!

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