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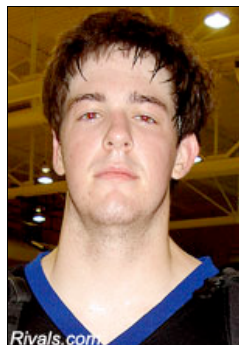
September 9, 2008

Ace in the Hole

Blue Zertuche
TexasHoops.com Recruiting Analyst

6-foot-7 face up four man, [Derek Johnson](#) from The Woodlands Christian Academy, had offers from teams all over the country but it came down to five schools that he was interested in. After getting back this weekend from an official visit to a program in the Sunbelt, Johnson made the call to finish off the recruiting prcess and go with the one program that he felt had the most opportunity for him. It's a program that is rebuilding, but Johnson likes what the turn around will look like.

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Johnson picked the Missouri Valley over the Big XII.

"I committed to Evansville earlier today," said Johnson. "I visited a few weekends ago and didn't know what to expect, but once I got there and meet the players and coaches, I realized that I fit right in."

Head coach, Marty Simmons has the community believing in the Purple Aces program and Johnson says that means a lot to him as a player.

"The atmospher is great there. Evansville is a school of about 2,500 students but the basketball games average over 5,000, and they had a losing record. That goes to show how much the people of Evansville support and believe in coach Simmons' ability to turn the program into a winning one. I can only imagine what it will be like when things are turned around."

Johnson remembers the workouts and the players character on and off the court.

"The workouts were intense," said Johnson. "The coaching staff went hard and got the players to perform their best. It showed that they all could coach and push the players."

Johnson Continues.

"I noticed that the player and the coaching staff were close, like a family. That was important for me to be around and the players all acted like they were best friends. Everyone got along."

Johnson will fit in nicely in the Missouri Valley and will fit the mold of a four man.

"Evansville runs a lot of motion. I never knew what type of offense I would like to in, but running off screens will be perfect for me."

Johnson's offers and top five consisted of Colorado, Middle Tennesse, Evansville, Liberty and Missouri State. Johnson had already unofficially visited Colorado during Elite camp in the summer, and visited Middle Tennessee this past weekend.

Texas Hoops Analysis:DEREK is a very sound player with a good feel for the game. He is a hard worker, moves well without the ball and has a good skill level for a big man. He can step out and shoot it with three point range, goes to the hole strong from the wing and can finish well off the move in traffic. He has a nose for the ball in the paint, is a good rebounder and plays aggressively. His skill level, size and knowledge of the game make for an intriguing combination as he could turn into a very good player down the line.

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