



Baseball | 7/3/2018 3:26:00 PM | Shawn D. Smith, Director of Athletic Media Relations

Minnesota Crookston Baseball Signs Pair of Junior College Players



CROOKSTON, Minn. – The University of Minnesota Crookston baseball team announced the signings of Brock Reller (OF, 6-1 230, Grand Forks, N.D./Iowa Central C.C.) and Ryan Alain (RHP, 5-9 155, Ottawa, Ontario/Lake Region State College) to National Letters of Intent. Reller and Alain will begin playing for the Golden Eagles during the 2019 season and will arrive on campus in the fall of 2018.

Reller and Alain bring the recruiting class to 22 for the 2018-19 season. The Golden Eagles are slated to have a school-record 51 players on the roster for the 2019 slate. Reller and Alain are both junior college products. They give Minnesota Crookston 10 junior college signees who will immediately provide depth and competition at key spots for the Golden Eagles.

Minnesota Crookston previously has now inked 15 players in the late signing period with 13 student-athletes previously signing with the Golden Eagles, including: Bobby Chu (C, 5-10 200, Redwood City, Calif./City College of San Francisco), Gregory Diaz (RHP, 6-2 180, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic/Northland C.T.C.), John Dormanen (LHP/IF, 6-0 200, Catalina, Ariz./Ironwood Ridge H.S.), Scott Finberg (3B, 6-2 205, Stillwater, Minn./Century College), Garrett Hohn (RHP, 5-10 170, Wausau, Wis./Century College), Bryce Jorgenson (UT, 6-0 175, Thunder Bay, Ontario/Century College), Luke Kinnunen (IF/RHP, 6-3 210, Grand Rapids, Minn./Grand Rapids H.S.), [Matt Nelson](#) (RHP, 6-5 250, Afton, Minn./St. Croix Lutheran Academy), Jack Peppel (IF 6-4 215, Olivia, Minn./BOLD H.S.), Mason Ruhlman (IF, 5-8 195, Algonac, Mich./Riverland C.C.), Colton Schrempf (UT, 6-1 171, Victoria, Minn./Chanhassen H.S.), Landyn Swenson (OF, 5-8 170, Devils Lake, N.D./Lake Region State College) and Carlos Turpo (C, 6-1 165, Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico/Northland C.T.C.).

The Golden Eagles also signed seven players during the early signing period, including: Phillip Champagne (UT, 5-10 180, Henderson, Minn./LeSueur-Henderson H.S.), Eric Graham (OF, 6-1 170, Casper, Wyo./Natrona County H.S.), Tyler Hegg (RHP/1B, Thompson, N.D./Thompson Public School), Trey Larimer (C/OF, Thompson, N.D./Thompson Public School), Anthony Lupa (LHP, 6-0 175, Brule, Wis./Northwestern H.S.), Alex Mushitz (2B/SS, 5-9 150, East Grand Forks, Minn./East Grand Forks H.S.) and Conner Richardson (RHP, 6-4 215, Grand Forks, N.D./Red River H.S.).

Alain is the second signee for the Golden Eagles from Lake Region State College, joining Landyn Swenson. Under Coach [Steve Gust](#), Minnesota Crookston has continued to put an emphasis on signing the best junior college players from the region. Nine of the 10 junior college signees for the Golden Eagles played for programs in Minnesota or North Dakota.

Reller is a Grand Forks Central H.S. product, who played one season at Iowa Central Community College and will now make his return to the Red River Valley for the Minnesota Crookston baseball program. The Golden Eagles have consistently recruited the best talent in the region, putting a major emphasis on Northwest Minnesota and Eastern North Dakota. Reller is the fifth signee for Minnesota Crookston from the Grand Forks metro area, joining Tyler Hegg and Trey Larimer from Thompson, N.D., and Conner Richardson from Grand Forks, N.D.

Minnesota Crookston is bringing in 16 players to the field, including six from the back yard in Minnesota, five from neighboring states and five from other parts of the country. The Golden Eagles are looking for depth and competition especially in the field where they have to replace six players who started at least half the games during the 2018 season. Additionally, Minnesota Crookston has signed six players to their pitching staff. The Golden Eagles are looking to improve on a 5.08 ERA on the season. Minnesota Crookston has the benefit of returning 11 players who have been on the hill this season with just four players to replace on

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Minnesota Crookston is coming off 24 wins in 2018, the Golden Eagles missed the NSIC Tournament for the first time in the last three years, but have still found a plethora of success. The Golden Eagles have picked up 87 wins in four seasons under Gust, after only winning two games the previous two seasons before his arrival. Minnesota Crookston produced their first-ever All-American in 2018 with [Reed Hjelle](#) earning National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association (NCBWA) All-America Third Team and American Baseball Coaches Association (ABCA)/Rawlings All-American Third Team honors. Additionally, [Zach Seipel](#) became the program's first-ever Major League Baseball draft pick, as he was selected in the 27th round by the Atlanta Braves. Seipel is currently pitching for the Danville Braves, a rookie affiliate of the Braves.

Ryan Alain (RHP, 5-9 155, Ottawa, Ontario/Lake Region State College)

Alain pitched 12.0 innings as a sophomore at Lake Region State College in 2018. He posted a 5.25 ERA in seven appearances with 13 strikeouts to just two walks. Alain went 1-1 on the season with one start and six outings out of the bullpen. As a freshman, Alain pitched 27.0 innings with 17 strikeouts on the season. He was a 2018 Mon-Dak Athletic Conference Academic Scholar-Athlete. Alain played for South Central High School in Oyen, Alberta as a prep.

Alain was born Oct. 27, 1998. He plans to major in business marketing at Minnesota Crookston. Alain is the son of Craig Alain and Tracy Bradley. He moved away from home at 16 to attend Badlands Baseball Academy in Oyen, Alberta.

"Ryan will provide depth on the mound," Gust said. "He isn't flashy but we are hoping he can be a consistent, every day pitcher for us."

Brock Reller (OF, 6-1 230, Grand Forks, N.D./Iowa Central C.C.)

Reller appeared in 31 games as a freshman for Iowa Central Community College. He scored 14 runs on the season with three doubles and 13 RBIs. Reller reached base on 11 walks during his freshman campaign. He was a two-time All-State pick at Grand Forks Central H.S. He was also an All-State pick for hockey. Reller is a left-handed bat.

Reller was born July 26, 1999. He is undecided on his major at Minnesota Crookston. Reller is the son of Tristi and Joel Reller. His father Joel Reller played collegiate hockey. Relative Leah Stratton-Reitmeier was a college basketball player.

"Brock is a difference maker," Gust said. "He has the potential to earn an outfield spot and hit in the middle of our order. The fact that he is one of the top area players made him even more intriguing to us."

All signees are contingent upon admission to UMC and compliance with NCAA rules, including certification by the NCAA Eligibility Center. Everyone released today has signed their National Letter of Intent prior to release of information.

For more information, visit the Golden Eagle Athletics website at www.goldeneaglesports.com.

Follow the Golden Eagles on Facebook at Golden Eagle Sports and on Twitter at @UMCAthletics.

The University of Minnesota Crookston is a NCAA Division II university located in the Red River Valley of Northwest Minnesota. UMC sponsors 11 intercollegiate athletic teams with membership in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate conference (NSIC) and the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA). The NSIC is a 16-team conference with schools situated in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska.

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