

Devonte Tinchier makes it official - he will attend SIUE on track scholarship

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – Devonte Tinchier's contributions to **Edwardsville's boys track team** have been plentiful since he entered the program as a freshman in the spring of 2014.

He's been on relay teams, served as a long and triple jumper and played a key role in the Tigers' 2015 Class 3A state championship team.

Tincher will now have the opportunity to take his talents to the collegiate level, and he'll get to do it before the home fans as well as he signed a letter of intent to attend **Southern Illinois University Edwardsville** beginning the fall of 2017 in a ceremony at Edwardsville High School Wednesday evening.

The decision to go to SIUE was an easy one for Tincher.

“After talking to several college coaches and just kind of compiling all the facts from each one and doing a couple of visits, I just felt SIUE had something to offer to me that no other college could,” Tincher said. “Great coach, great teammates – it was just an amazing experience.

“The fact that it happened to be close to home was kind of part of my decision because I'm really close to my mom; it's nice to be close and be able to see her whenever I want or if something comes up with my family or something like that, plus Julian Harvey gave me a good experience on my visit; he showed me what it feels like to be home, but really be away from home.”

Harvey's success with the Cougars after the success he had with the Tigers was an influence for Tincher to join SIUE. “Carry Bailey (the Tigers' jumps coach) Is a great coach,” Tincher said. “I love coach Bailey; he's done everything he can to progress me as a jumper and the fact that it can translate with (SIUE assistant Joey) Pacione has shown me it will be successful if I go there, if I put the time in – if I train – I can be as successful as Julian, if not even better.”

“It's hard to believe that Devonte is a senior,” said **Tiger coach Chad Lakatos**, “and signing a letter to compete in college. The four years have really flown by, and the great thing about coaching is you get to see these kids grow up; Devonte's been a big part of our program; even as a freshman, we knew he was going to be good.

“To be able to compete in state as a sophomore is a great accomplishment. He's a hard worker, he loves the sport of track and field and we're excited to have this last year with him. We've got some unfinished business to take care of, but I couldn't be happier for him, his family and friends and that means a lot to him.”

Tincher was part of the 4x100 relay team that finished fourth and 4x200 relay team that finished seventh at the 2015 Class 3A state meet in Charleston as the Tigers went on to bring home the title. In the 2016 state meet, Tincher finished seventh in the long jump and was on the 4x100 relay team that finished sixth as the Tigers finished second as a team.

“Anytime you see a kid go through high school, it's going to be a lot of different variables where you see a kid grow up,” Lakatos said. “Obviously, physically he's gotten bigger; he's matured. He's grown up and had to play a big role as a sophomore; sometimes, when kids are that age, some are ready and some aren't.

“Devonte was and that's given him an opportunity to grow up just a little bit faster than some of the other kids his age, but he's a hard worker in practice and it means everything to him. I think it's a good equation that a kid who works hard will see good results, and that's what he's seen the last couple of years.”

“It's been an amazing experience,” Tincher said of being on the EHS track team. “I've think I've gotten an opportunity that a lot of kids fail to achieve; just having the coaching staff behind me every step of the way and continuously push me, because I know I wouldn't be anywhere I am without them – Coach Lakatos, Coach Bailey – even Coach (David) Dougherty – stepping up and keeping me motivated and pushing me.”

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