

Once a Hawk, always a Hawk: Jerrett Smith prepares for move to Quincy

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CARROLLTON – Once a Hawk, always a Hawk.

This mentality will remain in the mind of **Carrollton football star Jerrett Smith**, who will be attending **Quincy University** in the fall on a scholarship.

Quincy possesses the same team nickname as his high school team – the Hawks – so it seems a natural next progression for the multi-sport athlete. Jerrett will also be reunited with former teammates **Cody Leonard and Luke Palan** on the Quincy squad.

Jerrett said he had a lot of nervous energy while at school on Wednesday, waiting for the big moment to make it official that he was attending Quincy.

“I am glad to be going to school where I know people and it is isn’t too far away from home,” he said. “People can come watch us play and we will still have that Carrollton support that I love. That is a huge factor for me.

“I am just excited I found someplace to give me that Carrollton home field factor as much as I can, plus reunite with my friends, Cody and Luke.”

Jerrett’s father, Luke Smith, was a multi-sport star in his time for the Hawks. He couldn’t be more proud of his son for achieving the opportunity to play in college.

“Jerrett had some phenomenal Division 3 offers, including one from Central Iowa, a Division 3 powerhouse, but he chose Quincy,” his father said. “Quincy seemed to be a better fit.”

Jerrett’s brother, Jacob, is now a player for **McMurray College** and will contend for the starting quarterback position this fall. Jerrett said he feels he learned a lot from his brother’s decisions on what would be best for him for his next step.

“Jerrett and Cody are cut from the same cloth,” their father said. “Cody really mentored him and Cody and Luke Palan’s success are also two of the biggest reasons they gave Jerrett an opportunity for a scholarship. They want Jerrett to play alongside Cody on defense.”

Jerrett said he knows in the off-season, he will have to hit the weights and try to add some pounds to be the player he wants to be for Quincy this fall.

Luke Smith will split his time going between college football games at both McMurray and Quincy next season; but one thing is for certain, when he stands on the sidelines, he will beam with pride.

“I am extremely proud of both Jerrett and Jacob,” he said. “Football has been a big thing around our house for quite a while. Both have been all-state in football and now will be playing football in college. That is quite an accomplishment for both.”

Jerrett Smith said he has an affinity toward nearly every sport, but football by far is the one he loves the most.

“I know I have the heart to impress and play,” he said. “It will also be good to be playing with people I know.”

Jerrett said the athletic and academic scholarship he will receive from Quincy is fantastic and he said the coaches are also outstanding, another key reason for his decision.

For now, Jerrett said he will focus on finishing the basketball season, hopefully with some post-season success, then he will turn to baseball.

“I think we definitely have a great baseball season ahead,” he said. “We have several who were sophomores last year who are juniors this year. I know they have grown up a lot personally. I think we will be a state-contending team in baseball.”

Jerrett believes his experience playing for Carrollton High School the last four years has been second to none.

“It has been an experience like no other high school around here,” he said. “You go and you are a great athlete and play and start in three sports. You go both ways in football and play every position. It develops you so much as an athlete.

“Where else can you go and be successful while playing three sports and all those positions? It’s like the Swiss army knife of athletics. Coach Flowers has won five or six WIVC championships and Coach K. has 500 wins in basketball. I am lucky to have played for them.”