

River Dragons' Baseball Star Blake Burris Is Honored For Best Prospect League's Top Hitter

by CJ Nasello

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ALTON - Blake Burris received a huge honor on Friday afternoon at Mac's Timeout when Alton River Dragons General Manager Dallas Martz presented him with a beautiful ring for being the top hitter in the Prospect League last year with a .361 batting

average. A full video interview will be shown on Monday on [Riverbender.com's Our Daily Show](https://riverbender.com/our-daily-show).

The Our Daily Show podcast airs at 9 a.m. each day on Riverbender.com with host C.J. Nasello.

Burris, an Edwardsville High School graduate, pounded out 78 hits, 43 RBI, and had 50 runs scored and 47 stolen bases. Burris described his time so far with the River Dragons as "an amazing opportunity."

The River Dragons started 6-0 last season and Burris played a big role in that success. He praised Martz and the coaching staff for starting a bond between the players who come from all over the United States.

Burris, who is a Lewis and Clark Community College player, suffered a hand injury sliding into second base and was on his way back to recovery when the Prospect League season started for the River Dragons. In the first River Dragons baseball game, he went one for three and after that, he knew he was going to be OK. After his first appearance this year, he just took things a game at a time and it worked.

Burris viewed Erik Broekemeier's walk-off grand slam as one of the highlights of the season to push them to an 8-7 win over the Quincy Gems to capture the 2022 Western Conference Championship. Burris said he has loved his experience with Martz and the River Dragons. He plans to return in 2023 for the squad.

Burris pointed out that his position with the River Dragons is simply "a lot of fun."

"It is completely different than playing anywhere else," he said. "When you take the kids to a Cardinal game you are 200 feet away but here the kids can come out on the field after the games and get autographs and talk to the players. Dallas Martz and the coaching staff do a great job. It is just fun and the players are a tight-knit group. We can be together for eight hours and it feels like time just flies by."

Burris' advice to young batters was before you go into the batter's box make sure you have confidence that you are going to swing and get a hit.

"A lot of our game is mental and a good mental approach goes a long way," he said.

Burris said he knows the goals will be set high for the team next year and he hopes the River Dragons achieve their ultimate goal - win the league championship.

[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)