



Sports

Secott picks MoonDogs

Right-hander enjoyed his time with Mankato Twins

By Chad Courier
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MANKATO — Dane Secott had a lot of fun last summer, playing with several Minnesota State teammates and leading the Mankato Twins to an amateur baseball state championship.

But if he hopes to pursue his dream of pitching in professional baseball, he knows the next step is the Northwoods League, not the Southern Minny. This week, the Mankato MoonDogs announced the signing of the Mavericks' junior right-hander for the upcoming season.

"All the guys with the (Mankato) Twins, they're my buddies," Secott said. "I think the MoonDogs will be a good experience, it's a step up in the level of competition.

"It's a little bittersweet because I loved playing with

(the Twins), and now I'm going to a team that I'm unfamiliar with."

Secott has been one of the top pitchers this spring for the Mavericks, who are competing in the regional tournament this weekend. Secott has started 11 games, and he's posted an 8-1 record with a 3.66 earned-run average. In 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ innings, he's allowed 60 hits and 33 walks, with 79 strikeouts, the third-best single-season total in Minnesota State history.

For his career, he's 16-6 with 170 strikeouts in 162 $\frac{2}{3}$ innings.

"I like his competitiveness," said Kyle Mrozek, general manager of the MoonDogs. "He pitched in all the big games last summer for the Twins, and it seems like he's the first guy for a series for the Mavericks. That says a lot."

Mrozek said Secott will be used as a starter, pitching every sixth game.



Minnesota State pitcher Dane Secott has signed on to play baseball with the Mankato MoonDogs for the 2006 season.

"He throws in the upper 80s, low 90s, and he has a plus, plus changeup," Mrozek said. "In our league, that's huge. The scouts rave about his change-up."

Secott is eager to see how his pitches match up against the Northwoods League's quality hitters, many from Division I or top junior-college programs. He thinks he's made improvement each year at Minnesota State, and he hopes to continue that this summer.

"Pitching is a maturing process, learning how to dissect batters in each at-bat or over the course of a game," he said. "This is a good opportunity to see how I stack up."

The MoonDogs' season begins June 1.