

DARK HORSE COMMITMENT REPORT

The story behind the first commit of Dark Horse's 2019 class

Written by Brandon Ruggles December 26th, 2017



South Bend, IN: Just three days prior to Christmas, Drake University (D1) head women's basketball coach Jennie Baranczyk received an early Christmas present in the form of her third 2019 commitment. This one came from Maggie Bair, a versatile 6'3 forward out of Glenbard South High School in Illinois who averaged a double-double and won Illinois' state three point competition last year during her sophomore season. Maggie's commitment is significant to Dark Horse for many reasons, as she is not only the first commit of Dark Horse's 2019 class, but she is also the first Dark Horse girls basketball player to commit to play basketball at the college level. This is the story behind Maggie's decision to end her recruitment early in favor of Drake:

Maggie Bair: When Maggie first stepped on the court for Glenbard South High School's varsity basketball team as a freshman in 2015, it was immediately clear that she was special. The forward scored 15 points and pulled down 20 rebounds in one of the first games of her high school career, and she went on to average over 10 PPG and an area-best 11.5 RPG that season. Maggie was even better as a sophomore, putting up 13 PPG and 12 RPG before flaunting her versatility by winning Illinois' "Queen of the Hill" state three-point competition in the spring of 2017.

However, the action surrounding Maggie's recruitment during her first two years of high school did not reflect either the skill or potential Bair showcased on the court. It wasn't until the summer of 2017 that Maggie, while playing up a year with Mercury Elite 17U Ralston on the travel circuit, began to receive serious attention from college coaches. The momentum began with a full scholarship offer from division two Saginaw Valley State University, a school that has had recent success recruiting players in the western suburbs of Chicago. A few weeks later, division one Youngstown State offered Maggie a scholarship while hosting her family on an unofficial campus visit. Though several other programs began recruiting Maggie hard by the end of the summer, her recruitment took a backseat to her all-state volleyball campaign in the fall of 2017. During this time, she visited only one school, and she scheduled that visit because the school's proximity to her home minimized the strain that the visit placed on her in-season schedule. That school was Drake University.

On that early-November visit, Maggie and her family fell in love with Drake. Her final commitment did not ultimately come until a month and a half later, but during that period of time, Drake's coaching staff only further emphasized their interest in Maggie. "The coaches made me feel so wanted", said Bair after announcing her commitment. "They made me feel like a part of a family". Even though it will be nearly two years before Maggie puts on a Drake uniform, she is confident that now was the right time to make her commitment. "I knew that Drake was the perfect fit, so what was the point of waiting any longer?". With Maggie's commitment, all three of the Bair siblings will be college athletes. Her oldest brother, Billy, plays football for Illinois State, while older brother Charlie is a freshman basketball player at Illinois Wesleyan.