

2011 NHSBCA Rookie of the Year



Carson Sands

*North Florida Christian School
Tallahassee, FL*

By Casie Vogel

This year's National High School Baseball Coaches Association Rookie of the Year goes to Carson Sands, LHP, from North Florida Christian in Tallahassee, Florida.

Carson just finished his freshman year at NFC, leading the Eagles to win the state championship last May. At just 16, Carson was 11-1 this year and pitched two no hitters, one of which was a perfect game in the regional final.

"He's a competitor; he's a real tall, 6'3", left-handed pitcher," said NFC Head Coach Mike Posey. "He's one of the top players in his grade in the country. At such a young age he's got a lot of poise. He shows a lot of maturity on the mound, he doesn't get rattled real easily. He pitches well above his years. He is an outstanding player."

Posey has been at NFC for 28 years and says that Carson has the potential to be one of the better player's the school's had. But even with Carson's stellar 11-1 record, Posey wants to see Sands to continue to challenge himself despite his talent.

"I think the challenge for him is to challenge himself. He's really, really talented, I think when you're really, really talented you have to push yourself to be better. I think that's what

Carson did,” Posey said. “I think he worked hard in the off-season, he put a lot of time in the weight room, and I think that helps him a lot.”

Carson started playing baseball at the age of four, playing not only baseball, but also soccer, football, and basketball at the local rec league, according to his mother, Lynna Sands. But for some reason baseball, specifically pitching, seemed to stick.

“When he was about 9 or 10 is when he started seeing the mound more and more,” Lynna said. “He started pitching a little bit more in games, he made All Stars as a nine year old, and it just stuck. He just has a God-given talent that has allowed a lot of opportunities for him to get out there and pitch his little heart out.”

Carson came up through the JV program before he started on the Varsity team this last season. A few years ago, Coach Posey’s son and pitching coach, took Carson under his wing to help him develop his skills.

“I think the thing that Carson is just now understanding that he’s got to really work at it. No matter how talented you are, you got to put in some time. I think he sees that,” Posey said.

Carson has put in a lot of hard work on the field, off the field, and gets along great with the rest of the team, according to Posey. He can’t wait to see how he develops over the next three years and really enjoys having him on the team.

“I don’t think he takes himself seriously!” Coach Posey laughs. “He’s kind of laid back and pretty funny sometimes. He’s done a great job for us and I’m looking forward to the next couple of years with him.”

Last week, Carson and his parents were road tripping to University of Florida for an unofficial visit. Carson would like to see himself playing university ball someday, but it’s still early and he has more important things, like the USA Baseball National Team Trials in North Carolina to focus on.

If selected, Carson would be a part of the 16U National team that would go to Lagos de Moreno, Mexico for a week in August. When asked if would like to spend a week in Mexico, Carson replied “Ohhhh, yes.”

2011 High School Season Stats:

<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>ERA</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>IP</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>BB</u>	<u>K</u>
11	1	1.73	14	61	47	18	98