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(Neb.)-Eagles ink 40 on National Signing Day (Updated 9 p.m.)

By: Andrew Lacy Posted at: 02/06/2013 11:29 AM

CHADRON – The Chadron State College football team has signed 40 student-athletes to its roster, head coach Jay Long announced Wednesday, which was the first day high school seniors could sign National Letters of Intent and Institutional Letters of Intent.

More student-athletes are expected to sign later this week.

Long, who guided the Eagles to a 9-3 record and a No. 18 ranking in the final AFCA Top 25 poll in 2012, is pleased with the recruiting class.

"Chadron State is a great place and it has always been about giving opportunities and this year is no different," said Long, who became the first coach in CSC history to lead a team to the playoffs in his first year. "The coaching staff and I believe we signed a great group of student-athletes. Some will contribute right away and others will be developed.

"Overall, I am excited about this year's class. Our coaches, staff and faculty, and team worked extremely hard to show that Chadron State and its football team is a great place to be. Our success and tradition make student-athletes want to be here. Today, as well as the future, is when we get to reap those rewards."

The 40 commits are spread evenly on offense and defense. Eighteen will be defensive players, 18 will be featured on offense and the final two are kickers.

Thirteen players from Nebraska have signed NLIs. They include Colin Deines and Matt Lordino of Chadron, Ty Dunkel, Matt Klein and Randy Wentz of Scottsbluff, Chance Bauman and Matt Fujan of Beatrice, Mitch Collicott of McCook, Tanner Martin of Grand Island, Tyler Dahlgren of Bertrand, Austin Powell of Lincoln, Creighton Reed of Hastings and Justin Hollman of Crete.

There are also 14 recruits combined from Wyoming and Colorado. Six of the nine signees from Colorado are teammates – Derek Jackson and Diego Rojas of Pueblo West, Sean Watkins and Josh Johnson of Eaglecrest and Chris Sweeney and Tyler Kiess of Thompson Valley – and the others are Baron Coffelt of Castle Rock, Garret Walker of Wiggins and Connor Conilogue of Erie.

Collin Eisenman of Sheridan, Aaron Fenner of Buffalo, Charles Allen of Douglas, Colton Wright of Burns and Tod Wenger of Cheyenne all hail from Wyoming.

In addition, four Texans will join the Eagles. They are Andrew Kaluza of Aquilla, Brewer Newton of Spring, Lucas Ley of Kingwood and Trace Oswald of Houston.

Four recruits from California – Chris Mayes of Winters, Tevin Malone of San Diego, Kyle Gordon of Villa Park and Ryan Staas – and two from Minnesota – Kyle Chrastek of Fridley and Kyle Fatturi of Lakeville – also inked Wednesday.

The other recruits include Taquan Kelly of Merritt, Fla., Justyn Curtis of Richmond, Ind., and Andrew Campbell of

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Shawnee, Kan.

Profiles of the signees follow.

Matt Lordino, K, 5-10, 170 (Chadron, Neb./Chadron)
A first team all-Western Conference and honorable mention all-state selection … Kicked for the Cardinals the past two years and also played wide receiver and defensive back as a senior in 2012 … He caught 28 passes for 372 yards and six touchdowns … Also kicked 26 extra points and one field goal.

Colin Deines, DE, 6-0, 220 (Chadron, Neb./Chadron)
A hometown prospect who earned honorable mention all-state in 2012 … Played on the defensive line for the Cardinals, participating in 69 tackles … His father, Curtis, was a four-year starter for the Eagles at center and was inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame in the fall of 2012.

Andrew Kaluza, WR, 6-1, 185 (Aquilla, Texas/Reicher Catholic)
A talented athlete from Texas … A three-year starter in football who received honorable mention all-district … Also received accolades in basketball and participated in track and field … As a senior, he was named first team all-state and was named his district's most valuable player after finishing with 93 receptions for 1,300 yards … He also caught 15 touchdowns and added 40 tackles and five interceptions … In addition, he threw two TD passes and can punt.

Brewer Newton, S, 5-10, 190 (Spring, Texas/Klein Collins)
A safety with good speed – he's been timed in the 40-yard dash in 4.5 seconds … He played linebacker in high school … Named all-conference.

Charles Allen, OG, 6-3, 265 (Douglas, Wyo./Douglas)
An honorable mention Casper Star-Tribune player at Douglas High … Will play on the offensive line at Chadron State.

Collin Eisenman, LB, 6-3, 230 (Sheridan Wyo./Sheridan)
The 2012 Wyoming Class 4A Defensive Player of the Year and a Casper Star-Tribune Top 25 player … He participated in 121 total tackles, including seven for a loss and three sacks … He also broke up a pass and intercepted another one … Also played in the offensive line … Also an all-state selection as a junior.

Kyle Chrastek, OG, 6-1, 230 (Fridley, Minn./Totino-Grace)
A good-sized offensive line prospect from Minnesota … Played at powerhouse Totino-Grace High School … The Golden Eagles went 14-0 in 2012 and won a 5A Class Championship, the second largest class in Minnesota.

Kyle Fatturi, S, 6-0, 180 (Lakeville, Minn./Lakeville South)
A team captain in 2012 … A defensive back who likes to rush the passer, finishing the season with 13 sacks … Has been timed in the 40-yard dash in 4.56 seconds.

Taquan Kelly, RB, 5-5, 190 (Merritt, Fla./Merritt Island)
A three-year starter at running back at Merritt Island High … Named all-conference and all-region and played in an all-star game … Averaged over eight yards a carry as a senior after rushing for 1,457 as a junior … Rushed for 938 as a senior and finished with over 3,000 yards on the ground in his prep career … He also had 38 tackles his junior season … Also a talented returner.

Justyn Curtis, QB, 6-3, 195 (Richmond, Ind./Richmond)
A good-sized quarterback from Indiana … He threw for 1,550 yards and 14 touchdowns as a senior.

Lucas Ley, DT, 6-2, 260 (Kingwood, Texas/Kingwood)
Named to the 13-5 All-District Second Team at defensive tackle following his senior season.

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Andrew Campbell, CB, 6-0, 175 (Shawnee, Kan./Mill Valley)
Had 29 tackles and one interception as a senior.

Kyle Gordon, CB, 6-2, 185 (Villa Park, Calif./Villa Park)
A cornerback with good size who had 58 tackles and two interceptions his senior season … Earned two MVP accolades during high school – during his freshman season and while he played on the junior varsity the following year … Also played soccer and was a peer leader for a youth ministry initiative.

Derek Jackson, RB, 5-8, 185 (Pueblo, Colo./Pueblo West)
Rushed for 3,343 yards and 29 touchdowns as a senior at Pueblo West … Holds the Pueblo West record for most rushing yards in a game and a season … Averaged 9.9 yards a carry and had six games rushing over 300 yards … He eclipsed 200 yards in three more … Scored five touchdowns and rushed for 380 yards on just 20 carries against Canon City … All-State honorable mention and first team all-conference … Earned several player of the week honors during 2012.

Josh Johnson, DT, 6-3, 300 (Centennial, Colo./Eaglecrest)
A big defensive line prospect … Was a two-time first team All-Centennial league selection at Eaglecrest.

Tanner Martin, DE, 6-3, 210 (Grand Island, Neb./Grand Island NW)
Named honorable mention all-state by Huskerland Prep, the Lincoln Journal-Star and the Omaha World-Herald following his senior season for the Vikings.

Trace Oswald, DE, 6-3, 240 (Houston, Texas/Clear Lake)
A big defensive lineman who averaged over seven tackles a game at Clear Lake High in 2012 … 2nd team all-conference for division 24-5A ... He had 77 total stops, including five sacks … He also forced three fumbles and recovered another one.

Diego Rojas, OG, 6-3, 290 (Pueblo, Colo./Pueblo West)
A good-sized offensive lineman from Pueblo … A two-time first team all-conference choice and an all-state selection as a senior … He also qualified for the state wrestling tournament.

Mitch Collicott, OC, 5-11, 265 (McCook, Neb./McCook)
A first team Class B pick at offensive line by both the Lincoln Journal-Star and Huskerland Prep … Also finished 12th in Class B with 61 unassisted tackles and 36 assisted stops.

Aaron Fenner, LB, 6-2, 210 (Buffalo, Wyo./Buffalo)
A Casper Star-Tribune third team selection in 2012.

Chance Bauman, LB, 5-11, 210 (Beatrice, Neb./Beatrice)
A first team Class B all-state selection by the Lincoln Journal-Star at defensive line … He'll play linebacker in college … Also named all-state honorable mention by Huskerland Prep and the Omaha World-Herald … Beatrice went 10-1 during his senior season … Can squat over 500 pounds.

Matt Fujan, IR, 6-2, 220 (Beatrice, Neb./Beatrice)
Played middle linebacker and tight end at Beatrice … Recorded 77 total tackles in 10 games and added seven receptions for 145 yards … Named honorable mention all-state.

Chris Mayes, IR, 6-2, 215 (Winters, Calif./Winters)
A big inside receiving prospect who played quarterback in high school … Named his team's MVP following the 2012 season.

Sean Watkins, CB, 6-4, 190 (Centennial, Colo./Eaglecrest)
A talented player joining teammate Josh Johnson … A first team all-league receiver and safety in back-to-back

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years … Also earned honorable mention all-state in 2012 … Led his team in receiving as a junior and senior, finishing with 33 receptions for 473 yards and four TDs … Also had 42 tackles and two interceptions.

Tyler Dahlgren, LB, 5-10, 196 (Bertrand Neb./Bertrand)
A linebacker who was the leading tackler in Class D-2 in 2012 with 80 unassisted and 100 assisted tackles … The Vikings finished 10-1 in 2012.

Tevin Malone, WR, 6-0, 175 (San Diego, Calif.,/Mt. Carmel)
Averaged nearly 25 yards a reception at Mt. Carmel High in 2012 … He finished the season with 26 receptions for 646 yards and six touchdowns … Also had three rushes for 26 yards.

Austin Powell, DT, 6-3, 240 (Lincoln, Neb./Lincoln Christian)
A first team Class C-1 all-state defensive lineman … Led the Crusaders in tackles with 139 total stops … He was also an honorable mention all-state selection as a junior … Involved with the National Honor Society and the student council at Lincoln Christian.

Baron Coffelt, S, 5-10, 190 (Castle Rock, Colo./Douglas County HS)
Defensive back from Colorado … Finished with 28 total tackles, two interceptions and a fumble recovery.

Creighton Reed, QB, 5-11, 185 (Hastings, Neb./Adams Central)
Played quarterback and defensive back at Adams Central, which went 11-1 in 2012 and advanced to the state semifinals.

Justin Hollman, OL, 6-1, 255 (Crete, Neb./Crete)
Named an all-state honorable mention for the powerhouse Crete High program … Earned a bevy of academic awards, including being named academic all-state.

Garret Walker, LB, 5-10, 200 (Wiggins, Colo./Wiggins)
Had 83 total tackles for Wiggins High as a senior … Also scored 12 touchdowns at running back while rushing for 690 yards.

Ryan Staas, LB, 6-3, 225 (Sutter, Calif./Sutter)
A tall linebacker … A two-time all-league and all-area selection in California … He was also his team's most valuable player, in addition to being named the Butte View and Northern Section MVP … Finished 2012 with 167 total tackles, six forced fumbles, four sacks and two interceptions.

Colton Wright, WR, 6-3, 170 (Burns, Wyo./Burns)
A good-sized wide receiver from Burns who led his team with 638 yards receiving and seven TDs as a junior and was named all-state … Unfortunately, he suffered a season-ending knee injury during the fall of 2012 and didn't play as a senior … As a junior, his 70.9 yards receiving per game were the second-highest in Class 2A … He also led 2A with four interceptions and blocked two kicks … He also had three pass breakups.

Chris Sweeney, OT, 6-5, 280 (Loveland, Colo./Thompson Valley)
A big offensive line prospect from the front range of Colorado.

Connor Conilogue, OT, 6-4, 260 (Erie, Colo./Erie)
A team captain in 2012 at Erie High … First team all-conference and also an alternate to the all-state team … Also named honorable mention all-conference as a junior.

Tod Wenger, OT, 6-4, 250 (Cheyenne, Wyo./Cheyenne East)
Honorable mention all-state.

Tyler Keiss, DE, 6-1, 260 (Loveland, Colo./Thompson Valley)
An all-conference northern league selection at defensive line in 2012 … He had 53 total tackles and eight sacks

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his senior season.

Ty Dunkel, DT, 6-1, 240 (Scottsbluff, Neb./Scottsbluff)
Another defensive line prospect who had a solid senior season … Finished with 78 total tackles for the Bearcats in 2012 after finishing with 48 total his junior season.

Matt Klein, WR, 6-1, 175 (Scottsbluff, Neb./Scottsbluff)
A first-team Class B all-state running back by the Omaha World-Herald, Lincoln Journal Star and Huskerland Prep … Led the 9-1 Bearcats with 202 carries for 1,405 yards (7.0 average) and added 15.3 yards on 12 punt returns … He led the Panhandle 11-man players in scoring with 21 touchdowns and one 2-point conversion … On defense he added 45 total tackles … He was also an all-conference choice as a junior when he carried 117 times for 1,159 yards … He scored 20 TDs … Also helped Scottsbluff win the boy's Class B basketball championship in 2012 and was a member of the winning Class B 400-meter relay team.

Randy Wentz, K, 6-0, 150 (Scottsbluff, Neb./Scottsbluff)
A two-time honorable mention all-state player at kicker … He booted 34 extra points and eight field goals as a senior and added 11 passes for 150 yards and two TDs … His long field goal was 45 yards … He was also an all-state honorable mention soccer player.

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