Reeder Named Head Baseball Coach at ABAC

TIFTON—Brandon Reeder had always dreamed of being a head baseball coach. Now Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College has made that dream come true.

After a year as interim coach of ABAC’s baseball Stallions, Reeder has been selected for the position of head baseball coach and academic support counselor at the institution.
“It’s always been a dream but I never expected it so soon,” the 26-year-old Reeder said. “During the past year, I have learned that it takes a lot of fortitude dealing with 18 and 19-year-olds who have much different interests that I do.”

One common interest for Reeder and the players is for the Stallions to become a competitive force on the diamond in the Georgia Collegiate Athletic Association.

“Our goals are going to go up,” Reeder, a 2006 Tiftarea Academy graduate, said. “We have the foundation laid. We want to win the conference year in and year out. With more success, we’ll have the better players come here, and we’ll continue to grow.

“Good people always want to come to ABAC because it’s such a good school. Quality players will begin to see that we want to be taken seriously in the conference every year.”

In his year as interim coach after Robert Morgan resigned in November of 2014, Reeder and the Stallions got everyone’s attention by bolting out to a 12-2 start in conference action. The team finished 27-30 overall and advanced to the quarterfinals of the conference tournament.

“We got cold at the end,” Reeder said. “Our pitchers were not throwing strikes. It’s a lot easier to pitch when you’re ahead in the count.”

Darton beat South Georgia in the finals of the conference tournament. Ironically, the Stallions won three of the four times ABAC played those teams in the regular season.

For Reeder, a former pitcher himself, it all starts on the mound. He has seven pitchers coming back from this year’s squad but he must replace his entire infield.
“We’ve got some good transfer players coming in, and we have some good freshmen coming in,” Reeder said. “Pitching is going to be our strength. There are a lot of little areas we can improve on from last year.”

After a standout career with the Tiftarea Academy Panthers, Reeder constantly improved his game on the hill in four years of baseball with the Georgia Southwestern Hurricanes where he played for Tifton native Brian McLain.

Utilizing a fastball which topped out in the upper 80s, Reeder set the school record for games pitched in during his career at Georgia Southwestern. During his senior season, the Hurricanes advanced to the finals of the Peach Belt conference tournament before losing to Columbus State. Reeder was the closer on the mound for three years.

“Now my arm’s ragged out but I’m still throwing batting practice every day,” Reeder said with a laugh.

Reeder received a psychology degree from Georgia Southwestern and is now pursuing a graduate degree in kinesiology. His initial goal was to become a sports or clinical psychologist. He admits that he still gets a lot of practice in that field with the daily analysis of the veritable plethora of personalities on the Stallions.

Now he’s putting his mind and body to work this summer to get the ABAC baseball facilities upgraded.

“There’s a real market for ABAC to host travel baseball teams in the summer,” Reeder said. “If we have great facilities, teams are more likely to come here. Tifton hotels and restaurants get business, the school gets exposure, and we raise some money.”
In his dual role as an academic support counselor, Reeder is assisting with the orientation of incoming freshmen this month. He advises students on what classes to take and involves himself in the acclimation process for the incoming students.

“I am really excited about the future,” Reeder said. “I have been recruiting guys all year. I am happy to be able to stay around and see the fruits of my labor.”

ABAC fall term classes begin Aug. 12. For Reeder, that’s when the dream kicks into high gear.

###