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## Liucci breaks down the Kohl Stewart commitment

by Billy Liucci



Kohl Stewart

photo: Andrew Kilzer, TexAgs

As Mike Sherman and the Aggies prepare for a highly-anticipated 2011 football season and put the finishing touches on what could be a Top-5 recruiting haul for the Class of 2012, the hits just keep on coming.

On Saturday, St. Pius quarterback Kohl Stewart — the state top junior signal-caller and a sure-fire national top-100 selection — called A&M assistant and area recruiter Troy Walters to tell him the good news.

"I've been talking to my parents and we really knew what was going to happen about a month ago," explained the newest member of the Aggie Football family. "I finally thought it was time. I wanted to have my head on right this entire year and get my decision out of the way. I was thinking, 'You know what? It's time to do it.' So I called Coach Walters and he was telling me how much they liked me and I just told him, 'Yeah, I know...that's why I'm definitely an Aggie.' He went crazy and got really excited and told me to call Coach Sherman tonight and let him know, too. So I'll call Coach Sherman tonight and tell him and then it's officially done."

As a sophomore, Kohl threw for 3,130 yards on 179-of-301 passing (60%), firing 30 touchdown passes versus just nine interceptions while leading his team to a 9-3 record. His 2010 campaign, coupled with an extremely impressive showing on the camp circuit in College Station, Austin, Baton Rouge and Norman, led to Stewart's very early recruiting stock soaring as high as just about anyone in the 2013 class. Stewart ultimately chose the Aggies over two of A&M's primary recruiting foes — Oklahoma and LSU.

"I really had it down to OU, LSU and A&M. The trips to every school were to feel everything out and see everything. The, it just came down to a comfort thing and I've grown up an Aggie and that's where I've wanted to go forever. Now that I'm an Aggie, it's over for sure."

While the Sooners and Tigers were more-than-worthy of a look, Stewart does find a little humor in the fact that there was any degree of uncertainty when it came to where he'd ultimately end up playing.



Andrew Kilzer, TexAgs

Kohl Stewart, an Aggie legacy, burst onto the scene in 2010 with a great sophomore year at St. Pius X.

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"It feels awesome. I knew in the back of my head this is what would happen. I mean, I was born an Aggie. It's not like I was going anywhere else. I went to six home games last year. Are you kidding me? Did anyone think I was going anywhere else? Please tell me no," he joked. "My dad joked with me that 'If you go anywhere else, I will have failed at raising my children.' My brother and sister both go to A&M. All they told me was, 'Anywhere but Texas.'"

As you might expect, the entire Stewart family, including Kohl's Aggie grandfather, was overjoyed to hear the news.

On Saturday, the Bright Complex might have been the only place that could rival the Stewart household in terms of excitement. That's because Sherman, Tom Rossley and the Aggies continued their remarkably strong and consistent recruiting at the quarterback position while also adding yet another state top-20 (Stewart is easily one of Texas' ten best overall prospects for 2013) and nationally-ranked prospect to the list of future Aggie ballers.

Blessed with a cannon right arm and a smooth, fast release, Stewart might just be the most impressive pure passer that I've seen come through a Texas A&M summer camp. During the Ags' one-day session last month, Kohl consistently threw the tightest of spirals as the ball zipped out of his hands for perfect strike after perfect strike. Whether it was the deep 15-18 yard out, sideline deep balls or crossing routes over the middle, Stewart was on-target and always on-time, hitting his receivers in stride and where defenders could not make a play on the ball. On film, the 6-3, 185-pounder displays tremendous toughness — standing in against the rush and either stepping into his throws or relying exclusively on his tremendous arm strength to fire the ball into the tightest spots. Also a fierce competitor and strong leader, Kohl Stewart is what you'd call a true difference-maker at the position.

Every bit as talented on the baseball field, Kohl is considered a legitimate high MLB Draft prospect. On the mound, he's an imposing presence, already having been clocked at over 92 mph on the radar gun. A true two-sport prospect, Stewart plans to play both football and baseball in college — something he's already discussed with the Aggie coaches.

Stewart's pledge means that the Aggies have basically landed the state's No. 1 player at the position for three consecutive seasons. In 2011, it was Kerrville Tivy's Johnny Manziel and Klein Forest superstar Matt Davis is easily Texas' best in 2012. Like Manziel and Davis before him, Stewart embraces the challenge and looks forward to competing with the best of the best.

"We're going to have to compete and make each other better. Even if I have to play wide receiver, that's not a big deal. But I don't run a 4.3 like those other guys (laughing). I would rather go somewhere where I have to compete and a place that's going to make me better. We're going to make each other better. I think A&M is going to maximize my potential and make me the best football player I can be. It's a family and it's competition but, ultimately, the goal is not to beat your own team, it's to beat the guys across from you. I'm just not worried about being a starter yet because that is such a long time from now."



*TexAgs*  
Stewart's commitment gives Mike Sherman and the Aggies the number one-rated quarterback in the state for the third straight season.

Obviously a team player, the Houston-area blue-chip feels that he's joining a group that is one of the nation's fastest-rising programs.

"Anything less than a national championship is unacceptable and that's a nice goal to have. I feel like that's the direction A&M is headed right now and everyone is coming in with those expectations. Right now, my goal is to win a state championship but I think by the time I get to A&M the goal will be to win national championships and to be the best in the conference, year in and year out. Expectations are growing. It's been since 1939 — too long — and the excitement level is crazy in College Station right now. Coach Sherman and A&M are recruiting the best players in the nation right now and I can't wait to be there."

Stewart is the third 2013 prospect to choose Texas A&M, joining A&M Consolidated DE Christian Lacouture and Baytown Sterling WR Jamar Gibson. Gibson is also an early state top-10 choice, while Lacouture is a top-30 overall talent and rising quickly. He'll be a top-20 prospect before all is said and done.

While Kohl's focus during his next two high school seasons will be on the gridiron and on the diamond, he had a hard time containing his excitement on Saturday when discussing his future in the maroon and white.

"I don't think I can describe how it is going to feel to be on Kyle Field as a player. I can't even describe how awesome it is to be in the crowd during a game so how can I describe how it's going to be on the field? I'll be nervous, but I'm sure Ryan Tannehill probably still shakes when he goes out there. It's not a big deal though ... I'm sure the other team is more nervous."

Spoken like someone who's been to Kyle Field once or twice.

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