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Niko Diaz Joins CSUSM Cougars Baseball Team After Impressive Season With The SDL

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SAN MARCOS – Niko Diaz, a two-way player from the Jets has signed on with one of The San Diego League's partners. Diaz will be going to California State University San Marcos to play for the Cougars. The Cougars compete in the National Collegiate Athletic Association's (NCAA) Division II as part of the California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA).

The All-Star outfielder/pitcher first heard about The San Diego League through CSUSM baseball head coach, Matt Guiliano. "I had been talking to a couple college coaches about summer leagues and my future college coach, [Matt Guiliano] told me about the SDL," said Diaz.

In 24 games this season, Diaz was second in the league in batting with a .395 average. He racked up 30 hits in 76 at-bats, scored 30 runs and had 17 walks and 17 runs batted in. Diaz was an on-base threat throughout the season and led his team with an on-base percentage of .531.

With the SDL's goal of enhancing the athlete's player development, Diaz believed this experience helped him grow as a ball player. "The SDL prepared me for the Fall just by the mentoring and the opposing pitchers. The opposing pitchers were a big part of my development this summer," said Diaz. "Seeing different pitchers and finding a way to beat them was a whole lot of fun. Especially the good ones!"

It was nothing but pure excitement when Diaz found out he was going to play at CSUSM. "I am very blessed that I was able to find such a great opportunity and had coaches helping me along the way," said Diaz. "I felt accomplished because being a transfer from a four-year university I had a vision, and through help with family and friends I was able to make that vision become a reality."

According to Diaz, playing under coaches such as former MLB pitcher Wayne Franklin and current University of San Diego director of player development, Matt Bergandi, gave him a different perspective on the game. "My coaches were very knowledgeable and taught me a different way to look at the game, the game inside the game of course," said Diaz. "The coaches I had wanted to see me succeed. Plain and simple."

Diaz's time in the SDL this summer has been an unforgettable experience and with plenty of memorable moments with his teammates and coaches. "I would most definitely recommend this league to my buddies and want to come back next year! I would say the atmosphere, the family environment and just a group of guys trying to make each other better is what matters."

We wish Niko Diaz nothing but success in his future endeavors and congratulations to him on signing with Cal State San Marcos!



After a summer of playing at CSUSM Baseball Field, Niko Diaz will be calling it home as one of the newest members of the San Marcos Cougars baseball squad. (Kevin Dahlgren/San Diego League)