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## Cardinal freshman Diekroeger not satisfied with good start

Menlo School product hitting .365, third-best among starters

BY JOHN REID

Daily News Staff Writer

Stanford third baseman Kenny Diekroeger is having a freshman season that most players would be satisfied with. Not Diekroeger.

The 6-foot-2 Diekroeger was drafted in the second round by Tampa Bay out of Menlo School-Atherton last June, but turned down a lucrative offer to come to Stanford. After he went 2-for-3 with two runs scored in Stanford's 13-8 loss to USC on Friday, Diekroeger was in no mood to talk about individual highlights. Diekroeger is 19-for-52 with two homers, six doubles, 18 runs scored and 12 RBIs. He is batting .365, third on the team among starters.

"We just lost our first game of the Pac-10," Diekroeger said. "I can't be too happy about that. We've scattered good pitching performances throughout the year. It's just a matter of putting it together. We're doing really well up at the plate, getting double digits in hits every game."

Diekroeger has had to adapt to learning a new position after playing shortstop for the Knights. He has committed four errors in 29 chances, a fielding percentage of .879.

"I'm doing my best, putting in the extra work," Diekroeger said. "I'm used to playing shortstop all my life, but they want me to play third. I'm playing as hard as I can."

"Diekroeger has played well, hitting well over .300 and doing a good job," Stanford coach Mark Marquess said. "Third base is a difficult position to play in college. He has handled that fairly well. It's the toughest position to play in college. His offensive numbers are great. He's a good talent and will get better as he goes."

Diekroeger has had his share of highlight games, such as a grand slam to help beat UC Davis and a lights-kissed two-run single to beat Rice. However, it's Diekroeger's 16 strikeouts in 52 at-bats that has caught his attention.

"I have a lot of strikeouts," Diekroeger said. "It's nice I'm getting a few hits here and there. I'd like to cut down the strikeouts. Traditionally, I'm not usually a strikeout guy. It's a matter of me battling with two strikes."

Being close to home, Diekroeger's popularity has risen with each game.

"I'm always getting people to want to put them on the pass list," Diekroeger said. "I'm having a great time at Stanford, getting a great education. We have something special here. We think we can get to Omaha. We're doing our best to make that happen."

