



University of Missouri

# MIZZOU

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## Around the Columns

### Find me in the club

When sophomore pitcher Jake Walsh describes his former self, it doesn't sound like a Division I baseball player. "I was always kind of a skinny, tall kid that didn't really throw hard, and I wasn't much of an athlete," Walsh says. "I wasn't as confident as I wanted to be."

Now, with eight saves (at press time), he's closing in on the Tigers' single-season record of 12. But last year he took a detour to the Taylor Stadium bullpen.

Walsh was cut from the squad early in 2011, and Coach Tim Jamieson's staff suggested he play junior college ball. He nearly quit the sport altogether, but after a heart-to-heart with his roommate who urged him to stick with it, he landed on Mizzou's club team. There, the lefty was virtually unhittable, and his confidence grew.

"In my heart, I knew I didn't want to leave this school, and I wanted to get a good education," Walsh says. "I felt like playing club ball was my best choice, so I worked out hard every day. It was really humbling knowing that you can go from having it all to working your way back."

Walsh was familiar with success, having played for the 2008 Texas state champions at Plano West High School. After club ball, he also spent time with the Sedalia Bombers of the Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas development league (MINK) before returning to CoMo to start Mizzou's 2011 fall season.

"We don't do a lot of recruiting off of the club team," says Jamieson, now in his 18th year at Mizzou. "Walsh's biggest jump is that, not only did he make the team again, but he has become one of our most valuable pitchers."



Sophomore closer Jake Walsh of Plano, Texas, pitched on the Mizzou club team last season before making the Division I squad in 2012. Photo by Joel Kowsky

Walsh has taken a few miles per hour off his fastball to improve his accuracy. Now, when he takes the mound, he has what Jamieson calls “a closer’s mentality.”

“The thing that makes him really good is, he believes.”

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