Friscia ready to lead by example for Hofstra baseball

Entering his fourth season with the Pride, senior catcher Vito Friscia will continue to be counted on for big hits as Hofstra hopes to build upon the team’s success from 2018. After a 23-23 season for the Pride that saw Friscia lead the team in hitting with a .353 average, Hofstra qualified for the CAA Championship tournament for the first time since 2012. As a senior, Friscia will be counted on to be a leader for a Pride team that includes nine freshmen.

“I want to be someone they can look up to but I don’t want to be someone to tell them they need to do something,” said Friscia, from Valley Stream. “I don’t want to be like a ‘this is what you need to do’ guy, I want to be a lead by example kind of guy. We have a lot of new faces but they’re all good players and they’ve taken their roles and they know what they need to do.”

Friscia, who committed to Hofstra as an 11th grader at Valley Stream Central High School where he was team captain, remembers what it was like to join the Pride in 2016 as a freshman and says he learned from his upperclassmen teammates.

“I had Christopher Hardart, he was a redshirt junior catcher when I was a freshman and he was exactly what I want to be like as an upperclassman,” said Friscia. “He wasn’t like ‘hey you’re a freshman you have to do it this way,’ he was more like, if he saw I was doing something wrong he would make sure I would straighten out my act. He led by example, he would show me the ropes and where I need to be as I matured in my Hofstra career.”

Named to the 2019 Preseason All-CAA Baseball team, Friscia is expected to be a big factor to Hofstra’s success during the 2019 season. Head coach John Russo, who is entering his eighth season running the team, knows the type of player Friscia has grown to be since making his debut three years ago.

“I think no kid on our team bleeds Hofstra blue as much as Vito Friscia,” eighth-year head coach John Russo said of Friscia, who was named to the 2019 preseason All-CAA team,. “He loves this school, he loves this baseball team, he carries great pride being a part of the Hofstra Pride baseball team.” Russo knows his catcher carries himself as a “quiet leader,” and knows the type of energy he can bring to the sport. “I think the new players and young guys haven’t seen that [passion] yet because they haven’t seen him in a game but if there’s one thing Vito does is he delivers when games are on.”