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## Tyler Cloyd, Nick Love get call during MLB draft

Two local pitchers are a step closer to realizing their dreams of pitching in the major leagues.

Former Bellevue East standout Tyler Cloyd was selected in the 18th round by the Philadelphia Phillies during the MLB amateur draft last week while Bellevue University hurler Nick Love was taken in the 32nd round by the Seattle Mariners.

Cloyd said Monday he will sign with the Phillies this week and report to rookie camp this month. Cloyd is currently pitching with the semi-pro Havasu Heat in Arizona this summer, but will leave the team this week.



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"I thought about staying here this summer and pitching and maybe signing after the season, but this is an opportunity I've waited for since I was a kid and I thought I'd be pretty stupid not to take it," the 2005 Bellevue East graduate said.

Cloyd pitched for UNO for two seasons and was the North Central Conference Pitcher of the Year following his sophomore campaign. But he left the school after that season and did not pitch anywhere this spring. He figured not pitching his junior season would hinder his draft status.



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"I really thought there was no way I would get drafted so I was pretty surprised when I heard the news," he said.

Cloyd did have a bullpen session for scouts this spring and one of those in attendance was Phillies Director of Scouting Marti Wolever, who lives in Papillion.

"He was one of the guys there, but I really didn't talk with him that much," Cloyd said.

Cloyd, a 6-2 right-hander, has worked as a starter throughout his career and although he would prefer to remain in that capacity, he will do whatever is necessary to succeed as a professional.

"Whatever role they want me in, I'll do," he said. "I just want a shot at the next level."

Love says he will sign with the Mariners this week and report to Arizona for rookie

league action.

A connection with coach Bob Steinkamp, who coached Love during the summer with the Beatrice Bruins, played a major role in his selection by the Mariners. Steinkamp also serves as a Mariners scout.

"He called me right before the draft and wanted to know that if the Mariners drafted me, would I sign," Love said. "I felt this rush through my entire body. I was very excited."

The right-handed Love was a standout pitcher for Millard West before joining the Bruin squad for the 2007 season. He made the switch to the bullpen this spring, compiling a 6-5 record to go along with nine saves. He struck out 96 batters in just 73 innings of work.

He is open to any role with the Mariners, but he's hoping his future is back in the starting rotation.

"This was my first year as a reliever so I would prefer to be a starter," he said. "That's where I feel most comfortable."

Love said the chance to pitch professionally fulfills a goal he set for himself as a youngster.

"I remember in grade school people asking me what I wanted to be some day and I always said a professional baseball player," he said. "Now, I am."

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