Garcia relishes role in bullpen

By Mark Foyer [ markf@hmbreview.com ] | Posted: Thursday, May 30, 2013 1:28 pm

Julian Garcia arrived at Cabrillo College in Aptos in 2010 hoping to be a starting pitcher. The Seahawks were loaded, with three talented starters. So they relegated Garcia, a 2010 Half Moon Bay High School graduate, to the bullpen.

He embraced the role and loved the opportunity to take the mound with the game on the line.

He impressed a lot of people as he finished up his community college career as the first-team All-Coast Conference, Pacific Division relief pitcher.

He’s not sure if his baseball career is done, though. He is talking with a couple of area colleges to further his education as well as play a role in the baseball team’s bullpen.

That’s not bad for a young man who set out with the hope of being a starter.

“I knew I had to earn my spot,” Garcia said. “They put me in as a reliever to earn my spot.”

He was second-team, all-conference in his freshman year. Being a relief pitcher was new for him since, at Half Moon Bay, he floated between starting pitcher and starting shortstop.

There is a big difference between the starter for a game and the relief pitcher.

“You have to be ready within 10-15 seconds,” Garcia said. “You have to be ready to go in every day. It can be very stressful.”

The stress can start the moment Garcia enters the game. Before he fires his first pitch, Garcia takes stock of the situation.

“You have to know who’s on base and where,” Garcia said. “You have to know the score of the game. You have to know everything.”

He admits that growing up playing ball, he didn’t aspire to be a relief pitcher. Now, he loves it. He’s been inspired by watching Jeremy Affeldt and other members of the San Francisco Giants relief pitching staff as it helped the Giants win two World Series titles.

“I might even grow a beard and a moustache,” Garcia said.