SC’s Masik taken by A’s

Stanford-bound Viall selected by Giants

BY ANDREW MATHESON

Scott Masik previously listed the NorCal championship he won while a member of the Scotts Valley Little League 9- and 10-year-old All-Stars as his most exciting experience in sports.

“Not anymore, though. Not after Saturday.”

The Santa Cruz native, who played the last two seasons at Cal State Los Angeles, was selected in the 21st round by the Oakland As in what was the third and final day of the MLB First-Year Player Draft. Masik, who prepped at Archbishop Mitty and played junior-college ball at both San Jose City and Cabrillo, was the 641st pick overall.

“It feels incredible. I’m speechless. No words can describe this feeling,” Masik said by phone Saturday afternoon. “I was a little caught off guard. I’m just so grateful for the opportunity the As have given me.”

Soquel High senior ace Chris Viall, a 6-foot-9, hard-throwing right-handed pitcher, was also drafted Saturday. He went in the 98th round to the San Francisco Giants.

Viall, though, said prior to the draft this week that he would be passing on the pros to instead honor his commitment to Stanford University.

Knowing his intentions not to sign, the Giants’ pick then could be seen as an honorary selection for Viall — Santa Cruz County’s top high school prospect. Many draft analysts had him rated as a top-three-round pick.

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Still, Viall was grateful.

“I’m very grateful to be drafted by the Giants. It’s such an amazing team, such an amazing organization. I’m very flattered by the pick,” said Viall, who will be draft eligible again in three years. “Hopefully in three years I’ll be picked again by an organization as great as this one.”

Although Masik — a 6-foot-2, 180-pound senior outfielder with the Golden Eagles — said he was caught off-guard by the selection, he was hopeful his name would be called Saturday.

He batted .325 (69 of 212) this past season at CSULA with 56 runs scored in 53 games, eventually working his way into the leadoff spot in the order for much of the season.

He figured that if he was going to be selected, his name would be announced much later — like around the 300th round.

In fact, he had been watching rounds 11-19 on his computer when he and a teammate left to get lunch. He figured he wouldn’t miss much of anything.

That’s when another teammate, Reed Rennick, phoned Masik of his selection.

“I didn’t believe him,” said Masik, who eventually checked the draft application on his phone to confirm the news.

“I was thinking I might go later,” he added. “But they obviously saw something they liked in me. I’m thankful they did.”

Masik said he isn’t exactly sure what’s next. Thirty minutes following his selection, he received a phone call from a scout with the As, informing him that he’ll receive a follow-up on Sunday — when the draft will be complete.

“My guess is rookie ball,” he said, “just starting at the bottom and working my way up.”

A 2009 graduate of Mitty, where he was an All-West Catholic Athletic League honorable mention, Masik’s career blossomed while playing at San Jose City. He transferred to Cabrillo a year later as a preseason All-American, after SJCC eliminated its baseball program at the end of the 2010 season.

“I’m so excited for Scott,” Cabrillo coach Bob Kittle said. “He’s all about baseball; he plays it hard and he plays it the right way.”

Kittle likened Masik’s qualities to those of former As outfielder Eric Byrnes — underrated, fast and scrappy.

“He’s the best outfielder I’ve ever coached — rocket for an arm and a great outfielder,” Kittle said of Masik. “I’m really happy for him.”

Masik, who earned All-Conference honors while at Cabrillo, is the second former Golden Eagle to be drafted in as many days. On Friday, Scotts Valley High and Cabrillo alum Shane Carlo was selected by the Pittsburgh Pirates in the 10th round.

The two were teammates during the 2011 season at Cabrillo.

“It’s an exciting time for both of us right now,” Masik said. “It’s a great day to be a Santa Cruz native.”

It was a great year for Masik, who felt he matured from his junior season at CSULA when he batted just .304 in 55 games with the Golden Eagles.

This season, he earned first-team honors in the California Collegiate Athletic Association and an All-West Region honorable mention from the National Collegiate Baseball Writers of America. Masik also earned ABCA/Rawlings West Region Gold Glove honors.

Committing just three errors in 161 chances from center field, Masik at the plate hit a career-high six triples and four home runs. He led the team with 10 stolen bases on 12 attempts.

“I’m happy to have been selected by a local team — a hometown team, which is more awesome,” said Masik, whose mother’s side of the family cheers for the As. “His family’s side, though, has always rooted for the Giants.

Maybe not anymore, though. Not after Saturday.

“There was already an As following before I got selected,” Masik said. “Now, it’ll be a little bit bigger of a following.”