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Seward Player Selected in MLB Draft

Late Saturday afternoon, another Seward County baseball player had a dream come true. This time it was freshman left handed pitcher Hayden Howard who was selected in the 39th round of the 2013 Major League Baseball Draft by the Oakland Athletics. Howard was the 1181st overall pick in the draft and was one of three Jayhawk Conference players selected in the annual event.

Howard was a key contributor in Seward County's run to the Jayhawk West crown this season. He finished the season with an 8-3 record and a team best 1.69 ERA. Howard was lights out down the stretch for the Saints, going 5-0 with a 1.05 ERA in his final five starts of the regular season including a pair of shutouts against Cloud County and Independence. Howard was second on the team with 74 2/3 innings pitched as a freshman and led all Seward starters with 7.83 strikeouts per 9 innings. He was a 1st Team All-Jayhawk West pick and was a 2nd Team All-Region VI award winner.

"It's truly an honor to have worked so hard and see it pay off at the end of the season" Howard said when asked about his emotions after the pick. "Seward County has helped me grow mentally and physically as a player on and off the field this year" he continued. "This moment is a dream come true" the 19 year old said.

Howard joins a long list of drafted Seward County players but is the first player drafted following a year with the Saints since Bobby Doran was drafted by the Pittsburgh Pirates after his sophomore year in 2009.

Unfortunately for the Saints and the A's, it looks as if neither will have his services next season as Howard has committed to play at Texas A&M University for his sophomore season. If he fulfills his commitment with the Aggies, Howard will have to postpone his professional career for at least two more seasons as per MLB rules, a player at a four-year institution is not eligible to be drafted until after his third year of competition.

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