



Sports

Intern work reignites love of baseball

By Grayson Bethel StarNews Intern

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Grayson Bethel a former high school athlete at New Hanover

Working in sports media has been a dream of mine since I was kid. Now I'm beginning to see it happen.

I have been a sports intern with StarNews for five weeks now, and in those five weeks I've learned lessons that no amount of schooling can teach. I have written articles, taken photographs, and of course been a part of more "interny" work like typing lists and addressing letters.

But what has surprised me the most has not been a part of the work. It has been the love I have received back for a sport I had almost forgotten about.

I went to New Hanover High School and loved playing football for coach Kevin Motsinger. I have continued to love the game before and after the time I played it. At UNC-Chapel Hill, where I go to school now, I play more basketball than anything else.

But the first sport I ever played was baseball. I did so year round through middle school, until I started getting burnt out. I completely stopped following baseball for four or five years until I came to the StarNews.

Since working with the paper, I have spent a few nights every week at local baseball games, and that has totally reignited my love for the game. I had forgotten all the details of baseball: The pitcher who waves off the catcher twice because he is determined to get a fastball by a batter, the outfielder who makes an impossible throw to get a runner out at the plate, and the bases loaded balk that sends a runner home, just to name a few.

Baseball is a game with lots to offer to someone who pays attention to the details, and southeastern North Carolina is full of great baseball.

While working with StarNews, I have been fortunate enough to see my alma mater make a run to the state championship. I got to follow the brothers of the people I went to school with as they made names for themselves. I've been able to see former classmates of mine connect for walkoff hits out at Buck Hardee Field, playing for the Sharks. I've witnessed a high schooler who hurls the ball 95 miles per hour with a curve ball that drops off a table.

And I watched as he -- yes, MacKenzie Gore -- was drafted third overall in the Major League Baseball draft.

While this area may not have any professional teams, it offers great athletes and great sporting events. All you have to do is get out there and see for yourself.