**ROBERTS**

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Cabrillo catcher Roberts commits to UC Davis

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APTOS — In one season, Cabrillo freshman catcher Houston Roberts went from having zero offers out of high school, to earning a full scholarship to play baseball at UC Davis.

He will first squat behind home plate for the Aggies in 2016 as a sophomore with three years of eligibility remaining.

Roberts arrived at Cabrillo after leading the Aptos High Mariners in doubles, RBIs and home runs while hitting .388 in 2014, his senior season.

“He was a leader,” said Aptos head coach Dave Heinevetter. “He put a lot of work in on his own.”

That outside work led to success instantly at Cabrillo. By his fourth game in a Seahawk uniform, he started a four-game hitting streak which included a 2-for-4 performance against West Valley College where he doubled and had 2 RBIs.

By the end of the season, Roberts helped lead the team by having an eight-game hitting streak heading into the playoffs.

“Houston works hard, he took instruction and applied it,” said Cabrillo head coach Bob Kittle. “We couldn’t ask for more. It is one of the quickest turnarounds we’ve had in a player since we’ve been here.”

On defense, Roberts started all but four games at catcher and threw out 14 batters attempting to steal which is 22nd in the state.

“I think Cabrillo is a good stepping stone between high school and Division 1,” Roberts said. “It’s kind of a middle ground where you can develop your skills and mature more.”

For Roberts, the school filled all of his needs.

“It had to be the right fit,” Roberts said. “I had to look at the social aspect, the location, academics most importantly and then obviously the baseball side of it.”

He will join pitcher Nat Hamby at UC Davis, who was Coast Conference MVP as a sophomore at Cabrillo last season.

The move to Davis will reunite Roberts with former summer baseball teammate Robert Garcia.

Aggies assistant baseball coach Brett Lindgren is a former Seahawk player himself and he helped make Roberts the sixth Seahawk to go to UC Davis in the last five years.

“It’s a good academic school,” Kittle said. “Lindgren knows the kind of players that will fit in.”

While Roberts didn’t win MVP like Hamby, he was named first-team All-Coast Conference team in his lone season at Cabrillo.

“It’s a good accomplishment,” Roberts said. “To be honest, I didn’t expect it, it’s pretty exciting to hear the news.”

He is joined on the first team by freshman pitcher Devon Loomis and sophomore second baseman Angel Sanchez.

“All three of those guys are committed to playing baseball correctly,” Kittle said. “They earned it, they are three of the better players in the league.”

Sophomore Matt Palazzo (pitcher) and Jake Raynaud (outfield) were named second-team All-Coast Conference while freshman utility Zane Gelpman was named an honorable-mention.

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