

Building the Phuture

Phillies focus on infielders, pitching in early rounds of 2019

The 2019 Major League Baseball First-Year Player Draft took place June 3-5, and the Philadelphia Phillies went heavy on infielders and pitching through their first nine picks. The big league club selected three shortstops, three right-handers on the bump, a southpaw, and one man at each corner infield spot.

With the 14th overall selection, Philadelphia selected its first shortstop with Bryson Stott, a 6-foot-2, 195-pound 21-year-old from University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Stott was born in Las Vegas and was a 2016 graduate of Desert Oasis High School, where he lettered in baseball for four years. During his high school years, Stott excelled on the diamond, earning accolades from both the state of Nevada and the American Legion.

During his senior year, Stott earned the 2016 Nevada Player of the Year and All-Southern Nevada First Team honors, and was named to the 2016 Nevada Preps All-State Team.

While playing as a member of the Las Vegas Aces, Stott led his team to the 2016 Nevada State American Legion Tournament title by hitting .692 at the plate, seven runs scored, and five RBI, leading to Most Outstanding Player honors.

Stott took his high school success and translated that into a fantastic career with UNLV.

During his three-year career with the Rebels, Stott hit .340 (234-for-688) in 171 games, slugging 15 home runs (which included a career-high 10 in 2019), drove home 97, scored 157 times, drew 109 free passes while striking out only 81 times.

Philadelphia did not have a pick in the second round due to signing Bryce Harper, and had to wait until day to make its second pick at No. 91 to take Jamari Baylor, a shortstop from Benedictine College Preparatory School in Richmond, Va.

According to a 2018 Perfect Game Showcase Report, Baylor:

“...has good footwork in the infield, charges the ball well and maintains his balance, light on his feet, plenty of arm strength, played all over the infield in games and looked good at each position. Right handed hitter, big leg lift trigger, has good hand quickness with a fluid swing, fast hands create bat speed, good extension out front. Two-way prospect who showed top prospect potential on the mound, slow paced delivery with some late crossfire energy to the plate. Fastball topped out at 92 mph with some arm side running life, showed good curveball spin especially at his higher velocities.”

The Phillies took pitchers with their next four selections, with LHP Erik Miller (120) from Stanford, RHP Gunner Mayer (150) out of San Joaquin Delta College, RHP Andrew Schultz (180) from Tennessee, and RHP Brett Schulze (210) out of Minnesota.

Miller, 21, pitched for three seasons for the Stanford Cardinal, compiling a 16-8 record with a 3.49 ERA (69er/176ip) in 43 games – 39 starts. The 6-foot-5 hurler set down 80 men on strikes in 2019 in just 67.2 innings of work, leading to a 10.64 K/9. Miller’s fastball can touch the 96-97 mph range, and the lefty includes a slider and changeup to his repertoire.

Junior College right-hander Mayer is just 19-years-old, and is an imposing 6'6" figure on the mound. The fifth-round selection appeared in 25 games during his freshman season, striking out 48 in only 37.2 frames. The Danville, Calif. native posted an 0-1 record with a 4.78 ERA, and recorded a save with the Mustangs.

A college junior, Schultz appeared mostly out of the bullpen during his days with the Tennessee Volunteers. The right-hander made 58 appearances during his collegiate career, with just one start. In just 25 innings of relief in 2019, the Alpharetta, Ga. native struck out 39 batters through 25 stanzas, and pitched to the tune of a 3-1 record in 26 games out of the bullpen.

Schulze made the second-most appearances out of the Gopher's bullpen in club history in 2019, coming into 30 games during his junior campaign. The 6-foot-2 right-hander transitioned into a reliever after his freshman season in 2017, in which he made 14 starts out of 15 appearances. During his full-time reliever duties from 2018-19, Schulze went 14-1 and allowed 26 earned runs over 92.2 innings (2.54 ERA).

Philadelphia turned back to the infield in the eighth round, selecting Nate Fassnacht from George Washington University.

The 5-foot-11 junior tied the Colonials' record for most doubles in a season with 23 during 2019. The Atlantic 10 Player of the Year led the league in runs (59), RBI (60), and total bases (148).

On the defensive side of the ball, the shortstop led the league in assists (146), and helped turn 37 double plays to lead the league.

The Phillies turned to the corner infield spots in the ninth and 10th rounds, selecting Rudy Rott from Ohio and McCarthy Tatum out of Fresno State.

Rott, hit .339 during his career with the Bobcats. The first baseman had back-to-back 50-RBI campaigns from 2016-18, and whacked 39 home runs during his four-year collegiate career. The left-handed batter added 60 doubles and three triples to help out a .551 career slugging percentage.

Tatum hit .356 during his redshirt senior season with the Bulldogs, collecting 13 long balls and 77 RBI over 57 games.

The Clovis, Calif. native also appeared on the mound for Fresno State, allowing just three runs in 10.2 innings of work in six games.

Philadelphia finished the 2019 draft with 23 pitchers taken, three catchers, seven infielders, and six outfielders. Teams have until 5 p.m. ET on July 12 to sign their draft selections.