Written by Mike Kelly
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Madison Bumgarner, who played his high school baseball at South Caldwell and is now a member of the San Francisco Giants organization, made his first major-league start on Wednesday in an exhibition game against the Los Angeles Dodgers in Scottsdale, Ariz.

The end result, the 19-year-old Bumgarner threw three scoreless innings, gave up one hit and struck out four, including Manny Ramirez on three pitches. Bumgarner has thrown five scoreless innings with the Giants this spring, allowing only one hit, walking two and striking out six.

He was San Francisco's first round pick (the tenth player taken overall) in the 2007 Major League Baseball Amateur Draft. Bumgarner, the South Atlantic League Pitcher of the Year last summer with the Augusta (Ga.) GreenJackets, was 15-3 with a 1.46 earned-run-average. He had 164 strike outs with 21 walks in 141 2/3 innings of work. He won his last seven decision, including his last six starts in a row.

Bumgarner, who led South Caldwell High to a state championship (and its first since 1982) his senior year, will most likely begin the year at high-Class A San Jose before he moves to the Class AA Eastern League, where he will play for the Connecticut Defenders.

Bumgarner is ranked sixth among Minor League Baseball's top 50 prospects. And it's believed that if he has another stellar year on the mound that he could join the Giants 40-man roster on September 1st.