

## Braves Select Hyatt, Tewell

Written by Mike Flynn

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The Atlanta Braves used back-to-back picks to select Appalachian State University relief pitcher Nathan Hyatt (Brevard, N.C./Brevard) and catcher Tyler Tewell (Charlotte, N.C./Butler) in the 13th and 14th rounds of the 2012 Major League Baseball Draft on Tuesday. Hyatt, the 419th overall selection in this year's MLB Draft, is Appalachian's highest draft pick since three Mountaineers (David Rubinstein, Jason Rook and Garrett Sherrill) were selected within a 44-pick span over the 11th and 12th rounds in 2008. Tewell, the draft's 449th overall pick, gives Appalachian multiple top-15-round picks for only the third time in school history (joining Todd Welborn and Rich Bosley in 1985 and Rubinstein, Rook and Sherrill in 2009).

In his only year as a closer, Hyatt set a single-season school record and fell just two shy of the program's career record with 16 saves, which led the Southern Conference and ranked sixth nationally. The flame-throwing right-hander was 16-for-17 in save opportunities and allowed just 24 hits while striking out 29 in 27.1 innings of work. Tewell made the most of his first season as a full-time starter, finishing third in the Southern Conference with a .357 batting average to go along with 79 hits, 17 doubles and four triples (all team highs), six home runs and 45 RBI. He played 52 of his 59 games in right field for the Mountaineers this season but was drafted by the Braves to play his natural position of catcher.

Hyatt and Tewell are both juniors and have the option of signing with the Braves by July 13 to begin their professional careers or returning to ASU for their senior seasons. Appalachian could shatter its all-time record of four draftees in a single year (set in 2009) when the final 25 rounds of the 40-round MLB Draft are held on Wednesday. Among the Mountaineers that could hear their names called on Wednesday are senior pitcher Ryan Arrowood (Rutherfordton, N.C./R-S Central), junior shortstop Will Callaway (Greenville, S.C./Eastside), junior second baseman Hector Crespo (Miami, Fla./Florida Christian), senior catcher Jeremy Dowdy (Raleigh, N.C./Wakefield), senior pitcher Seth Grant (Etowah, N.C./West Henderson), senior designated hitter/first baseman Daniel Kassouf (Lexington, N.C./North Davidson) and junior outfielder Tyler Zupcic (Charlotte, N.C./Providence).

**Photo Courtesy: Nathan Hyatt, ASU Athletics**