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## **Former CCC Student Athletes in the World Series**

**Sacramento, CA . . .** Throughout the years of California Community College baseball there have been countless student athletes who have moved on to make their mark in MLB history. There are undoubtedly those that will be overlooked with such a rich past, but some former CCC student athletes to make their way into the MLB Hall of Fame are:

**George Brett** – Kansas City Royals, El Camino College

**Rollie Fingers** – Oakland Athletics, Chaffey College

**Joe Morgan** – Cincinnati Reds, Merritt College

**Frank Robinson** – Cincinnati Reds, Contra Costa

**Jackie Robinson** – Brooklyn Dodgers, Pasadena City College

Of special note, given the historical precedence of breaking the MLB color barrier, the opportunity provided at the Community College level to demonstrate his 4 sport skills at Pasadena may have been the chance to get noticed by UCLA and his eventual signing.

**Tom Seaver** – New York Mets, Fresno City College

**Duke Snider** – Brooklyn Dodgers, Compton College

With this year's World Series ready to begin between the Texas Rangers and the St. Louis Cardinals, the California Community College Athletic Association would like to recognize the seven former CCC student athletes on the active rosters of the two 2011 World Series teams.



This is the second year in a row that the Texas Rangers have extended their season to this point. Many of the same players are still on the roster and have contributed in big ways to get their team back to the World Series. One major contributor to the Ranger's success thus far has been staff ace, [CJ Wilson](#).

Wilson is a former Santa Ana College student athlete where he played from 1999-2000. In his first year at SAC he was the MVP of the Orange Empire Conference as well as the California Community College Co-Player of the Year. He had an 8-2 record with a 3.75 ERA and 78 strikeouts. His bat helped him earn recognition as well with a .385 batting average, 19 doubles, 13 home runs and 41 RBI's. In 2001 Wilson was drafted in the 5<sup>th</sup> round (141) by the Rangers. He made his debut in 2005 and has been a centerpiece of the team ever since, working his way to becoming their number one pitcher in the starting rotation.

CJ Wilson will start the 2011 World Series for the Rangers on Wednesday, October 19, against a dangerous Cardinals' lineup. Wilson's regular season stats have surpassed what he accomplished a year ago, having a record of 16-7 with a spectacular 2.94 ERA and 206 strikeouts. His 2011 postseason numbers have been subpar with a 0-2 record and 8.04 ERA, but the most crucial games are yet to come in this 2011 postseason and the Rangers still have faith in him to start game one of this year's World Series.

Another former CCC student athlete and starting pitcher for the Texas Rangers is [Colby Lewis](#). Lewis is a former Bakersfield College star where he played in 1999. During his one year at BC he earned first team Western State Conference honors with 108 strikeouts, a 2.86 ERA and a 4-5 record. He was then drafted by the Rangers and made his debut in 2002.

Lewis bounced around teams in the MLB for years and eventually signed with Hiroshima Carp in the Japan Central League. After two successful seasons in Japan he returned to Texas last year and has made his presence felt. He pitched unbelievably in last year's postseason and has gone 1-1 with a 3.86 ERA thus far in the 2011 postseason, following a 14-10 record in the regular season. Lewis will most likely begin game three of the World Series, scheduled for Saturday.



**Scott Feldman** is a former College of San Mateo student athlete, where he played during the 2002 and 2003 seasons. He had one of the more impressive California community college careers going a remarkable 25-2 throughout his two seasons with both losses coming in the State championship tournament. He had a 1.30 ERA over those two years and an 8-1 strike to walk ratio. These numbers earned him the Coast Conference Pitcher of the Year award both seasons as well as All-American honors. Feldman is now a dominant relief pitcher for the Rangers.

Feldman signed with the Rangers in the 30<sup>th</sup> round in 2003. Despite dealing with some major injuries, he made his debut in late 2005. In 2008 he was converted to a starter and in '09 he was named the Rangers' Pitcher of the Year with a 17-8 record. To add to his list of injuries Feldman started this season

rehabilitating after undergoing micro-fracture surgery on his right knee following the 2010 season. Feldman has been the Ranger's long relief man for most of the 2011 season with a few spot starts when needed. He's left a positive impression with the team this year and has added to that with his stellar play in the 2011 postseason where he's had four appearances, throwing a combined 8.2 shutout innings with just three hits allowed, collecting a 1-0 record in the process. With this hot streak Feldman is expected to be utilized often in the World Series.

The final former CCC student athlete on the Rangers is first base coach **Gary Pettis**. Pettis played two seasons at Laney College where he was team captain and honorable mention in the All-Golden Gate Conference selection in 1979.

Pettis played in the MLB for 14 years where he was a 5-time Gold Glove winner as an outfielder. He's now in his fifth season with the Rangers where he is their first base coach, outfield instructor and base running instructor. Under his direction over the past two years Texas has posted two consecutive seasons of 120+ stolen bases for just the second time in club history (1977-78).



The 2011 St. Louis Cardinals have three former California community college players on their active roster. One is starting pitcher **Kyle Lohse**. Lohse is a former student athlete at Butte College where he was an All-Golden Valley Conference player. In 1997 Lohse was drafted by the Chicago Cubs and has bounced around the league ever since. He's been one of the truly remarkable success stories in the 2011 season, coming off of two injury ridden seasons (2009-10) and having a big impact with the Cardinals.

During the regular season Lohse went 14-8 with a 3.39 ERA. This postseason he has not lived up to his regular season numbers, with a 0-2 record and 7.45 ERA, but he should get another shot as a starter during this World Series.

Another former CCC student athlete is the Cardinal's backup catcher **Gerald Laird**. Laird played one season as a Cypress College Charger in 1999 where he led the team to the finals and broke the single season record for most runs and triples, a record that still stands today. Laird made his major league debut in 2003 and came over to the Cardinals this year to back up All-Star catcher Yadier Molina. Laird is in mainly for his defensive abilities, only seeing action in two games with one at bat thus far in the 2011 postseason.

**Nick Punto** is the final former CCC student athlete in the 2011 World Series. Punto attended Saddleback College for two seasons (1997-98) where he still holds single season records for RBI's and walks. He made his major league debut in 2001 and is in his first year with the Cardinals. Punto is a utility man, playing third base, shortstop and second base when needed. During the regular season he held a .278 batting average and during the 2011 postseason he has three RBI's over nine games played.

The CCCAA would like to recognize and thank Major League Baseball for their long standing partnership and support. The MLB plays a big role in providing opportunities to baseball players in the CCC system. Each of these former student athletes mentioned came to a California Community College for one reason or another and took advantage of that opportunity. They have each grown from it and are now playing on the biggest stage in baseball, the World Series.

About the CCCAA

The California Community College Athletic Association (CCCAA) is the governing body providing oversight of intercollegiate athletics within the California Community College System. The single largest educational system in the world, with attendance in excess of over 2.6 million students annually, the California Community College system serves one-third of all community college students in the United States. The CCCAA establishes the rules and regulations to administer the intercollegiate athletic activities of the nearly 27,000 student athletes attending California's community colleges. To view the latest news, information, and updates of all 23 CCCAA-sanctioned sports visit [www.cccaasports.org](http://www.cccaasports.org).

**California Community College Athletics**

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