CARSON SAND

Carson Sand is generally considered Castro Valley’s greatest swimmer ever. He rewrote the Castro Valley High record book, winning North Coast Section titles in the 200 individual medley and the 100 breaststroke his senior year. His times in both those events were the second fastest in NCS history.

Following his 2015 high school graduation, Sand swam four years for the University of California, earning All American honors as a junior and senior and scoring points for Cal’s 2019 NCAA championship team, a year after the Bears finished runner-up to Texas. Carson personally qualified for the NCAAs all four years in the 100 and 200 breaststroke.

In 2016, Sand competed at the Senior Nationals in Irvine and qualified for the 2016 Olympic Trials in Omaha, Nebraska.

Sand still holds Pacific records in both the 100 and 200 breaststroke.

A lifelong Castro Valley resident who still lives in town as he trains to become a firefighter, Sand started swimming at the age of 5 while his dad, Mark, coached in the East Bay Bat Rays program that trained at Cal State East Bay. Carson has always appreciated the team aspect of swimming.

“I loved swimming for the Castro Valley High School team. It was like a huge family,” he said. “I’ve always said that as long as I was having fun, I was going to keep doing it. That’s the way all sports should be. The relays always meant more to me than the individual titles. The more people from Castro Valley on the podium, the better.”

Unfortunately for a guy once ranked second in the nation in the breaststroke, the Olympic calendar and his own physical development weren’t a match. He was just 18 years old when he attended the 2016 Trials, and now four years later, he’s one year out of college with a focus more on life outside the pool than in it.

So, no Olympic medals, but plenty of memories.

“I still love the pool,” Carson said. “Swimming will always be part of my life.”