Myers makes pitch for baseball at Clark

Randy Myers is an anomaly. It's not everybody who can be an outfielder on his high school team, attend Clark College with the goal of being an auto machinist, turn out for baseball on a whim, become a pitcher, and wind up as a World Series champion and a Major League All-Star.

But that's the fairy tale the 46-year-old Vancouver native has lived, and that's the fairy tale he wants to help others pursue.

Myers, who spent 14 years as a relief pitcher in the big leagues and lives in Battle Ground, is lending his weight to an effort that would revive the baseball program at Clark.

"I said, 'If you want me involved, we're going to do it one way: We aren't going to put around,'" Myers said. "I've committed potentially some money; we need to get some community support."

That is the two-pronged approach to resuscitating the sport at Clark, which fielded a baseball team from the early 1950s until the early 1990s.

According to athletic director Denny Huston, support must raise $31,000 to refurbish a field that sits at the western edge of campus and to purchase equipment. They also must demonstrate that there is interest in a baseball program among high school seniors and among current Clark students.

Those tactics might require a Herculean effort, and yet they could be the easy part of the job. After that, supporters must convince the student finance committee to provide permanent funding for the program through the allocation of student fees.

"I'm supportive of baseball; I would love to see it at Clark."

Greg Jayne
Commentary

CLARK BASEBALL
To lend your support to the revival of a baseball program at Clark College, e-mail baseball@clark.edu, or call 360-992-2990.

Huston said school officials are working on setting up a World Series title in 1992, with the Cincinnati Reds. There was $3,000 in support donations, he said. Myers has pledged all that.

So, it's probably no surprise that Myers has pledged $31,000, if the refurbished field is named after him. Indeed, Myers is thinking big.

Think Myers is saving his real bet for the White House, but he did baseball things. "I wanted to do an All-Star Game," Myers said. "I wasn't even an All-Star, but the White Sox made up for it when they got my name on it."

"I'm just supporting a baseball team," Myers said. "If the baseball plan is approved, I'd love to see it at Clark College."
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college president Bob Knight said. “But we have a lot of things to fund.

“Without me, it’s not the highest priority, but if the students wish to support this I will certainly endorse it.

A decision is expected May 1. If the baseball plan is approved,

Houston said school officials then will go about setting up a timetable for the rebirth of the program.

For Myers, his experience of playing for Clark in 1981 and 1982 leaves no room to quibble about whether the school should bring back baseball.

“My first All-Star Game was my second year in college,” he said. “I wasn’t even an All-Star in Little League.”

He made up for it when he went to the major leagues, landing in the All-Star Game in 1990, 1994, 1995 and 1997. There was a World Series title in 1990 with the Cincinnati Reds. There were 347 career saves, a total that ranks ninth on the all-time list.

And even when Myers was basking in the national spotlight, he retained his ties to Clark during the winter. He returned to school and played for the men’s basketball team in 1995, and he was an assistant coach for the women’s basketball team from 1988-96 — even right after winning a World Series.

“The team went to the White House, but we had basketball games so I said, ‘No thanks,’” Myers said.

So it’s probably no surprise that Myers has pledged to match donations to Clark baseball at a 4-to-1 rate. Or that he has promised an additional $10,000 if the refurbished field is named after Vern Kindfather, Myers’ coach at Clark.

“I think baseball can be a big thing,” Myers said. “The best athletes are going to other community colleges. The big thing is that it’s a sport we can continue for our athletes in this area. There’s a huge number in the community.”

Most of those athletes will never make it to the major leagues. But there’s a movement afoot that says Clark College should provide them with that chance.

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