

# Clark moves forward with plan to revive baseball

## Program will operate as a club sport next season

By GREG JAYNE  
*Columbian Sports editor*

Despite being rejected by a student organization that oversees funding, officials at Clark College are pressing forward with plans to reinstate a baseball program at the school.

Beginning with the 2009-10 school year, the school will field a baseball team for the first time since 1992, athletic director Denny Huston said.

The plan is to have the team compete as a club program the first year, then have it added to

Clark's roster of 10 varsity sports in subsequent years.

Momentum for reviving the program has been building for several years, with athletic officials establishing a booster club and soliciting private donations. According to Huston, the goal is to raise \$35,000 for startup costs to cover equipment and the refurbishing of an existing on-campus field.

But each of the past two years, the Associated Students of Clark



Denny Huston

College — which collects and doles out student fees for various programs — has denied permanent funding for the baseball program.

That's where Randy Myers comes in. Myers, a former Clark baseball player who went on to be a major-league All-Star and World Series champion, has lent time and has promised \$20,000 in matching funds to the baseball effort.

That gave school officials the confidence to move forward with the plan, regardless of the denial from the ASCC.

"He thinks we can have a baseball fund-raising dinner, bring in a big name," Huston said of Myers. "That's our backup plan. He thinks it's a no-brainer."

Meanwhile, officials are establishing a timeline for the hiring of a coach and the establishment of the program — including another request for funding from student fees.

"We have no guarantee for 2010-11," Huston said of the funding. "We're going back in the fall to ask for travel for the club team; that would be about \$16,000."

"As the economy increases, I think the ASCC funding will increase."

According to The Independent, Clark's student newspaper, six new groups petitioned for funding in 2009-10 and all were denied.

For Huston and the supporters of Clark baseball, one of the first

orders of business is the renaming of the field for former coach Vern Kindsfather. A portion of Myers' donation is contingent upon the name change.

"That's just a formality," Huston said. "The college has certain steps you have to go through when naming buildings and the like for somebody."

But if it all comes together, Clark will field a team next year that will compete against junior varsity squads from colleges such as Linfield and Concordia, in addition to preseason games against fellow two-year colleges.

"The uniqueness of this," Huston said, "is that people who compete in the club program will not lose a year of eligibility. They will be freshmen for 2010-11."