

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 putt 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, sup-



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Commentary

CLARK BASEBALL

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porters 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 tasks 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,"

Jayne:

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college president Bob Knight said. "But we have a lot of things to fund.

"I have to measure it against all the priorities at the college. 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,

Huston 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 got 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 Kindsfather, 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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