

Former Nebraska catcher hopes to soar for Cardinals

By Jeff Singer
Senior Editor

For former Nebraska Catcher Jeff Murphy, baseball is for the birds. Murphy was drafted by the St. Louis Cardinals earlier this month in Major League Baseball's amateur draft during the 19th round. Murphy, who was the only

Cornhusker to be named to the All-Big Eight first-team this season, decided to forego his senior year to turn pro.

He left after only playing one year at Nebraska following his transfer from Central Arizona College.

"I figured that the first shot that I get (to play pro baseball), I was going to take it," Murphy said. "You never

know when you're going to get another shot."

Nebraska Coach John Sanders said Murphy's decision to turn pro didn't surprise the Husker coach.

"You can't blame him for taking it," Sanders said. "It's an occupational risk, but most guys have that (playing pro baseball) as a goal."

Murphy is currently playing for

the Hamilton Redbirds, a single-A minor league team that plays a 78-game schedule.

In Monday night's season opener, Murphy made his presence known by throwing out the first two runners who tried to steal base on him.

Murphy said right now, he's just trying to adjust to professional baseball.

"Minor league competition is top-class; it's like playing in a college all-star league," Murphy said. "With the better class of competition as well as the wood bats and new signs, it's like a whole new game."


The 21-year old catcher hit .312 this season for the 31-25 Huskers. He

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Sports bring Father's Day memories

Father's Day and sports.

No two things are more synonymous than these two, and can only be paralleled by America and apple pie or Oklahoma football and NCAA probation.

This Sunday, families will once again be celebrating the day to honor their fathers, in recognition of all the fatherly-things they've done for their children year after year.

And most fathers will enjoy the day in typical fashion, with sports.

Whether it's watching a sport on television or being fortunate enough to actually go to a ballpark, this Sunday is designed for dads to enjoy the spectacle of sports.

I can remember my fondest Father's Day when I was with my dad last year at Dodger Stadium.

Just as my dad had taken my grandfather to New York's Polo Grounds years before, I was doing the same in the City of Angels.

On a sunny Sunday afternoon last June, my father and I embarked on a short journey, of which he did not know the destination.

After numerous questions about where we were going, my dad grudgingly got into my truck and we began our excursion.

As we passed the high-rise skyscrapers of smog-infested Los Angeles on the crowded 210 freeway, we came upon, in my opinion, the most beautiful facet of the city, Dodger Stadium.

My dad now realized what his Father's Day surprise was, and seemed thrilled to be at the ballpark.

The hoards of automobiles appeared endless entering Chavez Ravine. The sellout crowd ap-

peared to be attracted to the annual oldtimers game as well as seeing the first-place Dodgers battle their traditional arch-rivals, the St. Louis Cardinals.

Under a basking sun, we entered into the athletic structure that is the most attractive in the senior circuit.

As we came upon the admission gates, the traditional vendors hounded



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us like sharks to a school of fish or lawyers to an accident scene; they screamed at us to buy a program for the game, which my father grudgingly obliged.

The sight of the crowd of over 50,000 patrons packing into the stadium seemed to make being there even more important and special.

Another of our family traditions was the visit to the concession stand. As we stood in eager anticipation in line, we could smell the freshly-cooked Dodger Dogs and the aroma of the beer coming out of the taps.

After what seemed an eternity in line, we finally were able to place our order. Despite being overpriced, the food and beverages on the hot day seemed well worth the wait and the inflated prices.

Our next adventure was to find our seats. As my dad and I had seats in aisle 136, we knew we would not have to worry about being too close to the action on the field.

We finally found our seats on the

first base line near the foul poll. As an optimist (me) would say we were only two levels from the field level, yet a pessimist (my dad) would say we were two levels from the top.

When we were seated with the food properly distributed between the two of us, we looked out on the field. It looked as beautiful as ever, glistening like a well-kept lawn at one of the nicer homes in town.

On the grass was a sight equally as beautiful to any baseball fanatic — the oldtimers.

While I had only heard about or seen video highlights of most of these players, my dad had seen them in their prime many years ago.


During the oldtimer introductions, my dad would give me a brief synopsis of the player's career after they were announced.

"Outfielder Duke Snider!" screamed the public address announcer, and as No. 4 came trotting out from the third base dugout, my dad told me all that he knew about the hall of fame slugger. This process continued for every player in the game.

After all of the introductions, an exhibition game followed. Many of the veterans had lost some agility and gained a few pounds, but each had their own trademark that they would never lose while being outfitted in the Dodger blue and white colors.

Seeing Maury Wills bunt a slow roller down the base line and beat out the throw, kicking up the stadium dirt in the process, seemed to

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