

https://www.theoaklandpress.com/sports/mother-of-tampa-bays-sean-murphy-bunting-reflects-on-dream-come-true-with-super-bowl/article_414b9393-d1eb-59ae-a08d-3320c4ad0a05.html

THE OAKLAND PRESS

Mother of Tampa Bay's Sean Murphy-Bunting reflects on 'dream come true' with Super Bowl win

By George Pohly gpohly@medianewsgroup.com

Feb 8, 2021



Tampa Bay Buccaneers cornerback Sean Murphy-Bunting breaks up a pass intended for Kansas City Chiefs wide receiver Byron Pringle during the first half of Super Bowl LV Sunday, Feb. 7, 2021, in Tampa, Fla. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip)

David J. Phillip -- The Associated Press

When it was finally OK to hug her son again, Kim Murphy gave him an embrace full of love, pride, joy and reflection.

“I had flashbacks to all the games he played, from little league through the NFL,” Murphy said after cornerback Sean Murphy-Bunting helped Tampa Bay defeat Kansas City in Super Bowl LV on Sunday night.

“I was collecting my thoughts and my memories and thinking, Wow, this is what he played all those games for, to get to this day, this moment,” Murphy continued. “It’s been amazing. It’s a dream come true. It doesn’t seem real.”

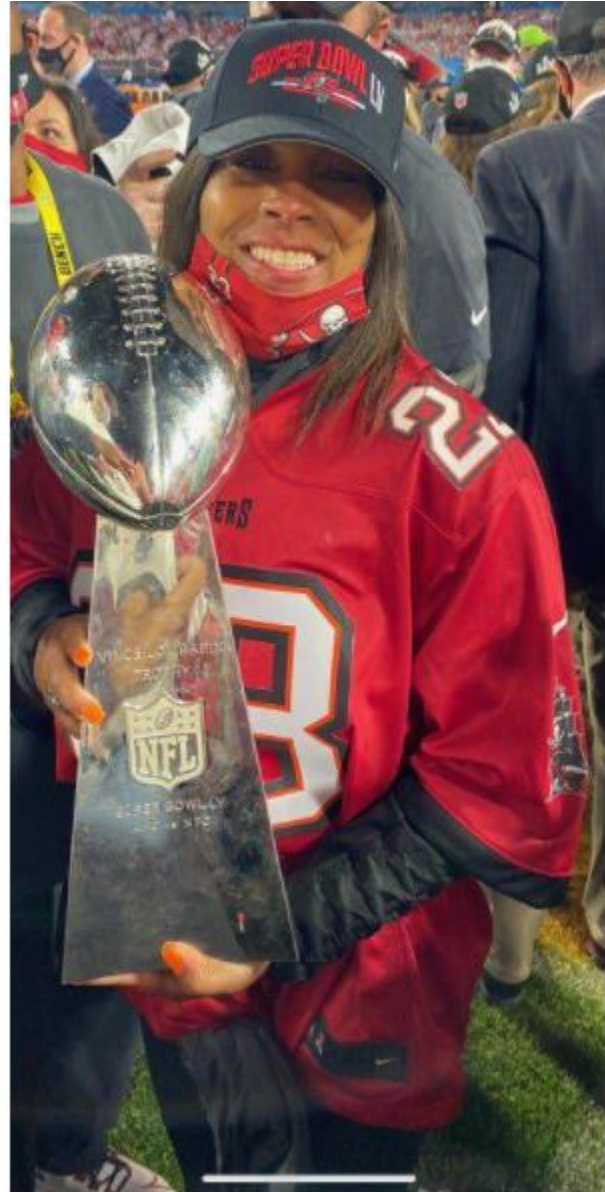
Murphy woke about 11 a.m. Monday after not going to bed until after 4 as her son, a former Chippewa Valley High and Central Michigan player, celebrated with friends and family following the Buccaneers’ 31-9 victory at Raymond James Stadium.

Still sleepy, Murphy nonetheless had vivid memories of being on the field after the game, holding the Vince Lombardi Trophy and hugging her son — something she couldn’t do for more than a month.

“I hadn’t been able to hug him for six weeks because of COVID,” she said. “To hold onto him and embrace him was the best feeling ever.

“I was used to being able to hug him and tell him how proud I was of him, and I couldn’t do that because he had to stay safe and healthy. It was really, really tough.”

A game that many thought would be high scoring was dominated by Tampa Bay, the NFC champion.



Kim Murphy, mother of Tampa Bay cornerback Sean Murphy-Bunting, holds the Lombardi Trophy after the Bucs defeated Kansas City in Super Bowl LV.

Kim Murphy photo

Murphy-Bunting had three tackles as the Buccaneers did not allow a touchdown to the Chiefs offense that was led by quarterback Patrick Mahomes.

Murphy, a self-described “sports mom” who has nurtured Sean’s career since he was 4, praised the Bucs’ defensive game plan.

“It was executed perfectly,” she said. “They were on top of their game. That was the best defensive game I’ve ever seen played by any team.

“Those boys were in sync with each other. They weren’t letting up. They had their foot on the gas. They were focused on what they needed to do. When Sean gets to a big game, he’s cool, he’s relaxed. I have faith in him.”

Murphy, who took in the game with seven family members and friends, is a liaison between the Bucs organization and parents of players.

She said it’s a role she easily took to after two decades of following the careers of Sean and her other sons.

“I’ve been there every step of the way,” said Murphy, who remembers attaching face masks to helmets and putting pads in football pants for her sons and others.

She said Sean summed up their relationship when the Bucs drafted him in 2019.



“He said to me, ‘Mom, you have done everything except suit up. This is a team effort; we did this together,’” Murphy recalled.

“That was special for him to say that. We have been a team. When he was down, I was there to lift him up. Sometimes I got discouraged, a little tired, and he was like, ‘We got this; keep rolling.’”

Murphy, who moved from Michigan to Florida in October, planned to spend Monday relaxing and resting.

“We’re going to be soaking it in and enjoying it,” she said. “It’s been crazy with what’s going on. My son is actually a Super Bowl champion. It’s amazing to see your son’s dream come true and hold (the Lombardi) in the palm of your hand.

“He worked very hard for it. It was difficult, hard to get my emotions right sometimes because of COVID. I believed that he was going to be OK. Me and my faith — I said my prayer every day.

“It worked out the way it was supposed to.”



Sean Murphy-Bunting
Tampa Bay Buccaneers