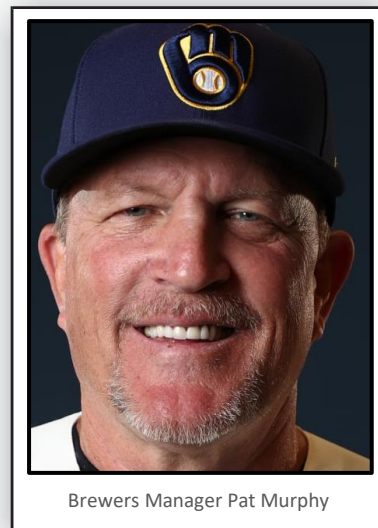


Pat Murphy in MLB

2024 Marks a new era of Milwaukee Brewers Baseball when Pat Murphy was named the Manager on November 15, 2023. Murphy spent the previous eight years as the Milwaukee Brewers bench coach. 2024 marks his 18th year in professional baseball. After becoming the Interim Manager for the San Diego Padres in 2015, his coaching career came full circle when he was named the Brewers bench coach under his former collegiate student-of-the-game, Craig Counsell, who played under Murphy at the University of Notre Dame from 1989-1992. His lifelong dedication to the game has given him the opportunity to continue his journey in Milwaukee.



Brewers Manager Pat Murphy

In his first eight seasons with the Brewers under Counsell, Murphy helped improve the Brewers' record since joining, including a 5-win differential between 2015 and 2016, a 13-win differential between '16 and '17, and a 10-win improvement from '17 to '18. Murphy assisted the 2018 Brewers to a tie for the highest win total in franchise history, having the best record in the National League, beating the Chicago Cubs in a decisive 163rd game, and going deep in the postseason coming within one game of the World Series. The 2018 Brewers finished with a 96-67 record, despite having one of the lowest payrolls in the MLB. In 2019, the Brewers posted an 89-73 record in the regular season for a postseason berth. During the shortened 2020 season, the Brewers once again became a postseason team, marking the first time in franchise history with 3 consecutive seasons in the playoffs. 2021 would continue that trend, as the Brewers reached the playoffs for a fourth consecutive year, achieving the feat by taking the NL Central crown with a 95-67 record, a 21% increase over the pandemic-shortened season. While narrowly missing the playoffs by one game in 2022, the 2023 team took the NL Central again, this time by 9 games, improving their record by six wins from the prior year.

Murphy's coaching and managing career has spanned four decades at all levels of the game. Murphy spent a better part of his career with two D-I schools: the University of Notre Dame, building a program to become a prominent national contender, and Arizona State University, upholding the tradition of a historically Top-10 team. During his college tenures, Murphy also managed two Dutch National Teams: both in 1987 in the European Championship and at the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney, Australia.

Upon departing the collegiate ranks, Murphy became a special assistant to baseball operations of the San Diego Padres before managing the single-A Eugene Emeralds in 2011, where he improved their record both years. After a two-and-a-half-year stint in Tucson and El Paso with the Padres' AAA-affiliates, Murphy became one of only 3 former NCAA coaches to graduate to the major league managerial ranks, ascending to the highest level with the San Diego Padres, a feat not attained since 1972 by fellow, former ASU head coach and friend Bobby Winkles.



Manager Pat Murphy

Prior to his first full manager position of the Brewers in 2024, on June 16th, 2015, Pat Murphy got a taste of the role as the San Diego Padres interim manager, replacing long-tenured Padres skipper Bud Black. Murphy managed the big-league club for 96 games, ultimately finishing in fourth place in the NL West. Coach Murphy is widely viewed as a dynamic leader and impactful player developer. Prior to his promotion, the 2015 season marked Coach Pat Murphy's third at the Triple-A level, following his successful managerial debut with the 2013 Tucson Padres and serving as the inaugural manager for the El Paso Chihuahuas in 2014.



Coach Murphy speaks to the media

During Murphy's Major League managing tenure, which began nearly a third of the way through the season, the Padres recorded a 42-54 record. While taking the reins of the 2015 squad, Coach Murphy's relentless competitive influence was evidenced by the team's 14-11 record in one-run games and 3-2 record in extra innings. Murphy also played the familiar role player developer, as the Padres relied on heavy playing time from many younger players, most of them learning new positions in-season. In addition to the personal growth Murphy achieved in his first taste of the Major Leagues, he was also able to help a handful of Padres achieve career resurgence, including Gyorko, Spangenberg, Yangervis Solarte, Ian Kennedy, and former Murphy Sun Devil Brett Wallace.

While with the Padres, Murphy's role in player development as an on-field instructor stretched beyond his familiar capacity as field manager. Coach Murphy served as a coordinator in Spring Training and instructional league, including the Padres' 2013 fall instructional league held in the Dominican Republic. Murphy has had the opportunity to develop relationships with, and instruct, the complete spectrum of professional ballplayers, from recent draft and international signees, all the way to tenured Major League veterans.



Murphy spent four-and-a-half seasons managing in the minors for the Padres, including two-and-a-half in Triple-A. At the time of his promotion, Murphy's career record in Triple-A finished at 180-171.

The 2014 Chihuahuas managed to finish with a 72-72 record in their debut season, despite playing 23 of 26 consecutive April ballgames on the road. After their atypical April, the Chihuahuas were an impressive 67-51.



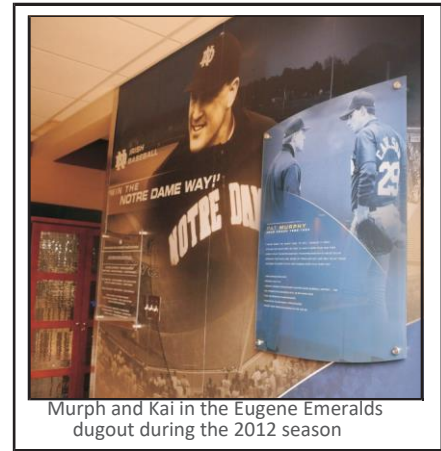
With Murphy's 2013 Tucson Padres finishing 77-67, 2013-2014 marked the first time since 1988-1989 that the Padres' Triple-A team finished with a .500 or better record in back-to-back seasons. It also marked their winningest two-year period since 2004-2005. The El Paso club was 25-17 in one-run games, and an infallible 62-0 when leading after eight innings. Murphy proudly helped several players reach the big leagues, and was notorious for his humorous ways breaking the news to players being called up for the first time.

The 2013 Tucson Padres finished with the best record for a Padres Triple-A affiliate in the last decade, registering a 77-67 win-loss record. A 21-game improvement from the 2012 Tucson record, the 2013 mark was good for fifth-best in the PCL and second-best in win percentage amongst all Padres minor league affiliates in 2013. This marks the third consecutive season Coach Murphy has ranked first or second in win percentage in the Padres organization.

The Tucson Padres managed to stay in the playoff hunt until the last weekend of the regular season, despite a roster that featured 67 players (including 20 different starting pitchers) with a league-high 162 player transactions throughout the year. At year's end, Coach Murphy received votes for PCL Manager of the Year in his Triple-A debut, a testament to his ability to lead and develop players at any level.



Coach Murphy spent the 2011 and 2012 seasons coaching the Eugene Emeralds, the Padres' short-season affiliate. The 2011 Emeralds won both halves of the Northwest League's season, finishing with a 46-30 record (their best record since 2001). Their 46 wins were most amongst all short-season baseball, which includes seven minor leagues comprised of over 65 teams. The 2011 Emeralds also set a Northwest League all-time record with 14 consecutive wins. Not to be outdone, the 2012 Emeralds again finished with the top overall record in the NWL. Their 47-29 record was the highest win percentage in the Padres organization. Overall, Murphy coached 56 different players on the 2012 Emeralds, a NWL single-season record for players.



Murph and Kai in the Eugene Emeralds dugout during the 2012 season

Prior to being named Emeralds manager, Murphy spent the 2010 season as Special Assistant to Baseball Operations for the Padres. In that position, Murphy fulfilled various roles in development and evaluation, including coaching in instructional ball at the Padres' Peoria Complex, a responsibility he has continued fulfilling in all four years of his involvement with the Padres. In 2013, after spending September on Bud Black's staff in the Major Leagues, Murphy traveled to the Dominican Republic with the Padres to once again coach instructs. In his five years of managing both minor and major league levels of the Padres organization, Murphy has compiled an 96-66 record in one-run games, and a 24-20 record in extra inning contests.



The College Days (25 Years)

In 1995, Murphy became the third head coach in Arizona State University history, winning 629 games in 15 seasons. During his ASU tenure, Murphy established himself as one of college baseball's premier coaches, leading the 1998 Sun Devils to the National Championship game in just his fourth season, earning him National Coach of the Year honors. Murphy's ASU teams were dominant in the PAC-10 conference, with the highest conference and overall winning percentages and most wins amongst PAC-10 teams since 2000, resulting in four PAC-10 Coach of the Year awards. Under Murphy's leadership, the Sun Devil program finished in the top 10 in national rankings five times over his last seven seasons and in the top five at the conclusion of three of his last five seasons, defining one of the most successful eras of the storied Sun Devil baseball program's history. Starting in 2005, ASU made College World Series appearances in 2005, 2007, and 2009, with three straight PAC-10 titles, which had not been accomplished since Rod Dedeaux's USC program in the mid-70's. These feats were collectively unmatched during that five-year span. During this same period, the team's GPA was the highest in program history and their APR was over 96 in the last three seasons. Additionally, ASU led the West Coast in attendance.



Coach Murphy speaks at a 2009 CWS Press Conference

To this day, Coach Murphy is considered one of the most successful coaches in college baseball history. In his 25 year head coaching career, Murphy was the youngest coach to earn 500 victories, is one of only three coaches to reach 1,000 wins by the age of 50, and is one of only three coaches in NCAA D-I history to have a winning percentage of .600 or higher in every season as a Head Coach (minimum of 20 years as a Head Coach).

Murphy averaged 40 wins per season and was on pace to become the winningest coach in NCAA history at the time he transitioned into coaching professional baseball. Murphy is widely recognized for his strong leadership style and standard of excellence that he established both on the field and in the classroom in his programs at the University of Notre Dame and Arizona State University. His three "Academic All-Americans of the Year" in his last decade of college coaching were more than any other school in the nation.



In 1988, Murphy took over a Notre Dame program with limited resources and transformed the Fighting Irish into a nationally prominent program. Murphy guided the Irish to NCAA regional finals in three consecutive seasons, each time beating the #1 team at the respective host site, and came within one win of taking Notre Dame to the 1992 College World Series. The Fighting Irish completed three seasons in the Top 16 and five in the Top 25 during Murphy's tenure at Notre Dame. Murphy was named MCC Coach of the Year three times for his teams' efforts. Murphy's teams averaged 46 wins a year and brought national attention to Notre Dame baseball and rejuvenated the Irish program, resulting in the construction of a new 3,000-seat stadium in the fall of 1993. Most recently, in May 2011, the University of Notre Dame awarded Murphy an honorary monogram and named their new facilities "The Coach Pat Murphy Clubhouse."



Murphy served as head coach of the Fighting Irish from 1988-1994

Prior to arriving at Notre Dame, Murphy served as head coach at California's Claremont-Mudd Scripps Colleges from 1986-1987, where, in his first year, he led the school to its first Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference championship in 11 years. He also served as assistant coach to the football team in '85 and '86. Murphy's college coaching experience also includes baseball head coach at Maryville (Tenn.) College in 1983, as well as assistant football coach in 1982 and 1983. He later became assistant coach and recruiting coordinator at his alma mater, Florida Atlantic University, from 1984-1985, helping the Owls transition from NAIA to immediately becoming a Top 10 team in Division II in both years.

He gained his collegiate experience as a pitcher at Florida Atlantic University, where he received his bachelor's degree in Health Studies and a master's degree in Education.

Murphy played catcher, infield and pitched for FAU, and was honored on FAU's 20th Anniversary All-Star team as a pitcher and utility player. He was an NAIA All-District player for FAU. In 2008, he was inducted into the school's Baseball Hall of Fame.

After his collegiate playing career, Murphy signed a contract with the San Francisco Giants and pitched professionally from 1982-1986 for the Giants, Padres, and independent clubs. He also served as player-manager of the Tri-City Triplets of the Northwest League (Single-A) in 1986, the youngest manager in pro-baseball at the time.



Career Managerial Record (as of 11/10/23):

Year	Team	League	Level	Wins	Losses	Ties	Winning %
1983	Maryville (TN)	ODAC	D-III	10	21	1	0.328
1984	Florida Atlantic*	Ind.	D-II	40	15		0.727
1985	Florida Atlantic*	Ind.	D-II	44	15		0.746
1986	Tri-City Triplets	NORW	A-	25	49		0.338
1986	Claremont-Mudd Scripps	SCIAC	D-III	22	18		0.550
1987	Claremont-Mudd Scripps	SCIAC	D-III	21	18	1	0.538
1987	Dutch National Team	CEB	CEB	7	2		0.778
1988	Notre Dame	MCC	D-I	39	22		0.639
1989	Notre Dame	MCC	D-I	48	19	1	0.713
1990	Notre Dame	MCC	D-I	46	12		0.793
1991	Notre Dame	MCC	D-I	45	16		0.738
1992	Notre Dame	MCC	D-I	48	15		0.762
1993	Notre Dame	MCC	D-I	46	16		0.742
1994	Notre Dame	MCC	D-I	46	16		0.742
1995	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	34	21		0.618
1996	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	35	21		0.625
1997	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	39	22		0.639
1998	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	41	23		0.641
1999	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	39	21		0.650
2000	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	44	15		0.746
2000	Dutch Olympic Team	CEB	OLY	8	8		0.500
2001	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	37	20	1	0.647
2002	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	37	21		0.638
2003	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	54	14		0.794
2004	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	41	18		0.695
2005	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	42	25		0.627
2006	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	37	21		0.638
2007	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	49	15		0.766
2008	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	49	13		0.790
2009	Arizona State	PAC-10	D-I	51	14		0.785
2011	Eugene	NORW	A-	46	30		0.605
2012	Eugene	NORW	A-	47	29		0.618
2013	Tucson	PCL	AAA	77	67		0.535
2014	El Paso	PCL	AAA	72	72		0.500
2015	El Paso	PCL	AAA	31	32		0.492
2015	San Diego Padres	NL	MLB	42	54		0.438
2016	Milwaukee Brewers**	NL	MLB	73	89		0.451
2017	Milwaukee Brewers**	NL	MLB	86	76		0.531
2018	Milwaukee Brewers**	NL	MLB	96	67		0.589
2019	Milwaukee Brewers**	NL	MLB	89	73		0.549
2020#	Milwaukee Brewers**	NL	MLB	29	31		0.483
2021	Milwaukee Brewers**	NL	MLB	95	67		0.586
2022	Milwaukee Brewers**	NL	MLB	86	76		0.531
2023	Milwaukee Brewers**	NL	MLB	92	70		0.568

30 Managerial Years	1355	800	4	0.629
MLB (1 season)	42	54		0.438
Minor Leagues (6 seasons)	298	279		0.516
NCAA (25 seasons)	1000	457	4	0.686
International (2 years)	15	10		0.600
* Assistant Coach	84	30		0.737
** Bench Coach	646	549		0.541

- Shortened season due to pandemic



Coach Murphy throughout his career



Coach Murphy is awarded an honorary monogram from Notre Dame in May 2011

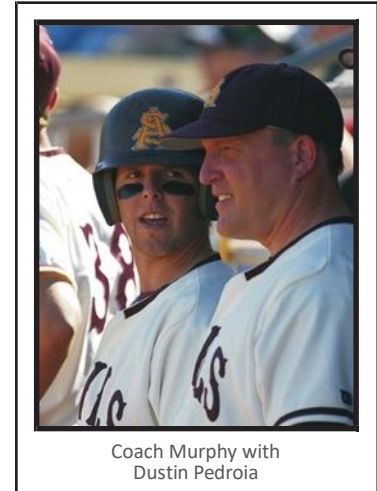
College Coaching Success

Awards and Achievements

- 1998 National Coach of the Year
- 4-time PAC-10 Coach of the Year: 2000, 2007, 2008, 2009
- 3-time MCC Coach of the Year: 1989, 1990, 1992
- Coached 47 All Americans, a National Player of the Year, and 3 Golden Spikes Award Semi-finalists
- Has coached 39 collegiate players who have made it to the major leagues. Eighteen of the 38 MLB players were undrafted out of high school
- ASU: 629-284-1
- ND: 318-116-1
- D-I: 947-400-2
- Overall: 1,000-457-4
- Postseason NCAA record of 55-32, including 9-7 in the College World Series, averaging 2+ wins per appearance
- Compiled a 150-103 1-run game record and 31-24 extra inning record at ASU & ND
- Inducted in Hall of Fame, Christian Brothers Academy High School in New York
- Inducted in Hall of Fame, Florida Atlantic University
- Awarded an honorary monogram by The University of Notre Dame in May 2011
- Honored by Notre Dame Baseball in May 2011 with the naming of the "Coach Pat Murphy" clubhouse

National Prominence

- Murphy's ASU Baseball teams finished in the top five nationally in three of his last five seasons. Only one other coach, has matched this performance in college baseball
- Took ASU to the national championship game in just his fourth season (1998)
- 12 of Murphy's former assistants went on to become Division-I head coaches
- Finished in the top 10 nationally in five of the last seven seasons, a feat matched by only one other school
- Established NCAA record 506 consecutive games (1995-2004) without being shut out
- From 2005-2009, ASU led the West Coast in attendance and had the highest team GPA in program history, while maintaining an APR of 96 from 2007-2009.
- His ASU teams were ranked in the Top 10 for 47 consecutive weeks from 2007 to the end of Murphy's tenure in 2009, a feat matched by very few in their college coaching careers
- Murphy's teams have finished in the top 40 in each of his 22 seasons as a D-I head coach, including the following national rankings:
 - 12 finishes in the top 16; 8 finishes in the top 12; 4 finishes in the top 5; 3 finishes in the top 3
- At Notre Dame, Murphy led the Irish to three final 16 finishes and five top 25 finishes



Coach Murphy with
Dustin Pedroia

College Coaching Success continued Conference Dominance

- Three straight Pac-10 championships 2007, 2008 and 2009. The 2010 team was coached by Murphy through the fall and went on to win the 2010 PAC-10 title
- Highest winning percentage and most wins among Pac-10 teams since 2000, both conference and overall
- Only coach of a major conference to capture three consecutive conference titles during last seven seasons
- ASU had not been swept in Murphy's last 11 years of conference play, the longest streak of any major conference program
- Against rival U of A, teams under Murphy only lost the season series twice in fifteen years. ASU had an impressive 47-27 record against the Wildcats during that time frame.
- While at Notre Dame Murphy's team won the MCC conference title five of seven years

Player Development

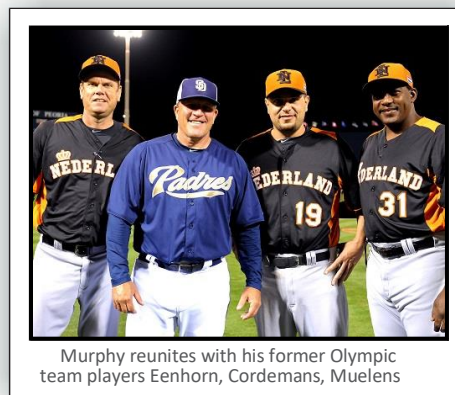
- ASU had more players drafted (119) by MLB teams than any other school from '95-'09
- All but two of these 119 players improved their draft status after playing for Murphy. Both of those players suffered injuries during their college career
- Of the 119 players, 44 went undrafted out of high school or junior college, and 11 have been selected in the top 10 rounds after having gone undrafted
- Coach Murphy has had 38 former collegiate players make it to the major league level, and many of Major League Baseball's brightest stars developed under Murphy:
 - **Dustin Pedroia** – Undrafted out of HS, 2nd round out of ASU. 2-time World Series champion, 2007 AL Rookie of the Year, 2008 AL MVP, 4-time All Star, 4-time Gold Glove, 2008 Silver Slugger, 2013 Wilson Overall Defensive Player of the Year
 - **Andre Ethier** – Undrafted out of HS, 2nd round out of ASU. 2-time All Star, 2009 NL Silver Slugger, 2009 MLB Clutch Performer of the Year, 2011 Gold Glove
 - **Jason Kipnis** – Undrafted out of HS, 2nd round out of ASU. 2-time All Star, 2013 MVP vote recipient, 7-year starter at 2B for the Cleveland Indians
 - **Craig Counsell** – Undrafted out of HS, senior sign (11th round) out of Notre Dame. 17-year MLB career, two-time World Series champion, and hired as Milwaukee Brewers manager in 2015
 - **Willie Bloomquist** – Undrafted out of HS, 3rd round out of ASU. 14 MLB seasons, 2 trips to the postseason, once described by ESPN.com as one of baseball's top 5 grittiest players. Current special assistant to Diamondbacks President
 - **Kole Calhoun** - Undrafted out of HS and Junior College, 8th round out of ASU, 2015 Gold Glove Award, 6-year starter for the Los Angeles Angels
 - **Mike Leake** - Straight from college to MLB; drafted in the 8th round as a position player out of HS, 1st round as a pitcher out of ASU, 8 MLB seasons
 - **Eric Sogard** – Undrafted out of HS, 2nd round out of ASU. 7-year MLB career, 2 postseasons
 - **Brooks Conrad** – Undrafted out of HS, 8th round out of ASU. 6-year MLB career
 - **Tuffy Gosewisch** – Undrafted out of HS. 5-year MLB career, became starting catcher for the Arizona Diamondbacks in 2015.
- Murphy's former players occupied 57 MLB roster spots from 2010-2013, most of any current or former college head coach during that span



Additional Coaching Accolades

Academic Achievements

- Highest GPA in ASU program history in each of Murphy's last four semesters
- Above 96 APR for the last three years
 - '06-'07 (98.8), '07-'08 (96.6), '08-'09 (96.0)
- Three Academic All-Americans of the year in the past decade (more than any other D-I school)



Murphy reunites with his former Olympic team players Eenhorn, Cordemans, Muelens

Attendance

- ASU had the highest attendance on the West Coast seven of Murphy's last eight years
- 2009 marked ASU's highest average attendance since 1984 with 3,207 fans per game

Olympics

- Coach of the Dutch Olympic baseball team in the 2000 Sydney Games
- Led the Dutch to three wins including a victory over Cuba, ending Cuba's 20-0 unbeaten record in Olympic baseball
- Beat the Gold Medal USA team in pre-Olympic tournament in Australia
- In 1987, the Murphy-coached Dutch won the European Championship in Barcelona, Spain qualifying them for the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, South Korea

Giving Back (Philanthropy)

- In 2006, Murphy made an unprecedented gesture, donating \$100,000 to the Arizona State University baseball program to help fund facility improvements. The donation was used to create the "Tillman Room" in honor of brothers Pat and Kevin Tillman
- Founded the Sandlot youth baseball program (ages 8-14) in 2004, which has made a tremendous impact on thousands of kids in the Valley and is now nationally ranked.
 - Every Monday night, over 100 kids received free instruction, were taught life skills and an understanding of community; additionally, all of the families were fed each night after the camp session
- Hosted the Inaugural Pat Murphy Home Run Derby benefitting Crossroads treatment center in November 2009. The event featured MLB players and special guest Muhammad Ali
- Murphy taught classes on campus at both Notre Dame and ASU
- Served on the NCAA Baseball Championship Selection Committee
- Created The Guadalupe Project, an after-school program, in 1995.



Newly Promoted Manager
Pat Murphy

Murphy In The News

[The Legend of Pat Murphy: How the Brewers' new manager makes laughter a lesson – by C. Trent Rosecrans](#)

PHOENIX — Newly promoted manager Pat Murphy's road to the [Milwaukee Brewers](#) began at a urinal.

In 1981, Murphy decided on a move to Miami to pursue a boxing career. He boxed a bit growing up in Syracuse, N.Y., but also played football, basketball and baseball. He tried his hand at all three in college but ultimately decided to leave school partway through and head south.

Murphy was searching for South Beach's famous 5th Street Gym, home to Muhammad Ali's trainer, Angelo Dundee. On his way, he saw a sign for a school he'd never heard of, Florida Atlantic University. Still in his early 20s, Murphy wasn't sure he was done with education, so on a whim, he visited the campus in Boca Raton. It was there, while using the bathroom, that he met Steve Traylor, who was starting the school's baseball program.

Traylor asked him what he was doing in South Florida and Murphy explained that he was looking to become a fighter after his collegiate athletics career fizzled. The coach needed players and suggested Murphy stick around.

Murphy played at FAU for two years and then signed with the [Giants](#), eventually playing in the minors with the [Padres](#) and two Indy leagues. Murphy was self-aware enough about his limitations as a player that his first two college coaching jobs came while he was actively playing in the Padres' minor-league system.

When you ask players about Murphy, the first response is often laughter, followed by a story. Everyone has a "Murph" story, although, as outfielder [Christian Yelich](#) noted, "it's hard to think of shareable ones."

Pitcher [Joe Ross](#), now in his first year with the Brewers, first played for Murphy in short-season A ball in Eugene, Ore., as a 19-year-old. One day, as the Emeralds were taking batting practice, Ross saw a shortstop's throw sail past the first baseman and hit Murphy square in the jaw.

"Everyone froze," Ross recalled. "I think he took half a step to his left, didn't say anything and just walked off the field like nothing happened."

Last season, during a game in Pittsburgh, the Brewers scored several runs early and the then-bench coach was fired up. Murphy is known to be full of energy, bouncing around the dugout at all times. But this was intense, even for him.

"He just turned into a big college-mode guy for the rest of the day," Yelich said. "We had a bunch of walks, little flare singles, and he's going up and down the dugout and yelling at fans: 'That's what we do! Get them on, get them over, get them in!'"

"I just remember it was hilarious to me in the dugout — the life, the energy," outfielder [Blake Perkins](#) said.



Pat Murphy succeeds Craig Counsell as the Milwaukee Brewers Manager

Murphy In The News

[The Legend of Pat Murphy: How the Brewers' new manager makes laughter a lesson – by C. Trent Rosecrans \(cont.\)](#)

In [Sal Frelick's](#) first spring training, Murphy — then in his sixth season as bench coach — introduced himself to the team's 2021 first-round pick as "the video guy." For a week, the outfielder saw a guy older than video coordinators usually are walk around camp and didn't think much of it. A while later, Frelick needed some tape and went to the video room and asked for "Murph." The response was that he was probably in his office.

"I didn't think (anything) of it and asked someone else," Frelick recalled earlier this month. "It took me about two and a half weeks for someone to tell me he wasn't the video guy."

Murphy still laughs about it.

"It's kind of funny," Murphy said.

But afterward, Murphy felt like he needed to atone for his prank. The story of how he did that goes back to his early coaching days.

After Murphy's time at FAU, Traylor helped him get jobs as the baseball coach and assistant football coach at D-III Claremont-Mudd-Scripps in California, where he also started dating an assistant volleyball coach.

Chris Penny, a Notre Dame baseball player whose sister played volleyball at Claremont, popped into Murphy's office one day and said he'd heard the coach was a Notre Dame fan. Surrounded by Fighting Irish memorabilia, Murphy acknowledged he was. The two chatted a bit and Penny mentioned the Notre Dame baseball coach had recently left.

Never one to think of what isn't possible, Murphy cold-called Notre Dame athletic director Gene Corrigan the following morning.

"I'm your next baseball coach," he told Corrigan. "I'd rather coach Notre Dame than the [Yankees](#) or [Dodgers](#)."

Corrigan laughed and passed him off to his assistant. While on his way to the Netherlands [to coach the Dutch national baseball team](#), Murphy stopped by Notre Dame to visit Corrigan's assistant.

Somehow, the 28-year-old nobody got the job.

"I'm coaching there and they rejected me from school four times," Murphy said. "I got rejected but you think it's OK for me to coach here? OK!"

It was there that he coached the first of two scrappy, undersized infielders who would help shape his career: In South Bend, he met a young Craig Counsell, the future Brewers and now-[Cubs](#) manager, who hired Murphy as his bench coach in Milwaukee in 2016.



Brewers Manager Pat Murphy

Murphy In The News

[The Legend of Pat Murphy: How the Brewers' new manager makes laughter a lesson – by C. Trent Rosecrans \(cont.\)](#)

In 1995, Murphy moved on to Arizona State, where he'd lead the Sun Devils to four College World Series appearances. There, he recruited an undersized high school infielder from Sacramento who didn't strike out his entire senior season.

"I had two scouting directors stand on the field with me at ASU and say, 'This is the guy you brought in to play shortstop?'" Murphy recalled. "These are two prominent scouting directors and I said, 'Yeah. I think this guy can really play.' They said, 'Murph, this is ASU, this kid is 5-foot-5.' (I thought) Maybe I did make a mistake."

It was not a mistake. Dustin Pedroia, despite his size, proved to not only be an excellent shortstop for the Sun Devils but would go on to have a storied career with the [Boston Red Sox](#).

This brings us back to that atonement Murphy felt he owed Frelick.

Before the jig was up, back when Murph was still "the video guy," he asked Boston native Frelick who his favorite player was growing up. When Frelick answered that it was Pedroia, Murphy, still in character, responded, "that guy sucks" and walked away.

But when the time came for Murphy to make amends, he remembered that fact.

Murphy brought Pedroia into camp last season and had him speak to the team.

This offseason, the Brewers talked to Frelick about playing infield in the coming season. Murphy arranged a minicamp for Frelick and teammate [Brice Turang](#) with Pedroia at Arizona State.

The night before they started, Pedroia and his wife welcomed Frelick and his girlfriend, along with Murphy, into their home for dinner, offering Frelick a way to connect to his favorite player away from the field.

That's consistent with what his players say about Murphy: he's a man who loves to laugh and tease his players – it's part of who he is, but it's also how he shows he cares. The more he picks on a guy, the more he likes them.

Often, when a player returns to the dugout after striking out, Murphy will tell them, "It's not your fault."

Murphy says it with a straight face, but it has a more pointed message.

"It's not your fault because you're just bad," Frelick explained. "He keeps it light. But that's what you need in baseball. You get so caught up in the intensity and high pressure. Murph's an unbelievable baseball mind, but he also knows how to manage players. It's the best."



Brewers New 2024 Manager
Pat Murphy

Murphy In The News

[The Legend of Pat Murphy: How the Brewers' new manager makes laughter a lesson – by C. Trent Rosecrans \(cont.\)](#)

Former Brewers pitcher [Brent Suter](#), now with the [Reds](#), shared a similar sentiment.

“We all have low moments in this game and the way he picked me up in those, I’ll never forget it,” Suter said.

Brewers pitcher [Wade Miley](#) recalled the time former Brewer Eric Thames, whose biceps are roughly the size of Pedroia’s thighs, struck out for the third time in a game. Murphy greeted him in the dugout.

“(Thames) came in all pissed off and Murph just looked at him and said, ‘Next time, why don’t you grab the tennis racket in my office?’” Miley recalled. “I thought he was going to get killed, but Thames loved it.”

By keeping things light, Murphy communicates his trust and belief in his players’ abilities. Murphy knows first-hand what that kind of confidence from a coach can mean. It wasn’t until his senior year of high school that he truly connected with baseball. That’s when his coach, Pete Birmingham, told him that he would pitch every other game, bat fourth and lead the team in hitting.

“That was the first time somebody believed in me,” Murphy recalled. “That did something for me.”

While most first-year managers have a feeling-out process, the Brewers know exactly what to expect from their new skipper. That familiarity has helped make this camp easier than it may have been with an outsider coming in. It has created a stabilizing force [when things don’t go to plan](#). And it also resulted in at least one pitcher, Miley, signing with the team.

Miley, 37, pitched for the Brewers in 2018 and then re-signed with the team in 2023, going 9-4 with a 3.14 ERA in 23 starts before entering free agency this offseason. As soon as Murphy was named the Brewers manager, Miley said he called Murphy and told him that made his decision to return to Milwaukee an easy one.

“The passion I get from Murph is that he truly wants to get to know the players and make him the best version of himself,” Miley said. “Does he have a different way of doing it? Yeah, sure, but it works.”



Brewers Bench Coach Pat Murphy during 2019 playoffs

Murphy In The News

[Pat Murphy could be the NY Mets next manager: Here's some insight from people who know him – by Justin Toscano](#)

In the 1990s, Brodie Van Wagenen played baseball at Stanford while Pat Murphy — then at Notre Dame — began his rise as one of the college game's elite coaches. One is now a general manager, the other a bench coach. Recently, their paths may have crossed. See, Van Wagenen has an important position he's looking to fill and, according to The Athletic's Ken Rosenthal, Murphy was a "mystery candidate." The Mets have not commented on their search, making it impossible to know who remains in consideration. But prior reports indicated Murphy had multiple interviews with the club.

Murphy is an interesting option. At the college level, he amassed 1,000 victories before age 50, something only two others have done. He was also the youngest skipper to reach 500 wins. He left Arizona State in a messy way, but since has gained almost a decade of coaching experience with MLB organizations, most recently with four years as the Brewers' bench coach.

The Record/NorthJersey.com reached out to three men who know Murphy — one who played for him and coached with him, one who hired him, and one who covered him. They paint a picture of who Murphy is and how he could help an organization if given the opportunity to manage.

A man who played for him and coached with him

In 1988, Miami and Notre Dame took over the sports world with a "Catholics vs. Convicts" football game. But what may go unnoticed is that the schools also played two fall exhibition baseball games.

Those were Murphy's doing. He flew Miami's baseball team to South Bend, Indiana, on the same week of the gridiron showdown. Mind you, these were the Hurricanes, who boasted several future big-leaguers every season. Murphy, on the other hand, was trying to build Notre Dame from nothing.

"We have no business being on the field with the University of Miami," recalled Mike Rooney, who played for Murphy at Notre Dame and later coached under him at Arizona State. "God only knows the last time Notre Dame had been to the NCAA Tournament and (Miami) is in the College World Series every year." The crowds were good, but only because of the football game that weekend. It was 40 degrees.



Murphy In The News

[Pat Murphy could be the NY Mets next manager: Here's some insight from people who know him \(cont.\)](#)



Brewers Bench Coach Pat Murphy during Practice 2020

“And we literally beat them both nights,” said Rooney, who is now a college baseball analyst at ESPN and a part-time writer at Perfect Game. There is no way that would have happened, Rooney said, if not for the belief Murphy instilled in his team. That might be his greatest strength.

“Murph in a big, big way has that ‘It’ factor,” said Rooney, who was classmates with current Brewers manager Craig Counsell. “There’s a persona, a charisma. When he walks in a room, you know it.”

Murphy was demanding. Standards were high, even if Notre Dame had zero baseball history. But when Rooney and Counsell were seniors, the Fighting Irish were a win away from the College World Series. Murphy was named Midwest Collegiate Conference Coach of the Year three times (1989, 1990, 1992). But inspiring players requires more than rah-rah speeches. How was he so good at it?

Some of it might come down to natural talent. Rooney said Murphy has always been great at challenging people and helping them get the most out of themselves. Even those whose confidence might not be in the best place. “He’s always been incredible at breathing confidence into players where they can survive on his confidence in the short-term until they get their own swagger back,” Rooney said.

Then there’s conviction. There are leaders, Rooney said, that often won’t be bold because they’re afraid to fail. *What if this goes wrong?* That stops them from tapping into outside-the-box ideas or beliefs.

Not Murphy. “Just an absolute fearlessness,” Rooney said. “Just kind of speaking victory and this is going to happen. We’re burning the boats. No turning back, we’re doing this.” Rooney follows Major League Baseball closely. He sees an interesting time in the game, one in which analytics use is prevalent.

But he acknowledges someone must sell it to players. “They’re still human beings with doubts,” he said. “Confidence is great one day, down the next, and that affects physical performance.” He believes his former boss can be that guy. Rooney believes the notion that a manager must be old-school or new-school is a fallacy. When he speaks with people around the league, he often hears about how the cutting-edge organizations don’t pick an extreme. Their beliefs aren’t all from the 1960s, but they also don’t side with the analytics 100 percent of the time. They use a balance.



Milwaukee Bench Coach Pat Murphy

Murphy In The News

[Pat Murphy could be the NY Mets next manager: Here's some insight from people who know him \(cont.\)](#)

"I think if the right group of analytics folks could get Murph and sell him on what their vision is, he's the ultimate guy that could convince a group of baseball players that that's the way to go," Rooney said.

At one point during this interview, Rooney flashed back to the Arizona State days. Back then, he said, outsiders knocked Murphy by saying his way "would never work in pro ball." They also claimed that "his personality is so strong, he could never be an assistant coach."

To perhaps debunk those: Murphy has almost a decade of big-league experience by now. For the Padres, he managed Class-A Eugene in 2011 and 2012, then served as Triple-A Tucson's manager in 2013 before managing Triple-A El Paso in 2014 and part of 2015. In 2015, he served as the Padres' interim manager when the club fired Bud Black. Which brings us to the next point.

For four years, Murphy has coached under Counsell, one of his former players. They've had success together as Counsell has navigated his first major-league managerial gig. Again, so we're clear: It is unclear if the Mets remain interested in Murphy. This week, MLB insider [Jon Heyman reported that the club had its final four set](#). But the organization's silence means no one knows what is going on inside Van Wagenen's head.

Could a dominant college coach be successful at the major-league level? "Murph has always been a pioneer," Rooney said. "He's always been the first of doing things."

A man who hired him

Arizona State has five national championships. Players like Barry Bonds and Reggie Jackson went through the program. The school's baseball accomplishments are aplenty, and expectations are always high.

In June 1994, coach Jim Brock tragically died of cancer. Suddenly, athletic director Charles Harris somehow had to figure out how to replace a legendary coach at a place where a standard had been set over the years. For added context:

Because of the program's success, Brock was only the second baseball coach in school history.

Harris now admits pressuring himself to make the right hire. In reality, all athletic directors do so. They dream of their hires being so successful that they win multiple championships and have statues built for them.

In a baseball coach, Harris wanted someone bright and talented. He also needed that person to recognize the changing landscape in college baseball.



Murphy In The News

[Pat Murphy could be the NY Mets next manager: Here's some insight from people who know him \(cont.\)](#)



Brewers Bench Coach Pat Murphy with Ryan Braun

"And with that, I got Pat Murphy, who is as bright as anybody you want to find, as competitive as anybody you want to find, but at the same time, is respectful of the institution and the guy he was following," Harris said. "He had everything I was looking for." Let's go back to the part about college baseball's shift. It's rather important. In the early-to-mid-1990s, Harris said, you could pinpoint five to 10 teams to pencil in as contenders for the College World Series. Not so in the late 1990s, when that number grew to 20 and maybe 30.

Murphy understood something crucial. "You needed to be there and figure out what was going to keep you ahead as opposed to treading water," said Harris, now the executive vice president at Averett University in Virginia. That might speak to the coach's ability to adapt. It's a necessary skill for a manager. When the university knew it needed a new baseball coach, it engaged people Harris and others knew. Murphy's name kept popping up. When Harris met Murphy, he gained a feel for Murphy's ability to connect with players and attract people of the same values.

Murphy had success at Notre Dame, but to Harris, you weren't truly established until you won at a big program. "It doesn't mean you haven't had great success where you've been," Harris said. "It just means you might be fishing in a slightly different pond." As for the hire ... Harris' expectations: "I think what I wanted to be certain of for the hire of Pat Murphy for that program was that we did not get to a point where we looked back and said, 'Wow, we had an opportunity to do some pretty extraordinary things and we didn't achieve them.'"

Reality: Murphy won four Pac-10 titles with the Sun Devils and took them to four College World Series. He was named 1998 National Coach of the Year after Arizona State went to the national championship game. Murphy is now 60 years old. Harris understands many older men may tend to do things the way they did in the good ol' days. But he's never viewed Murphy like that.

"You see someone who's been able to continue to build on the success of their career," Harris said. "Maybe if anything, I look at it and say, 'Wow, given the teams he's been associated with and the success they've had, I wonder when his chance is going to come.'" Harris doesn't take any credit for Murphy's success. In fact, he offers a candid statement. "I've had as many good hires," he said, "as not-so-good hires." Murphy falls into the first group.



Brewers Bench Coach Pat Murphy during 2019 Regular Season

Murphy In The News

[Pat Murphy could be the NY Mets next manager: Here's some insight from people who know him \(cont.\)](#)

A man who covered him

Jeff Metcalfe has covered Arizona State sports for The Arizona Republic for over three decades. Among all media members who knew Murphy during his time at the collegiate level, Metcalfe might have spent the most time around the coach. Fun fact: Murphy is a big Bruce Springsteen fan. Metcalfe is obviously hesitant to compare anyone to Springsteen, but Murphy is similar. "He's just got that kind of popping personality that a lot of coaches just don't have," said Metcalfe, who covered Murphy's entire Arizona State tenure. Metcalfe, who knows Arizona State baseball inside and out, said the 2005-09 stretch is right up there with the best periods in program history. Personally, he thinks the 2008 team is the best the school has ever had. The Sun Devils never won a title under Murphy, but they were consistently among the best in the nation.

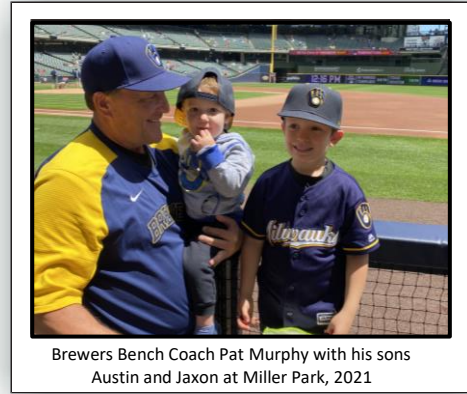
But in 2009, the school fired Murphy amid an NCAA investigation. The investigation began internally when allegations of academic fraud, recruiting violations and conflicts of interest involving players working for Murphy's non-profit youth athletic program were made by a former program employee. According to Metcalfe's reporting at the time, the NCAA handed the university a one-year postseason ban because "recruiting improprieties and overpaying athletes to work with the non-profit program showed the university's athletic department had a lack of institutional control."

Metcalfe remembers Murphy downplaying the allegations, saying there was really nothing to them.

"And probably in the grand scheme of all NCAA investigations, he was probably right about that," Metcalfe said. "But there was just no need for it to get to that point. They needed to do a better job with a lot of paperwork and keeping recruiting things pinned down better." The question Metcalfe kept asking in his head: But why did he let it get to this? "It was kind of an unhappy ending to what I thought was an extremely entertaining period," Metcalfe said.

Back to the personality. Being somewhat of an entertainer worked at the college level. It often does.

"I'm not sure that it works with a major-league team or any kind of a pro team," he said. "It seems like you have to be a different type of person to work with a front office, to be able to do all the things that are required now." But Metcalfe did mention that perhaps Murphy has changed with almost a decade in the bigs. Maybe he's more reserved nowadays. It has been a decade since Metcalfe has covered Murphy. The two have spoken a few times since, and they still have a good relationship. Metcalfe is uncertain of how Murphy would fare in New York, but he knows this: It would be entertaining.



Brewers Bench Coach Pat Murphy with his sons Austin and Jaxon at Miller Park, 2021

Murphy In The News

[Pat Murphy's story still has plenty of chapters left – by Tommy Stokke](#)

GLENDALE, Ariz. — From behind, Pat Murphy looks like everything you've read about him. Standing past the last row of seats behind home plate at Camelback Ranch watching an Arizona Fall League game, he's dressed in black from head to toe — black t-shirt, black athletic pants and black shoes. He's built like a fullback and looks like he should be coaching high school football. A strong jawline with a furled brow, he has all the physical qualities for the drill sergeant he was perceived to be as the head coach of Arizona State's baseball team.

His way or no way, that was his attitude. It was the attitude he carried at Notre Dame, when he resurrected a dying program that went 19 years without an NCAA tournament appearance before his arrival and brought it to three straight regional finals, complete with a .732 winning percentage. The locker room is now named after him.

It was his attitude that got him the best job in the country — Arizona State — at 35. He led ASU to four conference championships, including three in a row. He made the College World Series four times. He helped develop multiple undrafted high schoolers into MLB draft picks. The Sun Devils had a run of 11 postseason appearances in 12 seasons.

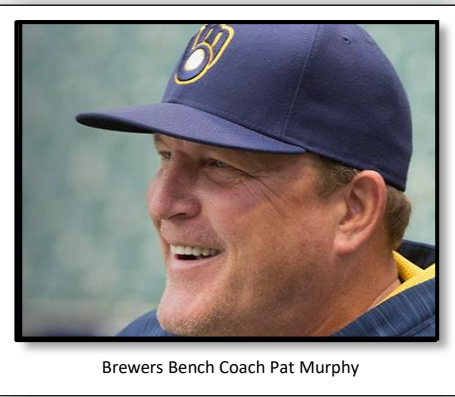
It's the attitude that cost him his job amid an NCAA investigation, one that created a resign-or-be-fired scenario in Tempe. An investigation that questioned the integrity of a program that reached the College World Series four times, specifically the integrity of the person running it — Murphy.

Eventually, ASU was cited for infractions, some of which are now considered legal, none of which were determined to provide a competitive advantage. Phone calls, though made on university phones, weren't documented. Other infractions were violations of financial aid legislation, coaching staff limitations and duties, student employment, lack of institutional control and failure to comply.

Murphy was ultimately reprimanded for his attitude toward the NCAA, not the infractions committed. The Pac-12 cleared ASU of wrongdoing, but because of infractions committed in other sports, it had to go to the NCAA. How he reacted, he says, was his biggest sin. When he should've shut up, he didn't. "Cavalier attitude" is what the NCAA called it. All of it led to being the person he is today, the one with success at every level he's been, the one with mistakes to look back and learn from.

In college, the line was long with those ready to tee off into a microphone. Most were standing in the dugout across the field. UCLA's head coach accused him of head-hunting, ordering his pitchers to hit players to get them off the plate. Murphy was told his players slid too hard. He walked too slow to the mound. He was a loose cannon to some; others thought he was just being honest in the media. Putting a recorder in front of his face was the equivalent of giving a high schooler a Twitter account.

"I don't know of anyone that has anything good to say about Pat," former Evansville head coach Jim Brownlee told Baseball America in 1997. "He does not have any friends in baseball. He's going to be pretty lonely when it's all said and done."



Brewers Bench Coach Pat Murphy

Murphy In The News

[Pat Murphy's story still has plenty of chapters left – \(cont.\)](#)

Yet, Mikel Moreno, a former player and graduate manager under Murphy told the New Times in Phoenix in 2006 that Murphy was the “best coach I ever had.”

But Moreno was fired in December of 2007. One month later, accusations were made to the NCAA following an anonymous phone call from Moreno’s mother, leading to an investigation. Almost two years later, Murphy resigned in November of 2009.

Numerous questions surrounded the investigation that followed, including the validity of the case brought up by Moreno.

One NCAA investigator on the case, Abigail Greenstein, was [fired](#) in 2012 for the way she handled another case involving UCLA basketball player Shabazz Muhammad. The other investigator, Tom Hosty, was demoted from a management position 2013 following misconduct in the investigation into the University of Miami.

It didn’t matter. Murphy already had a black cloud over him. Colleges weren’t going to call, at least not right away. But maybe it was time for a new challenge. Maybe it was time to try something else, having accomplished almost all there is to accomplish in college baseball. Maybe it was time to see what was on the other side.

It started a couple months after leaving ASU. Murphy took a job in the San Diego Padres front office as a special assistant in 2010 before moving back onto the field as the team’s manager of short-season Eugene Emeralds. In his two years there, the team finished with the league’s best record each season. He moved up to Triple-A for three seasons, managing in Tucson and El Paso. He finished 226-206 as a manager during those years, with his teams outperforming their pythagorean record each year.

Just one year away from the field, and thrown immediately into a fire different from anything he’d been in before, Murphy was left with with two choices — adjust or find a new profession. And after being the king of college, he was starting from the bottom of minor league baseball.

“Your mindset has to change immediately,” Murphy told FanRag Sports. “A-ball was a little bit like college because you’re working with younger guys and developing them. Triple-A I had to make a change. I knew it, so I studied the game, talked about it, asked about it, researched it and adjusted to it. You have a different role coming from a different angle.

“People told me I was going to hate Triple-A, but I loved it. I like players; I especially like good players. My focus became different, and I was managing a team in a different way.”



Murphy In The News

[Pat Murphy's story still has plenty of chapters left – \(cont.\)](#)



Pat Murphy, Barry Bonds, and Darnell Coles

The first time San Diego Padres general manager A.J. Preller met Murphy was on Preller's first stop to a Padres affiliate as general manager. He was hired in August of 2014, and Triple-A El Paso was his first stop when it came to the minor leagues. Murphy was in his first year in El Paso. What broke out was a conversation in Murphy's office that included Jason Lane, a player for Murphy at the time, that lasted until the wee hours of the morning.

"It's fun to sit and talk baseball," Preller said. "(Murphy's) got a lot of experiences and has been very successful. It's pretty easy to see pretty quickly why he's been successful."

Murphy's post-college career has him back in class, going from conversation to conversation, trying to learn as much as possible from as many different perspectives as possible.

When the Milwaukee Brewers made a managerial change in the middle of the 2015 season, new manager Craig Counsell was interested in talking to Murphy about joining his staff. But Preller had seen enough from Murphy to prevent the Brewers from talking to him about the job and eventually named Murphy the Padres' interim manager when Bud Black was fired during the 2015 season.

"He knows what winning baseball is," Preller said. "He has a unique perspective on things and he's not scared to challenge guys. He connects with players. From his experience in college to pro ball, he's able to relate to a lot of different guys. He likes to get in there and be able to read players and read people and figure out what motivates them, and has been able to push the right buttons. All those things led us to wanting us to give him a chance."

In Murphy's first role of any kind at the major-league level, he inherited an under-performing Padres team that made plenty of splashes in free agency, acquiring Matt Kemp, Justin Upton, James Shields, Wil Myers and Craig Kimbrel. It never came together for that group, and Murphy finished 42-54 during his stint. He wasn't retained as manager at the end of the season.

"My situation in San Diego was the greatest learning tool I've ever been a part of," Murphy said. "The problem with college is there's nobody there to evaluate you, to give you that feedback you get from the pro game. If you're open to it, there are people who can talk to you about it. I love that. That discussion doesn't happen enough for me, and I cherish that."

As far as learning tools go, there aren't many places better than San Diego. In Murphy's time with the organization, he worked with Jed Hoyer, Jason McLeod and Josh Byrnes. He worked alongside Dave Roberts, A.J. Hinch, Bud Black, Rick Renteria, Brad Ausmus, and Mark Kotsay.

Roberts, Hinch, Black, Renteria and Ausmus are all managers now. Kotsay is a bench coach in Oakland. Hoyer and McLeod are part of the super team in the Chicago Cubs' front office, while Byrnes is with the Dodgers.



Murphy In The News

[Pat Murphy's story still has plenty of chapters left \(cont.\)](#)



Brewers Manager Craig Counsell and Bench Coach Pat Murphy during Spring Training

"I hope it helps in some of the ideas that I bring," Murphy said of his different roles working with different people. "I hope it helps give a little different perspective than what a general manager is used to and what players are used to. I've been doing most of the receiving. I've been fortunate enough to be in some good situations and work with some great people and learn a ton and their perspective on the game. It's like a whole new path in life when you start looking at the game different."

The next path took him to Milwaukee, where a relationship that started 30 years ago resulted in a perfect match. When the 2015 season ended, it took all of an hour or two for Counsell to get Murphy to join him in Milwaukee as a bench coach. Counsell was part of Murphy's first recruiting class at Notre Dame, and they maintained a relationship well after Counsell graduated to the majors.

For Counsell, there were no red flags. With 100 games of experience managing in the big leagues, five years of experience managing in the minors, plus managing at the highest level in college, Murphy had more than enough experience to bring something to the table to help the Brewers.

Optics could show the hiring as a favor, the pupil repaying the teacher. But Counsell was in no position to hand out favors. This is his first big league job, and he was entering his first season. He couldn't afford to hire an experiment. "I thought in our situation with the Brewers he brought a different perspective than the rest of our staff would bring," Counsell said. "I think it's important to have different voices in the room and hear different thoughts and opinions. And I thought he could impact players."

It didn't take long for the presence to be felt.

"He had a huge impact on us in spring training, which for our situation as a new manager, a new staff and a team that was starting a difficult process, last year's spring training was an incredibly important time in the organization," Counsell said. "His energy on the field and in the clubhouse was critical to us forming a foundation that we're still forming but we've got a good start on. I thought he did a great job in that critical part of the season for us."

The Brewers finished 73-89, only ahead of the Cincinnati Reds in the NL Central. Under Counsell and Murphy, the Brewers saw career-years from Jonathan Villar, Junior Guerra, and Tyler Thornburg, plus steps up in development from Keon Broxton, Zach Davies, Hernan Perez and Domingo Santana.

"I don't have to do everything, I'm just one piece of a puzzle," he said of what he learned during his stint with the Padres and first year with the Brewers. "I have to do my job, relating to players, getting the most out of them, and I have to let everyone else do their job. It's all hands on deck, not just mine."

"I just want to help Counsell any way I can. I want to be prepared enough that he's not too surprised. The game will send you surprises, and after the first year of doing it, I learned a lot about what I have to do better. I got a lot to improve on to help him, but hopefully I can influence players here and there."



Murphy In The News

[Pat Murphy's story still has plenty of chapters left \(cont.\)](#)



Coach Murphy with former ASU player
Eric Sogard

Jason Kipnis was immature in college. He had an attitude, but he had talent. What he didn't have was a team or a chance after being dismissed from the Kentucky baseball team. He had one offer out of high school — Eastern Illinois — before Kentucky jumped into the process late.

To even his own surprise, his second chance came from an unexpected place, one of the best programs in the country: Arizona State and Pat Murphy.

Kipnis took off from there, getting drafted in the fourth round after his junior year but elected to return to school only to be drafted in the second round following his senior year. He's now a key cog in the Cleveland Indians' championship aspirations.

"I'm not where I am without Murph," Kipnis said. "He gave me a second chance when I don't know if anyone else would've. He believed in me on the field, but he believed in me as a person and that's what I needed."

Dustin Pedroia was a 5-foot-2 shortstop that went undrafted out of high school. It was hard to imagine he'd be a draft prospect. Hell, it was hard for some ASU alums to even accept him being the Sun Devils' starting shortstop, Murphy recalls.

Pedroia started every game in his career and reached All-American status at ASU. He became a second-round pick for the Boston Red Sox, a Rookie of the Year, an MVP and a World Series winner.

"He made me better in every aspect of my life," Pedroia said of Murphy. "He always expected you to be the best whether it was school or respecting people or doing an infield drill or a hit-and-run drill. He changed my mindset for everything I do, and I wouldn't be where I am at as a baseball player or a man if I didn't play for him."

If there's one thing Murphy didn't have to learn in his education of the pro game, it's how to connect with players. There are different intricacies, certainly. In college, the message generally stays the same. Players are cycled through every four years; messages can be re-used. Major League Baseball is full of professionals making a lot of money to play and support families. It's a job, and everyone has something different at stake.

Pedroia has played for enough coaches to know what works and what doesn't in professional baseball.

"I think at the major league level it is all about finding a way to get to every player," he said. "Everyone is different with different personalities. Some guys have families, some guys are single, some are loud or quiet. You have to be able to relate to each player, and if you can you will pull the best out of each guy. Murph has all those qualities."

Playing for Terry Francona has spoiled Kipnis, who sees first-hand how Francona is able to get the most out of his players and why he's earned the reputation as one of the best managers in baseball. But in college, Murphy had to play father-figure to young kids on their own for the first time. Does something like that even matter on this stage?



Bench Coach Pat Murphy

Murphy In The News

[Pat Murphy's story still has plenty of chapters left \(cont.\)](#)

"I don't think you can have enough of that advice off the field," Kipnis said. "You might need it even more at this level with everything going on. I think Murph's strengths will absolutely translate at this level. A lot of what (Francona) does well is what Murph does well."

Ryan Braun didn't play for Murphy at Arizona State. When Murphy was announced as Brewers bench coach, Braun didn't know much about him outside of the recruiting process he went through in high school. But he first sat down with him at Milwaukee's Fan Fest last offseason and was able to relate with him right away. That carried into the regular season, where the Brewers had a mix of veterans like Braun, Jonathan Lucroy and Chris Carter while shuffling in young players as part of the rebuild.

"There's a lot of things he is uniquely able to do because of the fact he's managed at the college level, coached at the professional level in the minor leagues and now the major leagues as well," Braun said. "He understands what the process is like, he understands what a lot of guys are going through because he's seen guys make the transition from high school to college, college to minor leagues and ultimately to the major leagues. I think it's a really unique perspective having seen guys go through that process."

"His personality, his communication skills, he has a unique ability to motivate and inspire. He's lived a pretty unique life and he's got some incredible stories that I think he found unique ways to relate to guys on our team to inspire and motivate over the course of the season. When you develop a relationship with the person, I think it gives you the best chance for the player to continue to listen to you and be open to ideas and concepts. That's something I've seen from him all year and something I expect to see going forward."

It's still a player's game, and the human element still matters, even as more and more information becomes available to teams. The last two managers standing in 2016 — Francona and Joe Maddon — are considered two of the best when it comes to player relations. Maddon came under fire for his tactical decisions, but there was no questioning his ability to get the most out of his players. Dave Roberts is another in that mold for the Los Angeles Dodgers, and his team fell short to only the eventual-champion Cubs.

As front offices get smarter and different teams across the league try different strategies, the importance of finding a way to mix both numbers and the human element is becoming prevalent. Organizations that have looked at players as just numbers on a spreadsheet have failed. Those that have failed to adapt to the analytics movement were left behind.

At 58, it's easy to place Murphy in the "old school" box — he was an intense college coach, a master motivator and it's easy to picture him as stuck in his ways of what worked in yesteryear.

But that's not the picture painted by those who've worked with him.

"He's a big culture guy," Roberts, who served as Murphy's bench coach in San Diego, said. "But he's thrived in baseball and is still open to more information. He balances data as well as the human side of things, and that's what I think has made him so successful."



Pat Murphy and Dave Roberts

Murphy In The News

[Pat Murphy's story still has plenty of chapters left \(cont.\)](#)

Counsell said he doesn't buy the "old school vs new school" talk, and Pedroia echoed that sentiment.

"The whole old school-new school thing in my mind is just talk," Pedroia said. "Because if you don't have views of both old and new you won't be maximizing your abilities, and he understands that. If you take a baseball player and provide him with information and you make him understand his role within the team concepts then you have both old and new style and that's what Murph does."

The old — younger, in this case — Murphy was intense, perhaps to an unhealthy degree. It was fifth gear and nothing else. Notre Dame was winning games, and so was Arizona State, but it wasn't until Murphy met with the late Harvey Dorfman, the esteemed sports psychologist, that Murphy knew he needed to change.

Those players are all someone's Kai Joseph, Dorfman told Murphy, referring to his son. Is that how he would want his son to be motivated? It was time for Murphy to change his approach.

"You have to have the growth mindset. You just do," Murphy said. "You can't stay the same. You stay the same, you're losing."

So he hasn't. What worked when he was 35 won't work now. What worked at Arizona State won't work as the bench coach in Milwaukee or as manager somewhere else. He has the same heart with a different attitude. He has the same passion with a different mindset. And he has a pile of mistakes to look back and learn from.

Pat Murphy doesn't know if he'll ever get the chance to manage full-time in the big leagues or not. He knows he'll be the Brewers bench coach in 2017, and can't help but smile thinking about it.

"I'm looking forward to this year and what's gonna happen in Milwaukee," he said. "It might not be as quick as people like, but it's fun watching how they're constructing it. Maybe I can have a little bit of influence, and be a little part of it."

He sees himself as a late-blooming prospect, one that maybe took a different path to the majors than the traditional route. That's for sure. Rarely do you see a college coach make the transition Murphy is working toward. Maybe it's because of money, maybe it's because of control, maybe it's because it's easier getting 19-year-olds who don't know any better to listen to you than adult millionaires.

None of that matters to Murphy. He gets emotional when talking about his past, whether it be about the players he's seen go on to success or the lows that came with an NCAA investigation in the public eye. Even then, it's not anger. The most animated he gets is when he's asked to explain why the Brewers were able to exploit Jon Lester's inability to throw to first base and why it hasn't been done by anyone else, a plan drawn up by Counsell, Braun and third base coach Ed Sedar. If it wasn't for the dinner bell ringing, Murphy might've raked Camelback Ranch after the game.

As he gains experience, his résumé gets more impressive, showing success everywhere he's been, and at places his counterpoints can't claim.



Pat Murphy – San Diego Padres

Murphy In The News

[Pat Murphy's story still has plenty of chapters left \(cont.\)](#)

"I have a lot of years left," he said. "I know it sounds crazy, but I have better energy now than I had before. I had a lot of wasted energy before. I still love doing it every day. I still think I'm on the way up. I have had a lot of experience, but I've made a lot of mistakes. I've had to pay for those mistakes.

"It's embarrassing to think about things I did 20 years ago in the game that you just didn't realize weren't appropriate. I came in with more of a football mentality. It was about beating those 25 guys on the other side no matter what. You didn't like them, you didn't socialize with them. You didn't share anything with them. But I think you grow. I think that's a good way to learn, and I'm fortunate to have been in the game so young that I have a bunch of energy left. I feel pretty lucky."

Perhaps his reputation will never go away, but as Preller points out, he's done everything to change whatever perception is out there against him.

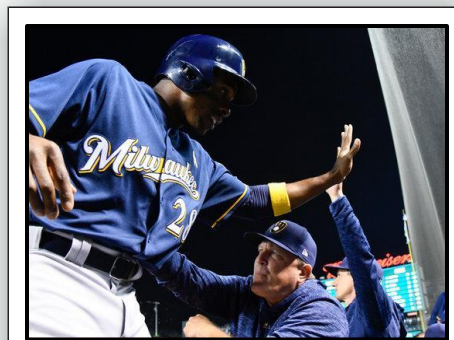
"I think he went out right away and worked his way through it," he said. "You hear some of the talk in the industry about the way he goes about it and would it work at a high level? Then he goes to Triple-A and has a lot of success and connected with those players. He's worked his way up from rookie ball and connected with all different levels."

"He thinks outside the box and is always looking at the game in different ways to get an edge," Roberts adds. "He's got a great acumen and just has to be himself. He can relate to players, he can work with modern executives and baseball operations. He can handle any challenge a manager might have. He checks all the boxes."

Thinking outside the box might be what it takes from a general manager for Murphy to get a chance. While previous managers are often recycled through the league and given interviews, there are plenty of other deserving candidates for only 30 jobs.

"No matter what anyone tells you, in my opinion, the question is not whether you're ready, it's whether you can be successful," Murphy said. "After your first couple years of being successful, you're going to look back and say 'wow, I wish I knew that or would've known this'. You're always improving, but yes I'm ready. Does it hurt me to spend more time being a bench coach? Absolutely not. Whatever's supposed to happen is going to happen."

Taking a chance on a 28-year-old from a Div. III school paid off for Notre Dame. It paid off for Arizona State. For whom will it pay off for next?



Brewers bench coach Pat Murphy was the coach at Notre Dame when Manager Craig Counsell played

Murphy In The News

[The Brewers, Bucking Convention Again, Seek Coaches With College Experience \(New York Times\)](#)

The Milwaukee Brewers were finishing their pregame practice last week at Miller Park, going through the rote exercises teams have used forever. Pat Murphy, the Brewers' bench coach, gestured to an infielder scooping a lazy ground ball. "That's 71 miles an hour," he said, guessing the speed. "Not many balls are hit 71 miles an hour. It's easily caught — you and I could go out there right now and catch it — so what are we doing here? I want to look at that. But I'm also smart enough to know that I want to grow and get better, but some things are just the way they are."

The Brewers have successfully challenged other conventions in baseball, notably by their early and aggressive use of relievers in the postseason, and Murphy embodies a different kind of change. In a sport that rarely looks outside the pro ranks for coaches, the Brewers have two prominent ones with a background mostly in college baseball.

Murphy coached in college from 1983 through 2009, mostly with Notre Dame and Arizona State. The Brewers' pitching coach, Derek Johnson, worked in college jobs from 1994 through 2012, the last 11 seasons as an assistant at Vanderbilt. "It's a different style of teaching that really, I think, appeals to the players," Brewers Manager Craig Counsell said. "If you can provide diversity in your teaching, diversity in your voice, I think you've got a better chance of connecting to players."

Counsell was undrafted out of high school but started all four years for Murphy at Notre Dame, hitting .307 and becoming an 11th-round pick by Colorado in 1992. (Murphy persuaded the Rockies to bump Counsell's bonus by \$1,000 — all the way to \$5,000.) Counsell went on to play 16 years in the majors, with a toughness Murphy first recognized when Counsell broke his nose with one of those practice grounders. "He went off the field, went to the hospital, they fixed his nose, and he's back on the field in a blood-soaked uniform taking ground balls — and it was like 42 degrees out in South Bend," Murphy said. "I just kind of watched him grow every year."

Counsell wanted to hire Murphy when he got the Brewers job early in the 2015 season. Murphy was managing the [Class AAA El Paso Chihuahuas](#), in the San Diego farm system, but the Padres kept him and later in 2015 made him the interim manager after firing Bud Black. Murphy went 42-54 with the Padres that season, and when they told him afterward that he was not a candidate for a full-time job, Counsell asked Murphy again to be his bench coach. Counsell considered Murphy an ideal dugout adviser because he would not be afraid to challenge him, and his extroverted personality would help connect with players. General Manager David Stearns understood the benefits.

... "In the big leagues, you have to find a different way to build a relationship with players," Murphy said. "But then again it does meld together at the end, because it's really about respect and love, it really is. It's about building respect for who that player is and showing them that you're in it for the right reason — you're in it for them. And when you're in it for them, they will reciprocate."

Murphy described himself as a gruff taskmaster in college, and he is still blunt with players. But he is also boisterous in a life-of-the-party way. In a 15-minute interview before Game 1 of the National League Championship Series, he stopped four times to hug, banter with or trade barbs with an umpire, a reporter, a player and an opposing coach. "Murph keeps it loose, likes to have fun," outfielder Christian Yelich said. "All the players really like him. He's not afraid to joke, and that's part of our culture."

Murphy's Arizona State program produced several prominent major leaguers: Dustin Pedroia, Jason Kipnis, Mike Leake, Andre Ethier and others. Murphy turned Austin Barnes into a catcher, setting him on his path to the Los Angeles Dodgers, the Brewers' opponent in the N.L.C.S. "He established the importance of good at-bats," Barnes said. "He made it known that you need to walk to be on the team. There were guys who just struck out and didn't get on base. I remember one of the first meetings, he said, 'If you don't have your on-base percentage 100 points higher than your batting average, you won't play here.' That stuck out to me. He's a very smart dude."

... In general, Murphy said, prominent college coaches tend to stay in college because entry-level pro jobs do not pay enough. Baseball is also fundamentally different from pro football and basketball because of its extensive minor leagues. Yet with the success of the Brewers — and the changing dynamics of baseball's front offices — others could follow Johnson and Murphy.

"What you haven't seen is a Nick Saban kind of person cross over, someone who's had success in college baseball and translated that over to the pro game," Corbin said. "But pro ball has changed at the administrative level. You're getting a different breed of people there. There's more of an education background, so to speak, in those positions, and they may look at a college coach as more of a viable option to lead an organization."



Murphy In The News

[Notre Dame connection: Pat Murphy enjoys counseling Craig Counsell on Brewers bench \(Chicago Tribune\)](#)



Brewers Manager Craig Counsell and Bench Coach Pat Murphy during Spring Training 2016

Pat Murphy came to the Notre Dame baseball field that day in 1989 intent on seeing how strong his skinny new shortstop truly was. One hot ground ball after another, Murphy kept hitting fungoes at 145-pound infielder Craig Counsell. And one after another, the player Murphy awarded a measly \$750 scholarship demonstrated how valuable his glove would be. "I was going to see if this kid could handle it and he handled everything," Murphy recalled Tuesday in the visiting dugout at Wrigley Field.

... Murphy spent the next three decades teaching Counsell all he knew about the game, a role formalized this season with Murphy serving as bench coach to the Brewers' second-year manager. Once the Padres decided last fall not to retain Murphy, who went 42-54 as the team's interim manager, Counsell acted quickly to bring his mentor to Milwaukee. "It was a one-day process," Murphy said.

It has been a smooth season-long adjustment for Murphy, 57, a college baseball legend who went a combined 947-400-2 at Notre Dame (1988-94) and Arizona State (1995-2009). For the first time in Murphy's coaching career, he gives advice instead of orders and leaves the final say up to Counsell, whose 16 major-league seasons earned him a reputation for being as smart as he was scrappy. "We were having a 30-year baseball conversation and we just continued it," Counsell said. "He's had a great impact on the one-on-one conversations with players, pushing them, motivating them, encouraging them. He's good at that."

The passionate motivator needed his own pick-me-up after being forced to resign from Arizona State in 2009 despite winning his fourth straight Pac-12 Coach of the Year award. The school felt pressure from an NCAA investigation into improper recruiting practices that ultimately found Murphy guilty of nothing more than a "cavalier attitude." Two years ago, a new ASU athletic regime offered an olive branch by honoring Murphy with a plaque at its new baseball stadium. Still, at the time, the NCAA stain scared college programs away, so for the first time, Murphy entertained suitors from professional baseball. One of them was then-Padres CEO Jeff Moorad, a longtime ally who wanted Murphy in the organization. At the time, Moorad left the decision up to his general manager, Jed Hoyer. "I really enjoyed Pat," recalled Hoyer, now the Cubs GM. "Great demeanor. Hilarious. He really wanted to learn the pro game after being in college baseball for so long. I'm thrilled that he made it work in MLB. He made the most of his opportunity." Murphy always will feel grateful to Hoyer for providing it. "I was clueless about pro ball, but it was really neat how Jed was open to what I had to say," Murphy said. "I didn't have a role and just started managing again (in Class A). I appreciate Jed and Jason McLeod for being so kind to me."

One day perhaps somebody will offer Murphy the chance to manage again, hope he finds every time the Brewers play the Cubs. Murphy looks into the opposite dugout at Cubs manager Joe Maddon, who, like him, never played in the majors. Who, like Murphy, has been known to use motivational gimmicks to break up the monotony of baseball. Who, like Murphy, never stopped believing he could experience success as a full-time major-league manager even if the wait lasted into his 50s. "He's brilliant," Murphy said of Maddon. "Just the way he thinks about the game and ways to beat you, creating an edge. It's great that we play him 19 times because I can learn from him."

The majors' 162-game grind makes fatherhood challenging for a guy who took pride in being a good dad during all those seasons on campus. Murphy readily admits the hardest thing about joining the Brewers was spending so much time away from his two children back in Arizona: 20-month-old Austin and 15-year-old Kai, an elite left-handed pitcher. (He also has an adult daughter, Keli, who is married.) "(Kai is) really right-handed, but we manipulated the process," Murphy kidded. "His dad knew the gene pool and thought he might have a better chance as a lefty."

During the All-Star break, his family visited Notre Dame, which named the baseball locker room after Murphy. Even though the campus landscape has changed so dramatically that Murphy got lost, the Syracuse, N.Y., native found comfort returning to the place he first met Irish football icons Ara Parseghian, a personal hero, and Joe Theismann as a 9-year-old in 1968. "Notre Dame always will be a special place to me," Murphy said.

It's where Murphy found his purpose — and once discovered how tough his boss really is.



Coach Murphy coached the Fighting Irish from 1988-1995.

Murphy In The News

[Notre Dame honors Murphy](#) [\(South Bend Tribune\)](#)

Paying attention to detail and scouting the opposition helped former Notre Dame baseball coach Pat Murphy reach the coveted 500-victory mark faster than any other college baseball coach. What never happened on the field to Murphy happened off of it during his return to Notre Dame's campus on Saturday. He was caught off guard when Notre Dame unveiled its newly renovated clubhouse, which it named for Murphy.

"I'm so surprised at how stupid I was not to know that more was up than throwing out the first pitch," said Murphy, who thought he was coming back for a reunion of former Fighting Irish coaches. "I'm shocked by myself. How could I not have known about this. I just had no idea. I'm stunned. I'm blown away. I've never experienced anything like this in my life."

The Coach Pat Murphy Locker Room, located within Notre Dame's Frank Eck Baseball Stadium, features maple lockers, graphics in blue and gold that provide a montage of Irish greats and accomplishments, and flat screen, high definition televisions and state-of-the-art RightView Pro technology for teaching purposes. Craig Counsell, a former Irish player who boasts two World Series rings, his father John Counsell, Murphy's brothers Daniel and David, and Bert Bondi were key contributors, along with a number of other Irish baseball supporters and former players.

"Walking in the locker room, I thought I was in a different stadium," Murphy said. "For me to have my name on it means the world to me." Murphy said that he was overwhelmed that Notre Dame would honor him. "You don't feel worthy," Murphy said. "You know all the stupid mistakes you made and what a jerk you were sometimes, all the players you might not have treated exactly the way you would today, but as a 27-year-old, I did it from my heart, and I didn't do it with any other intention but trying to make Notre Dame the best place and not to embarrass my family."

Looking back

Murphy was reflective on his heart-wrenching decision to leave Notre Dame 17 years ago to take over at Arizona State, where he was 585-284-1.

"Sometimes you don't realize what you had until you're gone for a while," Murphy said. "Coming back today and feeling that support ... I guess you miss the love."

Feeling vindicated

Murphy, who is now coaching the Padres' short-season team in Eugene, Ore., said that the naming of the clubhouse after him was especially touching since the past 18 months have been some of the toughest of his life. Murphy was released by Arizona State after allegations of NCAA violations occurred.

Murphy was cleared of knowingly violating rules, but Arizona State had to vacate all its wins from 2007 and is banned from the postseason in 2011 for violations related to impermissible recruiting calls. Murphy was hit with a one-year show cause penalty. "It's been real tough," Murphy said of having to leave college ball. "The tougher part is the perception people have without knowing the facts. That's the part that kills you."

"The exclamation point today is that a university like this would look into it and see what's real and what's not," said Murphy, who hopes to return to the college ranks. "You just feel so much joy inside that someone recognizes that you're not dishonest, you're not a cheater, just like the NCAA found. There was no dishonesty, there was no cheating. This is a matter of paperwork. This is a matter of a lot of other strategic things. It hurt me deeply. Our program (at Arizona State) was rolling."



Murphy In The News

[The Muddy Chicken Hits It Big: Dustin Pedroia \(Sports Illustrated\)](#)



Dustin Pedroia played for Murphy at ASU from 2002-2004

...

Murphy was overseas when one of his assistants recruited Pedroia to Arizona State. "The first time I met him, he walked into my office and he had on a white cutoff undershirt," Murphy says. "He's standing there with his pale skin, all of 138 pounds, and he goes, 'Hey, Coach, what do you think of these guns?' Obviously, there was nothing there. I said, 'Hell, you better be able to pick up that ground ball.'"

In a game against Wichita State and its ace, Mike Pelfrey (now with the Mets), Pedroia hit the first pitch he saw off the wall and screamed at Pelfrey, "Ninety-six coming in, 104 going out! Get ready for the laser show all day!" Another day, while Florida State took pregame infield, Pedroia yelled at its star shortstop, Stephen Drew, "You want to see how a real shortstop fields? Take a seat and watch. You're the guy on the cover of Baseball America? Are you kidding me?"

Recalls Murphy, "Stephen, who is a beautiful human being, is looking over with this look like, Who is that batboy screaming at me?"

Pedroia hit .384 at Arizona State, but nobody wanted him through the first 64 picks of the 2004 draft, which included seven middle infielders (only one of whom, Drew, has become an established regular) and six picks by the Twins alone. Now it was Boston's turn. "He was on our list of guys we thought would definitely be gone by the time our pick came around," Epstein says. "It was him or Kurt Suzuki."

"During that year the scouts kept coming back and saying, 'We didn't consider him coming into the year, but you know who's a good player? That shortstop at ASU. He's tiny and doesn't really have any tools, he takes a huge swing but squares the ball up as well as anybody, he probably has as good hands as anybody in the country.... It's just too bad he doesn't have more tools.'"

The Red Sox, though, were enticed by Pedroia's hitting for extra-base power with few strikeouts. They also marked his makeup as "off the charts." Says Epstein, "It was pretty clear he loved the game, was not afraid and was a big-time baseball rat."

Three springs later the Red Sox handed Pedroia the second base job, but by May 3, 2007, he was hitting .180 and major league scouts and the media had written him off as an ill-fated combination of being a little man with big man's swing. Indeed, Pedroia swings with a fierce uppercut, a long stride and some occasionally choppy footwork, like a hammer thrower in the batter's box. But the violence in his swing is confined to his lower half. His barrel, in fact, takes a quick path to the ball because his hands are so extraordinary. When the Red Sox this spring measured all their players' hand-eye coordination, Pedroia and Jose Iglesias, a slick-fielding shortstop prospect, came out on top.

Supreme athleticism is the foundation of Pedroia's big swing as well as his footwork in the field. "I love that little [guy]," says White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen. "It looks like he escaped from Cirque du Soleil and they put a uniform on him."

In the midst of the slump at the start of his rookie season, while riding in a taxi with Kelli, Pedroia called Murphy. In the background the coach could hear Kelli saying, "Dustin, look what these people are saying!"

What the media were saying did not bother Pedroia. Ever confident, he couldn't believe people would question him like that. "Do you believe these guys are on me like this?" he said. After Pedroia and Murphy finished talking, Pedroia sent his coach a text. The 5'8" rookie who was hitting .180 and getting hammered in the press typed out this message: *I'm about to put Red Sox Nation on my back.*

...



Murphy In The News

[Tucson Padres: Team is playing 'Murphy Ball'](#) [\(Arizona Daily Star\)](#)



Murphy managed the 2013 Tucson Padres to a 77-57 record.

Wednesday, it was nearly 30 minutes of practicing bunt defense. One day earlier, it was working on tagging from third base on a fly ball to the outfield. At other times, it's been extra ground balls, pitchers' fielding practice or perfecting hitting the cut-off man. These are drills you see at a high school or even Little League practices. But for the Tucson Padres, this is the new normal: fundamentals, fundamentals and more fundamentals.

It's the Pat Murphy way.

"Nobody wants to do that stuff," Padres outfielder Travis Buck said. "Nobody. But he makes it fun because it can get really old, really quick."

The first-year Padres manager wasted no time at the beginning of the season making sure the Padres were going to play "Murphy Ball." With Tucson coming off back-to-back losing seasons, the manager wanted to instill winning baseball in the Kino Stadium clubhouse from Day 1. It didn't matter to him that victories aren't really the priority at the Triple-A level or that a lot of minor-league players are more concerned with their own statistics than they are with wins and losses. The man with 947 Division I wins at Arizona State and Notre Dame and just 400 losses knows only one way of doing things.

"The best way to describe it is you have to be accountable at all times," outfielder Daniel Robertson said. "If you're a spiritual person, you know someone's always watching. When you're playing for Pat Murphy, you feel like everything you do, he's watching. "It's like playing in front of a family member because you always want to be at your best in front of him."

Murphy's way is working.

After Tucson's 3-2 victory over Fresno on Wednesday night, the Padres are 28-25. One year ago at this point, the Padres were 20-33. In 2011, the team was 23-30. So although the record doesn't appear all that special, it's an improvement from the past two seasons. "The Padres Triple-A team hasn't won in quite some time, and everyone just expected us not to be very good," said Buck, who played for Murphy at ASU. "I think most guys thought it was going to be, 'Get your numbers, work hard and then move on to the big leagues.' No, that's not going to happen with him. He wanted to make the Tucson Padres relevant. "He doesn't care what our talent level is compared to other teams, he expects to win."

...

Robertson, who went to Oregon State and played against Murphy while he was at ASU, agrees with Buck. The outfielder said Murphy has a unique way of getting players to want to work hard to be at their very best.

"I didn't like him at all when I was at Oregon State," Robertson said. "It didn't have to deal with him as a man; I just wanted to beat him. You could always see, watching his teams, there was a different mentality. He's great with words and can convince you of anything. "He could sell ketchup to a woman in a white dress."

Ask Murphy and he's say there's still a lot of work to be done. He said Tucson's record should be better and eventually will be. Fifty-three games into the season and the veteran coach and manager feels he's just starting to have an imprint on the team.

"I don't care where this team has been in the past," Murphy said. "It's an ever-changing club. The biggest thing I'm pleased about, maybe the only thing, is that we haven't been out of too many games. I think it's only been two out of 52 games where we've come up for the last time and haven't had a chance to win. I'm proud of that."



Murphy In The News

[Murphy reunited with his ASU legacy \(ESPN.com\)](#)



If there is a man in college baseball who needs redemption, it's Pat Murphy.

He is considered a legend in Arizona State baseball lore, but it was the ASU athletic department that unceremoniously kicked him to the curb in the fall of 2009 amid an investigation by the NCAA's Division I committee on infractions that eventually led to postseason probation. He left ASU bitter by the way his exit was handled by the NCAA. Four years after that ugly time, a rejuvenated Murphy will finally get his due this weekend from the program he so loved, and some long-burned bridges will be crossed again at the same time.

ASU will hold a special ceremony before Saturday's game against Baylor to honor Murphy as part of a salute to historic Packard Stadium, which is in its final season.

"We are honoring the great ASU baseball tradition during our final season at Packard Stadium, and our former coaches and players play a big role in this." Rocky Harris, senior associate AD for external relations, said in a press release. "Pat Murphy is the cornerstone of one of the most decorated eras in Sun Devil Athletics and we are going to have him kick off our season-long celebration of Packard Stadium. It has been part of our overall plan to continue to reach out to everyone who has contributed to ASU's success over the years and this is an important step in accomplishing that objective."

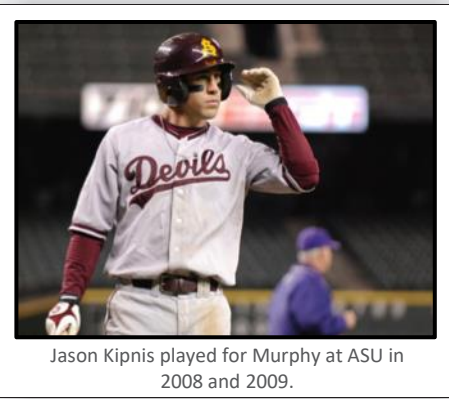
It doesn't take much explaining to understand where Murphy fits into the Sun Devils' success in the 2000s. The four-time Pac-10 Coach of the Year took four teams to the College World Series and sent more than 100 players to the MLB draft in his 15 seasons at ASU. "I'm very, very thankful," Murphy said of his upcoming recognition. "It's very exciting to be able to go back and have this honor. I'm excited about it, but I'm also very humbled over it."

When you review the names of some of the players who went from his tutelage in Tempe onto pro diamonds, there's not a lot of reason to be humble. Dustin Pedroia, Andre Ethier, Willie Bloomquist, Kole Kalhoun, Jason Kipnis, Brett Wallace and Ike Davis are just the tip of the iceberg. "It's a real thrill and very gratifying to see these guys succeed at the highest level," Murphy said. "Although the truth is that they brought out the best in themselves to get where they are. We all know it wasn't me who did it, but I like that I had a small part in making them successful at that level."

A large part of Pat Murphy's winning formula was never failing to get the most out of his players, or his staff. According to former assistant coach Mike Rooney, who was with Murphy at Arizona State for five years in the early 2000s, he knows that game plan quite well.

"He's everything a great coach should be," Rooney said. "I think people knew that he was very tough on us. He held us to a high standard and pushed us beyond our comfort level. But that's what a great coach is all about."

Though he has reason to still be indignant about the ending of his days in the Valley of the Sun, Murphy has not let that hinder the upward momentum of his career. After leaving ASU, he became a baseball operations assistant for the San Diego Padres, then he went on to manage in the minor leagues, currently with the Triple-A El Paso Chihuahuas (the team was based in Tucson in 2013, Murphy's first year with the club).



Jason Kipnis played for Murphy at ASU in 2008 and 2009.

Murphy In The News

[A 2nd chance in college jump-started Jason Kipnis' baseball career – by Mark Gonzales](#)

Thirteen seasons before joining the Cubs on a minor-league contract, Jason Kipnis was down to his last strike. Thanks in part to a coach who believed in second chances, Kipnis began to make the most of every opportunity. Now the veteran second baseman has a chance to play close to his Northbrook roots while pursuing a playoff berth. That mentor — Brewers bench coach Pat Murphy — painted a portrait of perseverance as Kipnis ascended from discarded college player to two-time American League All-Star.

“He gets winning baseball,” said Murphy, who gave Kipnis a second chance to evolve into a star at Arizona State. “I hated to see him go to the Cubs, obviously, but I’m happy for him. It’s home. He’s big on his family.”

Kipnis, 32, maintains a “riverboat gambler” approach to a crowded second-base competition in which his credentials — nine years in the majors, 24 postseason games and 70 home runs over the last four seasons — stand out among the other candidates.

“It’s a new beginning,” said Kipnis, who signed with the Cubs last month after the Indians declined to pick up a \$16.5 million option in November. “You join a new group of people you’ve got to earn the trust and respect of, and it makes you want them to want you on their team. “That’s the way you get in their good graces. Everyone starts thinking, ‘We want this guy on our team.’ That’s how you fit in.”

There’s nothing fancy about Kipnis’ early work with the Cubs, just an ability to range to both sides with sound footwork and fundamentals while developing a rapport with his competitors.

“He came (to Arizona State) with the right attitude, just like he’s doing here,” Murphy said. “He went to work right away. He’s genuine. He’s not trying to impress anyone.”

Kipnis nearly faced a dead end after the University of Kentucky parted ways with him following his redshirt freshman season in 2007. He drew minimal interest until a few opposing SEC coaches spoke favorably to Murphy.

“If he got scholarship (money), it wasn’t more than for books,” Murphy said.

Kipnis, then a center fielder, immediately gained Murphy’s trust with his attitude.

“He went after it,” Murphy recalled. “He didn’t back off anything. He wasn’t intimidated. He just came and did his thing.” Kipnis’ determination helped him bat .371 with 14 home runs and 78 RBIs and earn 2008 Pac-12 Newcomer of the Year honors. He passed up a chance to sign with the Padres as a fourth-round pick to return to Arizona State and batted .384 with 16 homers and 71 RBIs, winning the Pac-12 Player of the Year award.

That helped raise his stock, and the Indians drafted him in the second round and signed him for a \$575,000 bonus.

According to Kipnis, Murphy “believed in second chances, which is what I needed at the time.”

“He helped me focus on the right things, what needed to get done,” Kipnis said. “He was great for me.”

The next major development occurred after his first professional season, in which he batted .306 for short-season Class A Mahoning Valley (OH). He was asked to move to second base to enhance his chances of reaching the majors.

“It was a grind,” Kipnis recalled. “It was rough at first. It was uncomfortable, but I knew that it was my ticket to the way up. I could be more comfortable in the outfield and maybe stay at Double A or switch to the infield and make it to the big leagues. “So it was a no-brainer in that sense. And it’s something I had to keep working at.”

The transition was smooth enough for Kipnis to reach the majors in 1½ seasons. He has looked sharp this spring in workouts and exhibition play.

“Nobody hands out starting spots on sports teams, especially at this level,” Kipnis said. “It’s something you’ve got to go out and earn day in and day out, not just until breaking camp. If you want to be that second baseman, it takes a 162-game season to do it.”



Murphy In The News

[El Paso Chihuahuas: Manager Pat Murphy brings aggressive, relentless style to city \(El Paso Times\)](#)



PEORIA, Ariz. — Pat Murphy knows how to win and, just as importantly, knows how to get others to win. The personable 55-year-old Murphy will be the first manager in El Paso Chihuahuas history ... beginning a new chapter in this city's baseball history. Murphy will bring a relentless, aggressive style to this city's baseball team. And, though he is a Triple-A manager in a business when the only thing that counts is Major League wins, he will find a way to win baseball games.

He always has.

"I'm beginning my fifth year in professional baseball now and there is a lot to be learned, adjustments to be made," Murphy said recently, taking a brief break at the San Diego Padre training facility. "Because I'm older, I've made some of the adjustments a little quicker. But I've got a long way to go. Keep learning, keep working."

Murphy came late to the professional dance. But the credentials he brought on the journey were impeccable. He was the head coach at Notre Dame University from 1988-1994, finishing with a 318-116-1 (.732 winning percentage) and taking the Irish to the NCAA Regional Finals in 1992, 1993 and 1994. Murphy then took over the Arizona State job and, from 1995 to 2009, put up a stunning 629-284-1 record. He took the Sun Devils to four College World Series, won the Pac-10 championship in 2007, 2008, 2009. Twice his teams finished in the top three in the nation, his teams spent 100 consecutive weeks ranked in the Top 25 and his teams set an NCAA record by going 506 consecutive games without being shut out. Murphy became the youngest college coach to win 500 games. He finished his stints at Notre Dame and Arizona State with 947 victories.

"College baseball was great," he said. "28 years as a head coach, 22 as a Division 1 coach. A dream came true for me at a young age with the Notre Dame job (he was only 29 years old). Notre Dame did more for me than I ever did for them. And the same for Arizona State. Arizona State did more for me than I ever did for them."

Perhaps.

But the two universities obviously appreciate Murphy's contributions. Notre Dame named its new baseball locker room the Coach Pat Murphy Locker Room in a 2011 ceremony and Arizona State honored Murphy last month and will put his name on a sign at the school's new stadium.



Coach Murphy has served as a coordinator in Spring Training and instructional league in addition to managing

Murphy In The News

[Meet the minor-league manager who may have major-league potential \(Yahoo! Sports\)](#)

Survive enough days, make enough reasonable decisions, care enough, and one of those days you begin to see yourself in your children's eyes. If you're very lucky at the end of all that, you'll like what you see. Or maybe not hate it entirely.

Pat Murphy is 55. He's survived his share of days, many of which he is proud of, some of which he'd maybe take another shot at, given the opportunity. He's cared plenty.

He has a daughter and a son. And these are those days.

Five years ago, Murphy resigned as baseball coach at Arizona State, after 15 seasons and 629 wins. There was drama. A lot of drama. Before that, he won 318 games in seven seasons at Notre Dame.

When he was no longer a college coach, he took employment with the San Diego Padres, managed two seasons in the Northwest League and the last two in the Pacific Coast League. He's still winning. He's still making good ballplayers better ones. He is big-league manager material, though nobody's talking about that yet.

The man on the other end of the phone line would rather talk about his girl Keli, who's 28 and teaches yoga to the ladies at the Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh, who is kind and giving. And Kai, his 14-year-old, an old soul and a ballplayer himself. It's been just Pat and Kai for years now – in Tempe, Ariz., and Eugene, Ore., and Tucson, Ariz., and El Paso, Texas – and big ol' Pat, all shoulders and block chin and ball coach, has a little something catch in his throat when he's talking about Kai.

"He thinks I can do anything, I guess," Pat said, his voice thinning. "Our times together, my relationship with Kai, yeah ... it's hard to talk about. I just want him to get the pieces of me, the perspective of, 'It's what you give that matters. Not just aimlessly giving. The true giving.' I think he has that. And I think he just wants me to be dad. He loves wherever we are. How about that?"

Maybe he's thinking of Keli and Kai when he's asked what he wants, now that he's 55 and he sees himself in their eyes, now that he's chased all those wins and gotten so many of them, now that he can't be sure what's next.



Quotes about Murph

"He is big-league manager material"

– **Tim Brown, Yahoo! Sports**

"Pat Murphy deserves to manage a major league team somewhere, someday."

– **Peter Gammons, Hall of Fame Journalist**



Pat Murphy in the dugout managing the 2015 San Diego Padres



"Other than my Mom and Dad, who got me going, Murph was more responsible for me becoming a baseball player than anyone else. He made me understand what mental toughness really is, and that I could become a player even though I wasn't the most talented guy around."

– **Craig Counsell, Chicago Cubs Manager / 16-year MLB Infielder**

"I didn't go [to ASU] for the tradition and all that BS. I went there because of Murph. Murph made me into the player I am today, and all the guys feel that way. He's very well-loved."

– **Dustin Pedroia, 14-year Boston Red Sox**



"I came in confident but not confident enough, and didn't know what type of player I was or what direction I was going in. Coach Murphy and his staff pointed me in the right direction and helped me tremendously in becoming the player I am today."

– **Andre Ethier, 12-year Los Angeles Dodger**

"I absolutely believe [Murphy] can be a big-league manager. He has this ability to relate to players, get them pulling in the right direction. He's as good a man as I've seen in this game."

– **Jason Lane, 7-year MLB OF/Pitcher**

