

Football: CU Buffs' Murphy thankful for chance to play

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Having spent time with four head coaches at two different schools in only 24 months of college football, Colorado fullback Jordan Murphy has watched a lot of film.

It's the one film he hasn't watched, however, that has made the biggest impact on his young life.

"I haven't seen it yet," Murphy said, referring to the 2012 blockbuster hit, *The Dark Knight Rises*. "I watched a little bit of it, but it's just eerie. It's an eerie feeling.

"I've seen a few movies since then with no problem, but just that movie is one I'm really not interested in anymore."

Murphy was in Theater 9 of Aurora's Century 16 cinema on July 20, 2012, when a mass shooting occurred during the premier of *The Dark Knight Rises*. James Holmes has been accused of killing 12 people while wounding 70 others.

"I just remember the screams, some people getting shot and a lot of chaos, just wondering what was going on," Murphy said. "It was so quick, it felt like just a few quick seconds. It was just chaos."

Murphy saw several people who had been shot, including a young girl who was killed. Murphy and a friend were shot at, but avoided injury.

"I shouldn't have made it out of there, but God protected me and he has a reason that I'm here still, so I just want to see what that is," he said.

While Murphy did escape harm, he said he thinks about that night often.

"It still sticks in my mind," he said. "I'll still have some bad dreams about it, some nightmares, but for the most part it's in the past now.

"The hardest part of the whole deal was just the families and the victims that are still suffering. I'm not suffering, but their families are, so that's hard."

Knowing the suffering that so many others went through, and are continuing to go through, helps Murphy keep the proper perspective when he thinks of the rough road he has taken through his first two years of college football.

Coming out of Lutheran High School in 2011, Murphy received several scholarship offers from Division II schools, but instead chose to walk-on at CSU. He played a little bit on special teams in 2011, but never got to play on offense for coach Steve Fairchild.

After the 2011 season, Fairchild was fired and replaced by Jim McElwain. Unfortunately for Murphy, McElwain's offense does not use a fullback, so Murphy wasn't needed by the Rams anymore. He transferred to CU last summer, but had to sit out due to the NCAA's transfer rules.

He spent the year learning coach Jon Embree's offense, which used pro style and spread concepts.

Then Embree was fired and replaced by current coach Mike MacIntyre.

"It was déjà vu," Murphy said. "McElwain pretty much ended my playing days (at CSU), so I thought maybe this would be the same thing, because these guys (on MacIntyre's staff) didn't recruit me, they didn't want me here, they didn't know me, so I was nervous about that, definitely."

He may have been unknown, but certainly not unwanted. MacIntyre's pistol offense does not use the fullback often, but "enough to feel a part of the team," Murphy said.

"It is included, I would say, probably in around 15-20 plays a game," said Murphy, who ended the spring listed atop the depth chart at fullback.

As he tries to learn his fourth offense at the college level -- without playing a single snap -- Murphy wonders if he should have just accepted an offer to play in Division II, but he's happy to be in Boulder.

"It's been all adversity for me with little success," he said. "But, I'm getting a chance now, so I'm very thankful for that."

Murphy even has an opportunity to earn a scholarship, he said, if he can play well and contribute to the team.

"Coach (Klayton) Adams is a really good coach and he's helped me grow so much as a blocker in the running game with form and pad level," Murphy said. "So, I've really picked up on the offense fast."

Later this month, the anniversary of the Aurora theater shooting will bring a flood of emotions and memories to those who have been affected by it. That includes Murphy, who is eager to see what his future -- a future that could have been taken away from him last year -- will bring.

"It has changed me," he said. "It's given me a real different perspective on life, just to see how quick it can end. You don't want to waste it, you don't want to live for the things that don't matter. It changed my perspective on life, definitely."

"I'm a walk-on, fighting to pay for school and I could complain about that, but I'm thankful to be here. I'm thankful to have a life, I'm thankful to be able to run around on that field again and be with people that I love. It's been great."

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