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Meramec Alum Freese Makes MLB Debut As Cardinal

April 6, 2009 will be a date that STLCC-Meramec alum **David Freese** will never forget. That's the day Freese made his major league debut in his own hometown as a St. Louis Cardinal.

Freese, who attended and played baseball at Meramec from 2002-'04, entered the season and home opener in the seventh inning at third base of a 2-2 game. In the bottom of the inning, he grounded out to third in his first major league at-bat.

However, an inning later, after the Redbirds grabbed a 3-2 lead, Freese added an insurance run with a sacrifice fly to right for his first career RBI.

Looking on from the stands was Meramec head coach **Tony Dattoli**, who guided Freese both his seasons for the Magic.

"It's nothing less than exciting. It's the reason you get in this business, to help kids achieve their dreams and reach the levels they never thought they could," said Dattoli. "Having David make his major league debut is a proud moment, indeed, for me as a coach."

Freese, a Lafayette High grad, was a first team All-American at Meramec in '04 as well as the Region XVI Player Of The Year. He transferred to Division I South Alabama for two seasons before being drafted by the San Diego Padres in 2006.

The Cardinals acquired Freese in January, 2008 from the Padres in a trade for fan-favorite Jim Edmonds and placed him at Triple A Memphis, leapfrogging the Double A level. Freese produced with strong offensive numbers last year, prompting scouts to advise the Cardinals he was ready for the majors.

The off-season surgery on Redbird third baseman Troy Glaus and his uncertain return opened a roster spot which Freese earned with more offensive production during spring training. Dattoli feels Freese's success is a testament to the Meramec athletic program, past and present.

"It's a compliment to the previous coaches, the institution itself that has allowed us to maintain such a high level of ability and recognition in the classroom and on the field that there are players of this caliber that want to come to Meramec," said Dattoli.