

FRIDAY, MAY 30

Mulitalo takes the flight of a lifetime

Last Saturday (May 24), Lions' guard **Edwin Mulitalo** got the opportunity to fulfill a childhood dream. The 350-pound lineman took a parabolic air flight - a zero-gravity method used by NASA - that enabled him to experience weightlessness.

Mulitalo on the overall experience: "We flew out of the airport in Las Vegas - (the trip) was a gift from my wife. I went up with a good friend of mine, **Haloti Ngata**, who is a defensive tackle for the Baltimore Ravens. For big guys who are over 300 pounds, to experience weightlessness flying is an awesome experience.



Mulitalo and former teammate Haloti Ngata of the Baltimore Ravens. *Photo by: Steve Boxall*

"It's basically what they train NASA guys with to feel what it is like to have zero gravity. I have a hard time trying to explain it to people - they (told me) they've only brought up 5,000 people around the world. The closest thing I can compare it to is scuba diving. You can fly, you can do flips - you can do everything. Every kid wants to be an astronaut or wants to fly. It was definitely a once-in-a-lifetime experience."

Prior to takeoff, Mulitalo and approximately 24 other passengers were given a brief run-down of what they would experience once they were airborne in the seatless 747 airplane.

Mulitalo: "You do a little course first; it's a 45-minute video. The way you do parabolic flying is they take you in a 747 airplane which they (have gutted) out and put 25 seats in the back. (Then) they take you through the motions of nose dives and you experience weightlessness. There are three parts: the first is the 'martian level', which is one third of your weight; 'lunar' is when you're one-sixth of your weight, and 'zero G' is weightlessness."

Considering there were 25 weightless passengers aboard the airplane - not to mention two NFL linemen - collisions would seem to be an obvious occurrence. But for Mulitalo and Ngata, two people more than familiar with collisions, this was a new experience even for them.

Mulitalo: "We tried to do some pass-rush when we were up there, but when you try to do it weightless you hit each other and you fly both ways. Just the concept of two 350-plus-pound guys being pushed around, flying and weighing nothing is a funny sight to see."

For information on the **Zero G Weightless Experience** and for pictures from Mulitalo's flight visit www.gozerog.com.