

# Seahawks give rookies extensive course in transition to NFL career

By TIM BOOTH  
AP Sports Writer

RENTON, Wash. — Pete Carroll stood at the front of the auditorium just like he would for any other meeting as the head coach of the Seattle Seahawks.

But his words Monday were brief, poignant and directed just at his newest players. And they had nothing to do with what these rookies end up doing on the field.

"It's so important to us to help you guys figure out what is coming," Carroll said.

When the NFL did away with its rookie symposium in Canton, Ohio, it put the onus back on the teams to organize three days of rookie transition education after the completion of their minicamps and before players head off on their summer breaks. Seattle took it a step further, creating an education program that started following the completion of the Seahawks' rookie minicamp the second week of May and will conclude with the mandatory three days this week.

### More formal program

The reason for such an extensive program: The Seahawks don't believe three days is enough to adequately provide rookies with the information they need. It's education on the team provided in the past, but now in a more formal program.

"They've been with us since May 9 so we had nothing but time," said Mo Kelly, vice president of player development. "It's a redundancy type deal. They can never hear it enough. We've talked to them on finances, I don't know how many meetings we've had so far, but guess what? They're still going to



Former Seattle Seahawks' Bryce Fisher, right, sits on the stage as he addresses rookies during a panel discussion at the football team's training camp Monday in Renton, Wash. The team is holding a rookie symposium for the new players to give them information about the NFL.

AP Photo/Elaine Thompson

make mistakes. They're still young men. They're still growing up. Imagine if you were 21 years old with a lot of money in your pocket. That's the thing I keep thinking about it is they're young individuals, they're going to make mistakes and we have to be here to help them when they make mistakes."

Seattle's program was opened to the media Monday and included a history lesson on the franchise and a panel discussion with former players Bryce Fisher, Jordan Babineaux, Marcus Trufant and Hall of Fame offensive tackle Walter Jones on the lessons learned and pitfalls to avoid as a young player entering the league.

### PhD in finances

Much of the conversation revolved around finances and the circle of friends and family suddenly looking for money.

"Nobody thinks they have to worry about managing that. They think they have that under

wraps. They go from the small kid, the young one, to now being the person in their family that everyone turns to and asks questions to," Kelly said. "Now they have to have a PhD in their finances. Everybody is asking them about spending money or getting money from them. Dealing with family and friends is really, really tough because it's close to the vest. We can talk about it, but until you live it and be put in a situation like that it's tough to understand."

That's where the experiences of former players proved important. All four came from different backgrounds and entered the league with different expectations, but their stories shared a common theme. Yes, mistakes will be made. But the ultimate priority for these rookies is not endangering their future.

"You have more to lose now. So what are you willing to bargain? That's the question," Babineaux said. "What is this position and this opportu-

nity that you guys have in front of you worth to you? That means a change in attitude. It requires a change in lifestyle. And it requires a change in really the way you act. The choices that you now have to make. Because what you are doing now is investing in your future and every choice and decision that you make will be a result of where you end up."

Trufant's recommendation was to have someone able to deflect those requests, an intermediary to work through and keep the pressure off the individual player. Jones, who earned the most of anyone on the panel during his Hall of Fame career, told the rookies to start training their families now on priorities.

"It's going to be tough because you've got people tugging and pulling, that want something," Jones said. "But you've just got to make sure you're taking care of the people that you feel that's in need or you, say this is the person I want to take care of."

# Harber K's seven in Timber Rattlers' win

The Daily Astorian

GRAND CHUTE, Wis. — Conor Harber earned Player of the Game honors, and the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers started the second half of the Midwest League schedule with a 2-0 win over the Quad Cities River Bandits at Fox Cities Stadium Thursday night.

A trio of Wisconsin pitchers held the River Bandits to one hit. Harber got the start and pitched five no-hit innings, with seven strikeouts and two walks.

The seven strikeouts was a new single-game high as a professional for Harber, the Astoria High School graduate.

Quad Cities starter Jose Hernandez pitched around three doubles in his five shut-out innings, with five strikeouts and no walks for the River Bandits.

The Timber Rattlers (35-36 overall) broke a scoreless tie in the seventh inning. Isan Diaz, who had two hits and drew a walk, started the frame with a single against River Bandits reliever Elieser Hernandez.

Diaz eventually scored on a sacrifice fly by Jake Gatewood for the only run the



Conor Harber

Rattlers would need.

Wisconsin pitcher Nate Griep entered the game in the top of the ninth and retired the River Bandits in order to close out the victory. Griep has converted his last eleven save opportunities.

Jake Drossner tossed three scoreless innings in relief for the Timber Rattlers and picked up the win. He allowed a two-out single to Myles Straw in the sixth inning for the only hit given up by the Rattlers.

Harber was named as the "Uncle Ray's Player of the Game" for his performance.

Wisconsin and Quad Cities meet again tonight.

## SCOREBOARD

### SPORTS SCHEDULE

**TODAY**  
Junior State Baseball — Knappa at Clatskanie (2), 3 p.m.

### SUNDAY

Baseball — Jon Gizdavich Memorial Alumni Tournament, Broadway Field, 1 p.m.

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