

SPORTS

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Knappa batters defeat Gaston

The Daily Astorian

While the rest of the Northwest League sits and waits for the rain to end, the Knappa Loggers continue to play ... and win, and win, and win.

The Loggers may be clinching their league title a lot sooner this season, as they improved to 6-1 in league play Tuesday, with a 12-2, five-inning win over Gaston at CMH Field.

Neah-Kah-Nie is currently a distant second in the league standings, at 3-3. Gaston falls to 0-4 in league, with two more games against Knappa Friday, scheduled to be played at Yamhill-Carlton.

Knappa pitchers Dale Takalo and Mason Hoover combined on a five-hitter with six strikeouts, while the Loggers had 10 hits in four at-bats, and scored in every inning.

Reuben Cruz had a home run in a five-run first inning to set the tone. Jason Miller had a double and scored twice; and Hoover was 2-for-2 with a double and two RBIs.

"It was a good overall performance," said Knappa coach Jeff Miller. "The kids battled through the weather, and we're thankful to Astoria for opening up their field and getting it ready for us."

MLB: Multiple groups have submitted bids to buy Marlins

Associated Press

MIAMI — Derek Jeter and Jeb Bush still haven't touched all the bases in their bid to buy the Miami Marlins. Far from it.

Multiple groups have submitted bids to buy the team, and none has yet been accepted, baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred said Tuesday. His comments came after Bloomberg reported a group led by former New York Yankees captain Jeter and former Florida Gov. Bush won an auction for the team with a \$1.3 billion bid.

"There are multiple groups interested in acquiring the Marlins," Manfred said in Pittsburgh while attending the Pirates-Cubs

game. "One of those groups is the Bush-Jeter group. When we have a resolution as to which bid is going to be accepted, we will announce that."

Completion of any sale by Marlins owner Jeffrey Loria could take months and would require approval by at least 75 percent of the major league teams. More than half of the winning bid could involve cash because of MLB's debt service rule, meaning the Bush-Jeter group would need to raise a lot of money.

"You can rest assured that the acquiring group, whoever it turns out to be, will have a financial structure — meaning some debt and the rest equity — that is consistent with the rules that we have, most notably the debt service rule," Manfred said. "And more important than complying with the rules, (that) puts the franchise in a position that it can operate effectively. That's really the commissioner's office's job in terms of approving any potential bidding group, and we are really focused on that issue with respect to the Marlins."

The debt service rule was expanded under the new collective bargaining agreement to include club-supported debt incurred by the club or any club-related party.

Quogue Capital investment fund founder Wayne Rothbaum has also pursued the Marlins, and talks with him might be restarted if



Dale Earnhardt Jr. speaks during a news conference at Hendrick Motorsports in Concord, N.C., Tuesday. Dale Earnhardt Jr. abruptly announced his retirement at the end of the season, a decision that will cost NASCAR its most popular driver as the series scrambles to rebuild its fan base.

NASCAR has huge hole to fill after Earnhardt retires

By JENNA FRYER
 Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — There was a moment during the Bristol Motor Speedway race that captured the essence of Dale Earnhardt Jr.

He was walking briskly to the care center for a mandatory health check after a crash. Flanked by a television reporter on one side, a handler on the other, he was explaining why he wrecked while hustling to his destination. A fan approached him from behind, Earnhardt turned, and the fan was shoved away when it became clear he just wanted a selfie.

Earnhardt never broke stride. He just gave his aw-shucks smile and continued on his way. Once cleared by the medical staff, he found the fan and posed for the photo.

Earnhardt is a 14-time winner of NASCAR's most popular driver award for a reason. He's personable and authentic and as close to the roots of racing as any driver alive today. When he walks away from NASCAR at the end of this season, he will take a lot more than 26 Cup wins.

He will also take a big, reliable chunk of NASCAR's identity. The big question is whether he will also take Earnhardt Nation and its thousands of fans with him, too. It's the last thing NASCAR needs in a time of transition, both in terms of structure and in its celebrity lineup of drivers.

NASCAR has already lost Jeff Gordon, the driver who took the sport mainstream and announced his retirement two years ago at 43, just like Earnhardt. Then a year ago it lost Tony Stewart, the talented, volatile rebel who said what everyone was too scared to say out loud.

Carl Edwards, friendly and a strong ambassador, walked away



AP Photo/Wade Payne
 Driver Kyle Larson watches during practice for a NASCAR Xfinity Series auto race Friday in Bristol, Tenn.

from NASCAR at the start of this year.

Now here goes Earnhardt, the blue-collar everyman. A third-generation racer from North Carolina who says "ain't" and "Daddy" and talks the way the good ol' boys always did.

Stage left

So what does NASCAR do now, with its most bankable stars rapidly exiting stage left at a time when the sport needs to rebuild its audience?

"It will be an important year for fans to look at what other drivers are out there and who will make them interested in continuing to watch," said Jill Gregory, chief marketing officer for NASCAR. "We knew these days were going to come, we just didn't know when."

Gregory said the biggest challenge for NASCAR is introducing the current crop of young talent to fans and giving the drivers a chance to make their own marks rather than pigeonhole them in roles as the next Gordon, Stewart or Earnhardt.

"What is true to them? What is authentic?" asked Gregory. "You look at Kyle Larson, he loves to race. That's what he is going to

do, and allowing him to do what he naturally loves, that's what we want to highlight. I don't think there's an effort to say 'We're going to make this guy into the next Jeff Gordon.'

"We have to let it come naturally and what do they gravitate toward, because if it's natural, that's what makes it real to the fans. If we are trying to manufacture it, that's how it is going to be seen. We have to let it play out."

Kyle Larson

Earnhardt didn't hesitate to name the future of the sport: Larson, the current Monster Energy Cup points leader, and Chase Elliott, his current teammate who replaced Gordon last season.

Elliott is the son of Hall of Famer "Awesome" Bill Elliott, a Georgia native who grew up at NASCAR tracks. Larson is a dirt tracker from California who will race anything at any time and is likely headed in 2018 for a seat in the Indianapolis 500. Earnhardt also praised Ryan Blaney, another second-generation NASCAR driver, and Bubba Wallace, who have used social media to show the life of a millennial and not been afraid of overstepping their place.

Although their personalities are often overshadowed by the veterans, they are settling into their own niches and engaging a much younger fan base for a series whose origins are steeped in the bootlegging days of Prohibition.

"All those guys have great attitudes, great personalities," Earnhardt said. "I know them well enough to be excited about how fans are going to know them in the future. I feel like that these are the guys that they're the cream of the crop, and maybe I'm the only one that sees it in this room, but I really have a lot of confidence in the personalities that we have."

NBA PLAYOFFS

Spurs, Jazz take the wins in Game 5

Associated Press

HOUSTON — James Harden had 34 points and his supporting cast helped Houston overcome a 47-point game by Russell Westbrook to get a 105-99 victory over Oklahoma City on Tuesday night to advance to the Western Conference semifinals.

The Thunder head home a year after advancing to the Western Conference finals after Houston took this series 4-1.

The Rockets used a 5-1 run, with all their points coming on free throws, to pull away from the Thunder and make it 98-91. Victor Oladipo threw a pass about 5 feet above Westbrook's head and out of bounds on the next possession and Harden made a layup on the other end with about 3 minutes left.

The Rockets began eating up the clock after that and Oklahoma City missed shot after shot that could have closed the gap.

Houston couldn't add to its lead

though and the Thunder cut it to 4 points twice in the final seconds, with the second one coming on a basket by Alex Abrines. But Harden made two free throws both times they got close to secure the win.

SPURS 116, GRIZZLIES 103

SAN ANTONIO — Kawhi Leonard had 28 points and San Antonio rebounded from two discouraging road losses to beat Memphis and take a 3-2 lead in their first-round series.

San Antonio shot 14 for 28 on 3-point attempts, two off its postseason record, including 5-for-7 shooting by Patty Mills.

Mills finished with 20 points and Tony Parker added 16.

Mike Conley had 26 points and Marc Gasol added 17 for the Grizzlies, who have lost nine straight postseason games in San Antonio.

With each team winning on its home court, Game 6 is Thursday night in Memphis.

JAZZ 96, CLIPPERS 92

LOS ANGELES — Gordon Hayward scored 27 points, Utah controlled the paint, and the Jazz beat the Clippers 96-92 to take a 3-2 lead in their first-round playoff series.

Hayward returned after missing most of Utah's win in Game 4 because of food poisoning that caused him to lose weight and energy.

Chris Paul's 3-pointer drew the Clippers within two with 5 seconds left. After George Hill hit two free throws, Paul struggled getting the ball under control near the sideline and couldn't do anything as time expired.

The Jazz made five 3-pointers in the fourth quarter, including three by Rodney Hood, who finished with 16 points.

Paul led the Clippers with 28 points and J.J. Redick added 26 with injured star Blake Griffin watching from the bench, his right foot encased in a black walking boot.

Tigers rout the Mariners

Detroit scores nine in fifth inning

By NOAH TRISTER
 Associated Press

DETROIT — James McCann homered in the second inning, then Justin Upton and Alex Avila followed suit in the fourth.

The Detroit Tigers were just getting started.

Detroit added nine more runs in a fifth-inning onslaught, and despite the usual shakiness from the bullpen, the Tigers went on to rout the Seattle Mariners 19-9 on Tuesday night. Felix Hernandez was bothered by a stiff shoulder and allowed four runs in two innings. The next two Seattle pitchers didn't fare any better.

The teams combined for 40 hits and 14 walks.

"Don't know if I've ever been a part of a game like that before," McCann said.

It was the shortest outing for Hernandez (2-2) since 2015. Detroit finished with 24 hits, 19 of which came in the first five innings. That was despite injuries that kept Miguel Cabrera, J.D. Martinez and Jose Iglesias out of the lineup.

Jordan Zimmermann (2-1) allowed five runs in six innings. Jean Segura, Danny Valencia and Nelson Cruz hit solo homers for Seattle, but that wasn't nearly enough to keep up with Detroit.

Mikie Mahtook added another home run for the Tigers in the eighth. Ian Kinsler had four hits and four runs before being lifted for a pinch hitter in the seventh.

UP NEXT: MARINERS

• Seattle Mariners (8-13)
 at Detroit Tigers (11-8)
 • Today, 4:10 p.m.
 TV: RTNW, FSDT

SCOREBOARD

PREP SCHEDULE

TODAY

Baseball — Seaside at Astoria (CMH Field), 5 p.m.

Track — Warrenton at Clatskanie L&C Meet, 3:45 p.m.

THURSDAY

Baseball — Clatskanie at Warrenton, 5 p.m.; Wishkah Valley at Ilwaco, 4 p.m.

Track — NWL Meet at Nestucca, TBA

Boys Golf — Banks at Astoria, 3 p.m.

Girls Golf — Astoria Invitational, Noon

STANDINGS

BASEBALL

Cowapa League		League Overall	
Astoria	7-0	12-2	
Banks	5-2	8-5	
Valley Catholic	5-2	9-3	
Seaside	2-5	5-9-1	
Scappoose	1-5	7-7	
Tillamook	0-6	1-10	

Lewis & Clark League

Rainier	6-0	9-3
Clatskanie	3-2	5-4
Catlin Gabel	2-2	3-6
P. Christian	1-3	4-6-1
Warrenton	0-5	0-9

Northwest League

Knappa	6-1	9-3
Neah-Kah-Nie	3-3	4-8
Vernonia	2-1	6-3-1
Nestucca	2-4	6-5
Gaston	0-4	3-7

Knappa 12, Gaston 2

Gaston	010	01-2	5	4
Knappa	521	4x-12	10	0
Cullers, Losey (4) and Anderson; D.Takalo, Hoover (3) and Goozee. W: Hoover. L: Cullers. 2B: Kna, J.Miller, Hoover. HR: Cruz.				

SOFTBALL

Cowapa League		League Overall	
Banks	5-1	13-1	
Scappoose	5-1	12-2	
Astoria	4-2	7-8	
Tillamook	2-4	3-9	
Seaside	1-5	3-11	
Valley Catholic	1-5	4-9	

Lewis & Clark League

Rainier	6-0	12-1
Clatskanie	3-2	8-3
Warrenton	2-3	10-3
P. Adventist	1-3	4-3
P. Christian	0-4	0-9

Northwest League

Knappa	6-0	7-10
Gaston	3-0	5-6
Vernonia	1-0	4-1
Nestucca	0-4	0-8
Neah-Kah-Nie	0-6	2-8