

SPORTS

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Heimlich won't join Beavers in Omaha

Pitcher bows out from series

By ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

Oregon State pitcher Luke Heimlich, who as a teenager pleaded guilty to molesting a 6-year-old girl, will not accompany the Beavers to the College World Series.

The 21-year-old left-hander made the announcement in a statement released Thursday through a representative for his family. He called going to the series something that he and his teammates have worked toward all year.

"I'm sad to say I am not joining them because doing so would only create further distraction for my teammates, more turmoil for my family and given the high profile of the national championship, direct even more unwanted attention to an innocent young girl," the statement said.

Details about the molestation were revealed last week in a story published by The Oregonian. In an editorial accompanying the article, the newspaper said it learned about Heimlich's 2012 conviction in Washington state after running a background check that it routinely does for in-depth profiles.

"I want to wish my teammates the best. I hope they understand this decision as my family and I continue to work through this together. My hope is to return to OSU next year as a student-athlete and continue to earn the trust of my community," Heimlich's statement said.

Heimlich was the top pitcher during the regular season for the Beavers, who have lost just four games. He has compiled an 11-1 record with a 0.76 ERA.

He had been projected to be an early round pick in Major League Baseball's draft, which ended Wednesday without him being selected.

The Beavers are the top seed in the NCAA Tournament. Heimlich pitched in the opening round for the Beavers, before the story broke. He asked that he be removed from the rotation in the super regional round.

The Beavers (54-4) are scheduled to play Cal State Fullerton (39-22) on Saturday in the College World Series opener for both teams in Omaha.

Prosecutors in Washington state initially charged Heimlich with two counts of molestation for abuse that began when the girl was 4, The Oregonian said. He ultimately pleaded guilty to one count of molestation between February 2011 and December 2011, a period during which he was 15. Prosecutors dismissed the other charge as part of a plea bargain.

He entered a diversion program, received two years of probation and was ordered to attend sex offender treatment for two years, according to court records.

PBL basketball camp next week

The Daily Astorian

Registrations are being accepted for the Pacific Basketball League's annual summer camp, Monday through Thursday next week at Broadway Middle School.

The camp is divided into two sessions:

Session 1: 9 to 11:30 a.m., for incoming first through fourth graders;

Session 2: Noon to 3 p.m., for incoming fifth through eighth graders.

Cost is \$90 per child. Checks can be made payable to Pacific Basketball League (or PBL), P.O. Box 1015, Seaside, 97138-1015.

For more information, call (503) 717-4308.

Beaverton-based company to focus on hottest-sellers

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Nike wants to be more nimble on its feet.

The sneaker maker said Thursday that it plans to focus on the hottest-selling sneakers, slash the number of styles it offers and sell more shoes directly to customers online as part of a restructuring in which it also will cut about 1,400 jobs.

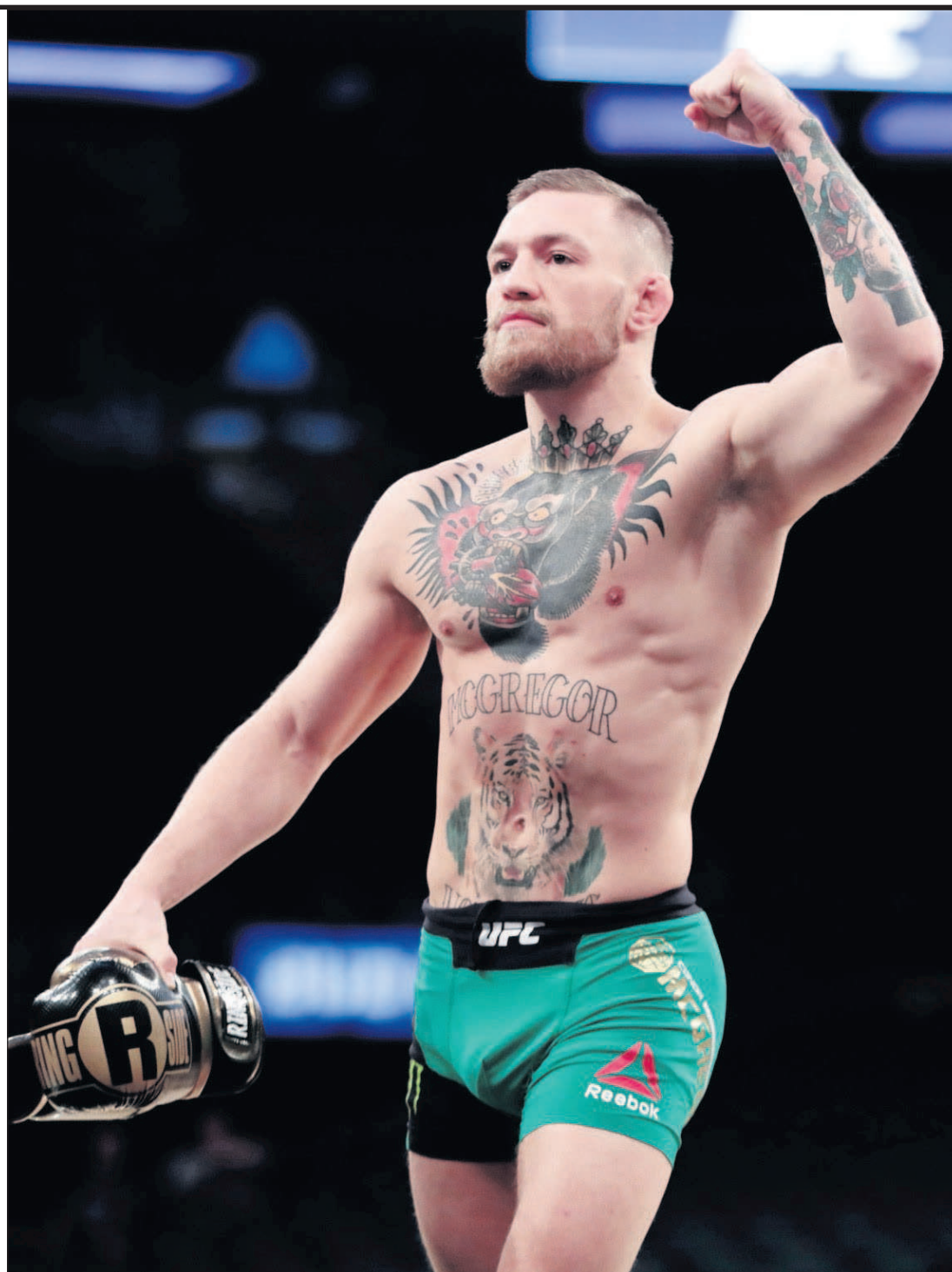
Nike said the moves will help it offer products to customers faster as it is facing increasing competition from smaller brands and premium labels. Another problem: The running and basketball shoes Nike is famous for may be outdated.

More people are choosing fashion over function, with sales of clas-

sic sneakers industry-wide climbing 26 percent last year, according to research from The NP Group. Meanwhile, sales of running performance sneakers were flat and sales of basketball performance sneakers dropped, according to the same report.

"Nike missed the fashion shift away from performance basketball to retro," said Matt Powell, the sports industry analyst at NP Group. "They still have not caught up."

Adidas, whose casual Stan Smith shoes have become popular again, has made a push to increase sales in the U.S. The German company said last month that first-quarter revenue in North America jumped 31 percent from a year before. And on the high end, Neiman Marcus noted to investors last week that sneakers, with an average retail price of \$360 per pair, have become a significant business as shoppers focus on a more casual lifestyle.



AP Photo/Julio Cortez

Conor McGregor gestures toward fans while working out at Madison Square Garden in New York in November. Boxer Floyd Mayweather Jr. said he will come out of retirement to face the UFC star in a boxing match on Aug. 26.

McGregor backers: Mayweather fight is no sideshow

Associated Press

SINGAPORE — Conor McGregor's fight against Floyd Mayweather Jr. on Aug. 26 has been described by critics as a novelty and a sideshow, among other things.

McGregor's camp doesn't care what it's called, promising only that it'll be a contest.

"Keep doubting us. We love it," McGregor's agent, Audie Attar, said in an interview Friday with Sports News Television. "The human element of sport is that anything can happen."

Mayweather, who retired in 2015 after winning all his 49 professional fights as a boxer, is back in training at age 40 after accepting an offer he couldn't refuse from the mixed martial arts fighter who has never had a pro boxing fight.

"These are two world-class combat sport athletes," Attar said. "Yes they come from different disciplines. Yes there are going to be different rules, so it's going to be confined within those set of rules and we understand that. But I don't think you can take away from (McGregor's) ability, his power, his reach, his ... all these different attributes that I think he will bring to the table."

Las Vegas oddsmakers immediately made May-

weather an 11-1 favorite when the fight — scheduled for 12 rounds in Las Vegas at 154 pounds in a boxing ring and under boxing rules — was announced.

McGregor, the wildly popular UFC star, is 21-3 in UFC fights, and is coming off a win in November against Eddie Alvarez. Although he hasn't boxed professionally, McGregor did box while growing up and is known for his striking expertise.

"Floyd's been an amazing tactician in term of his quickness, his ability to get in there, his ability to elude punches," Attar said. "But I think on Aug. 26, I'm bullish on the idea that that's going to change and he is going to meet someone that is going to have the physical attributes that will potentially catch him and be that one, 49-1."

Attar said Mayweather was arguably the greatest boxer of all time, "but there's some things that he hasn't faced before and Conor brings those ... unique differentiation attributes and strategies."

"Both of their styles will cause them to engage differently than Floyd's other competitors before Conor. And in my opinion, that's going to yield a different result."

"I'm more confident on the idea that we're gonna be that one. 49 and one."

Twins top Mariners in 6-2 win

Gimenez homers twice in victory

By DAVE CAMPBELL
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — After going deep twice in a game for the first time in his big league career, Chris Gimenez still has more mop-up relief appearances this season than home runs.

Wait, maybe the Minnesota Twins have this whole thing backward with their backup catcher.

"Hopefully I'm one of the better hitting pitchers in the league," Gimenez said with a wide smile, after his pair of drives on Thursday spurred the Twins to a 6-2 victory over the Seattle Mariners.

Eduardo Escobar sparked a five-run first inning with a two-run shot, and Jose Berrios (6-1) took over from there by pitching a career-best eight innings to win his third straight start. The first-place Twins raised their home record, the worst in the major leagues, to 14-20 with the four-game series split.

Gimenez hit a three-run homer with two outs in the fateful first for Ariel Miranda (6-3), who lost for the first time in 10 starts for the Mariners and lasted only four innings with 10 hits and six runs allowed. Gimenez then hit the foul pole in left field with a solo drive in the third inning, giving the 34-year-old a total of 18 home runs in 867 plate appearances.

"I had to talk to it a little bit as I was running to first," Gimenez said.

His conversations with Berrios throughout the afternoon turned out well, too, driving a strategy to mix in some change-ups with a lively fastball that the right-hander spotted well and that devastating curveball.

"We had chances to kind of get close but could never mount the big rally against him," Mariners manager Scott Servais said.

Berrios struck out six and yielded two runs and five hits. After finishing six innings only once in 14 starts as a rookie last season on his way to an 8.02 ERA, Berrios has lasted that long in five of seven turns this year.

"I was blessed to be able to go as far as I did today," he said through the team's interpreter.

Berrios silenced a lineup that totaled 45 hits and 27 runs over the first three games of the series, handing the Mariners just their sixth loss in the last 18 games.

"Sometimes it takes them awhile to get comfortable and trust what they can do up here," Twins manager Paul Molitor said. "We all never really lost hope that he was going to figure it out."

UP NEXT: MARINERS

• Seattle Mariners (33-35)
at Texas Rangers (32-33)
• Today, 5:05 p.m.
TV: RTNW, FSSW

Nike to slash 1,400 jobs, cut sneaker styles in shakeup



AP Photo/Michael Noble Jr.

People walk outside the Nike SoHo store Thursday in the SoHo neighborhood of New York. Nike said Thursday that it plans to sell more shoes directly to customers online as part of a restructuring in which it plans to cut about 1,400 jobs.