

SPORTS

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**SPORTS
IN BRIEF**
**Former ace
Hernandez upset
over Mariners' opening day plan**

PEORIA, Ariz. — Felix Hernandez doesn't think he could have changed the mind of Seattle Mariners manager Scott Servais about opening day, even by pitching well this spring.

With his ERA approaching 16, it's a moot point.

King Felix is royally agitated anyway.

Hernandez was tagged for seven runs in three-plus innings against the Cleveland Indians on Sunday, raising his spring ERA to 15.95 a day after Servais announced that Marco Gonzales would start Seattle's season opener against Oakland in Tokyo on March 20.

Seattle's decision ends Hernandez's run of 10 consecutive opening day starts.

Hernandez spoke publicly after the game for the first time since Servais' announcement. Asked if he was upset, Hernandez said simply, "Yeah," but declined to elaborate on his emotions.

"I knew it was going to happen," he added.

Hernandez was also asked if he could have convinced Servais to give him the opening day nod with a better spring camp.

"No," he said while shaking his head.

The 32-year-old has been losing fastball velocity since his mid-20s and been mostly hobbled and ineffective since turning 30.

The 2010 AL Cy Young Award winner had a career-worst 5.55 ERA in 29 games last season and was briefly removed from the rotation for the first time in the majors. This is his final season of a \$175 million, seven-year contract.

The Mariners have asked Hernandez to use his curveball more this spring, especially early in counts, because data suggests it's the right-hander's most effective pitch. Hernandez used the breaking ball often during a 1-2-3 first inning but got away from it as the game wore on.

"He needs to continue to work that in," Servais said. "It's one of his best pitches. Didn't go to it today."

**Mariners' Seager
needs surgery on left
hand, out for April**

PEORIA, Ariz. — Seattle Mariners third baseman Kyle Seager needs surgery on his left hand and will be out at least through April.

Manager Scott Servais said Seager will have surgery today to repair the tendon of his middle finger. Seager had an MRI over the weekend that revealed the extent of the injury, which is just above the knuckle.

This will be Seager's first time ever on the injured list. It's unclear how long he will be out.

Seager is coming off the worst season of his career in 2018, when he hit .221. He changed his offseason training regimen and arrived at spring training slimmed down and in better condition. He was hitting .318 in nine spring training games.

With Seager out, the Mariners are likely to move Ryon Healy to third base. Healy played in only two games at third base last season with Seattle, but made 103 starts at third during the 2016 and 2017 seasons with Oakland.

— Associated Press

SCOREBOARD
**PREP SPORTS SCHEDULE
WEDNESDAY**

Baseball — Knappa at Warrenton, 4 p.m.
Softball — Gladstone at Astoria, 5 p.m.; Seaside at Molalla, 4:30 p.m.

THURSDAY

Baseball — Astoria at Gladstone, 5 p.m.; Naselle at Knappa, 4 p.m.

Softball — Astoria at Clatskanie, 4:30 p.m.

FRIDAY

Baseball — North Marion at Astoria, 5 p.m.; Nestucca at Warrenton, 4 p.m.

Softball — Seaside at Gladstone, 5 p.m.; Nestucca at Warrenton, 4 p.m.

Track — Astoria at Cotton Invitational, 4:30 p.m.; Seaside at Grant, 4:30 p.m.

ASTORIA MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAMS FIND SUCCESS AT STATE



Astoria's fifth-grade basketball team — the Bandits — took third place.

Photos by Keely Hjerleid-Bohannon

The Daily Astorian



ABOVE: The seventh-grade Astoria Anglers won three games in the Silver bracket.
BELOW: Astoria's team in the eighth-grade Silver bracket went 3-1.



Astoria Middle School had three teams compete in the seventh annual state basketball tournament for Oregon middle schools, March 8-10 in Bend, Redmond and Sisters.

Astoria's fifth-grade team — the Bandits — took third place in the Silver bracket.

They played their first game Friday night in Sisters, defeating the Molalla Indians 33-27.

Their lone loss came early Saturday morning, coming up short against eventual champion Pleasant Hill, 38-36.

The Bandits rebounded with a 43-27 win Saturday afternoon over Tigard, then won Sunday's third-place game against West Linn, 40-36.

At the seventh-grade level, the Astoria Anglers went 3-1 in the Silver bracket.

The team opened with a 55-42 win Friday over Sherwood, then played a single game Saturday, dropping a 37-20 decision to the Molalla Indians.

The Anglers closed the tournament by winning a pair of Sunday nail-biters, 52-50 over Tualatin, and 47-46 over Sherwood.

In the eighth-grade Silver bracket, the Astoria team also went 3-1.

The eventual champion Woodburn Bulldogs topped Astoria 78-56 in a 9:15 a.m. Saturday opener in Redmond, before the Astorians bounced back with a 62-39 win over the Dayton Pirates. Astoria closed the day with a 54-53 victory over Clackamas.

In Sunday's consolation action, Astoria took down Summit in a high-scoring game, 69-54.

Gonzaga, Virginia, UNC remain 1-2-3 atop new AP Top 25 poll

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Gonzaga, Virginia and North Carolina remain 1-2-3 atop an otherwise reshuffled top 10 in the latest AP Top 25 poll.

The Zags sit on top for a third straight week, earning 41 of 64 first-place votes on Monday. And the Cavaliers also stayed put behind Gonzaga for a third straight week, claiming the remaining 23 first-place votes.

Gonzaga (29-2) didn't play last week after wrapping up its regular-season schedule on March 2. The Zags blew out Pepperdine on Monday night to start play in the West Coast Conference Tournament. Virginia (28-2) and UNC (26-5) finished tied atop the Atlantic Coast Conference regular-season standings with wins Saturday.

Kentucky was fourth, followed by Duke — which lost for a second time to the rival Tar Heels without freshman star Zion Wil-

liamson, though coach Mike Krzyzewski has said the 6-foot-7, 285-pound Williamson could be ready for this week's ACC Tournament.

Michigan State, Texas Tech, Tennessee, LSU and Michigan rounded out the top 10.

Preseason No. 1 Kansas fell to No. 17 for its lowest ranking since the 2013-14 season, which followed last week's end of the Jayhawks' 14-year run of winning at least a share of the Big 12 regular-season title.

No. 23 Marquette had the biggest fall of the week, sliding seven spots after closing the regular season on a four-game losing streak. Kansas and No. 24 Cincinnati each fell four spots.

Auburn is the only addition at No. 22, returning for the first time since mid-January and after peaking at No. 7 in December. UCF slid out from its No. 25 ranking in the last poll.



Gonzaga coach Mark Few.

AP Photo/Jeff Chiu