

MLB

Kazmir debuts, A's top Mariners

Comedian Ferrell plays for each team



By RICK EYMER
Associated Press

MESA, Ariz. — Scott Kazmir pitched 2 2-3 innings in his first spring start and the Oakland Athletics rallied to beat the Seattle Mariners 4-3 Thursday.

Kazmir gave up two unearned runs and three hits. He walked two and struck out four.

Austin Jackson tripled and singled and Nelson Cruz, Justin Ruggiano and Jesus Montero each drove in runs for the Mariners.

"I'm just making sure I am staying consistent," Jackson said. "I want to get my timing down and not focus on results too much."

Jordan Pries, a Mariners minor leaguer, went three innings, giving up a run and one hit. He walked one and struck out four.

Funnyman Will Ferrell played shortstop for Oakland

in the top of the first and later was at second base for Seattle. No balls were hit to the actor.

Ferrell planned to play for 10 teams in five games during the day, spending time at every position. The adventure was being filmed for an HBO special Ferrell is dedicating to fighting cancer.

THE OTHER GUY: Ferrell started his day as the A's shortstop and was eventually "traded" to the Mariners in time to play an inning at second base.

"All I wanted to do was turn around and see what he was doing back there," Kazmir said. "I heard him pretty much every pitch."

Said Pries: "I knew he was out there. I never would have thought that Will Ferrell would play second base behind me. I threw a cutter and he yelled, 'I like that . bleep.' I looked at him and thought 'OK, great.'"



AP Photo/Matt York
Actor Will Ferrell calls the runner out as he plays second base for the Seattle Mariners during the second inning of a spring training baseball game against the Oakland Athletics, Thursday, March 12, 2015, in Mesa, Ariz. The comedian plans to play every position while making appearances at five Arizona spring training games on Thursday.

College Football

Holder of No. 2 pick attends Ducks pro day

Associated Press

EUGENE — Heisman Trophy winner Marcus Mariota highlighted Oregon's pro day Thursday, looking to show he has the skillset to succeed in the NFL.

Five NFL general managers, as well as Tennessee coach Ken Whisenhunt, watched the workout at the Ducks' indoor facility.

Mariota, along with 2013 Heisman Trophy winner Jameis Winston, also participated in the NFL Combine last month. Both quarterbacks are considered top picks when the draft starts on April 30. Tampa Bay has the top pick, followed by the Titans.

Mariota hit his receiver on 60 of 67 overall throws he made at pro day, including nine of 10 into the red zone.

"I thought it went OK," he said afterward. "There were some missed throws here and there but overall I thought I did well."

Mariota told the NFL Network he had met with the Buccaneers and Eagles, and was also going to sit down with the Titans.

Mariota threw for 4,454 yards with 42 touchdowns and had just four interceptions as a Duck last season, but scouts wonder whether he can make the transition from the speedy no-huddle spread offense of Oregon to the NFL. On pro day, he took snaps from under center and dropped back to pass.

"I think coming out there was a little bit of butterflies," he said. "But that's OK, that's natural. Once we got in the thick of things, the group started having fun. It was enjoyable."

Other Oregon players taking part in pro day included center Hroniss Grasu, left tackle Jake Fisher, defensive tackle Arik Armstrong, safety Erick Dargan and cornerback Dior Mathis.

NFL

Graham excited to join Seahawks, waiting on Unger to pass physical

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press

Jimmy Graham's hobby is flying small planes. So after completing his morning workout earlier this week he decided to fly a six-seater to a Florida beach for lunch.

While there, New Orleans coach Sean Payton called and informed Graham his next destination was on the opposite side of the country.

A shock for the perennial Pro Bowl tight end in not just being traded, but being dealt to the two-time defending NFC champions? You bet.

"Maybe not even a month ago, I was in the city and saw Mickey (Loomis) and was talking about next season with Mickey," Graham said in a conference call with Seattle-area media on Thurs-

day. "Even when the season ended, just talking with the coaches, talking about what we're going to do, what we're going to work on, so it was definitely out of left field."

Graham became the latest option in the Seattle Seahawks offense when he was acquired on Tuesday along with a fourth-round draft pick in exchange for center Max Unger and Seattle's first-round pick. On a day when free agency was supposed to be the focus, the deal for one of the most prolific tight ends in football upstaged everything else.

Graham was in Seattle on Wednesday and passed his physical but the trade won't be finalized until Unger takes his physical with the Saints, expected next week. He'll be leaving behind the relationship he developed since he

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— Jimmy Graham,

On his first conversation with Seattle QB Russell Wilson

arrived in the NFL with New Orleans quarterback Drew Brees, but is already looking ahead to the next chapter and what he could add to go along with Russell Wilson, Marshawn Lynch and the rest of Seattle's offense.

"Marshawn, you have to put guys in the box and you have to bring safeties down," Graham said. "When you're playing cover zero there are a lot of one-on-ones, there are a lot of opportunities down the field, there are a lot of oppor-

tunities in that middle section where you have guys in these one-on-one matchups and I think eventually teams won't be able to do that. You won't be able to go cover zero to stop the run and I think I can help open that up. And then in the red zone, that's something I've always been good at."

Not surprisingly, Wilson was the first Seahawks player to reach out to Graham after the trade. Graham said he'll go through the same process with Wilson that he did with

Brees in developing their passing game relationship.

"I said I'm going to go wherever I need to go and I'm going to be wherever I need to be with you and to work on this chemistry. Because that is the most important thing is chemistry and the only way to work on that is time," Graham said.

Since the start of the 2011 season no tight end in the NFL has matched Graham's production. He has led all tight ends in receptions, yards receiving and touchdowns. He held out before the start of last season before signing a \$40 million, four-year extension rather than playing under the franchise tag. Seattle will inherit the remaining three years on that contract.

Graham argued during the franchise tag situation with the

Saints that he should be viewed as a wide receiver. While his position remains tight end, he'll essentially be Seattle's No. 1 receiver. And the attention that'll have to be paid toward Graham should create more opportunities for the rest of Seattle's receiving group.

He's well aware there will be fewer passes thrown in Seattle than the aerial show in New Orleans. Graham was targeted 124 times last season by the Saints. No Seattle receiver was targeted more than 100 times.

"It's all about having an opportunity and a chance at winning a championship and that's all I care about. ... I just want to be part of this team and I want to be there in big moments for this team and this franchise to help us win games."

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