

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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MLB M's in awkward spot entering 2nd half

Slump going into break leaves GM with tough decisions

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press

SEATTLE — Trying to define who the Seattle Mariners are heading into the second half of the season is going to be a challenge that leaves the club in a difficult spot. The team only has a short time in July to decide how to move forward for the final two months.

Are they in position to be wild card contenders in the American League? Or would they be better served by punting on an injury-filled season and building for the future prior to the July 31 non-waiver trade deadline?

In the view of general manager Jerry Dipoto, those questions are one and the same with the Mariners four games back in the wild card standings following the All-Star break.

"We are playing in a league of 15 teams, I believe 12 are within five-ish games of a playoff spot. We're one of them and we have as



In this Nov. 9, 2016, file photo, Seattle Mariners general manager Jerry Dipoto talks to the media during baseball's annual general managers meeting, in Scottsdale, Ariz. Trying to define who the Mariners are heading into the second half of the season is a challenge and leaves the club in a difficult spot of only having a short time in July to decide how to move forward for the final two months of the season.

much talent as anybody else on that board," Dipoto said before the break. "We've seen what this team can do when they're clicking on all

cylinders, so as we move forward, whether it be for the second half of 2017 or 2018 and beyond, our goal is to continue to build onto the

core of this team." Seattle could have made the situation far simpler for Dipoto if not for an awful two weeks prior to the break

when the Mariners failed to take advantage of a favorable schedule. In the final 14 games before the break, the Mariners went 4-10 just as

they were finally getting closer to full health after patching together a lineup, rotation and bullpen since opening day.

Most puzzling was that the slump came after a promising period during which the Mariners appeared ready to be contenders.

"We have underperformed, truly," Dipoto said. "Particularly over the course of the last couple of weeks. We just haven't played well, and we are at probably our most, the longest stretch of positive health that we've had since opening day, and we've played perhaps as poorly as we've played all year long."

Inconsistency has defined most of Seattle's season. The Mariners have been sloppy at times, making careless mistakes. The offense has disappeared for stretches or the bullpen has failed to close out winnable games. During other stretches, the Mariners have shown the punch to be the playoff contender that most believed them to be before the season began.

Sitting at 43-47 is probably where Seattle deserves to be. But are they markedly better or worse? That's the unknown.

See MARINERS/2B

HERMISTON

In this 2016 file photo, two players battle it out in the high school boys championship game of the Takin' It to the Streets three-on-three basketball tournament in Hermiston.

Staff by Kathy Aney



Hermiston welcomes 3-on-3 hoops teams

Takin' It To The Streets returns this weekend

East Oregonian

Downtown Hermiston will transform into the place to be for 3-on-3 basketball enthusiasts this weekend as Takin' It To The Streets returns for two days of fast-paced fun for all ages.

With registration closed, 169 teams have entered this year's tournament, which organizers said is about average.

The tournament's elite divisions typically feature a number of former and current college players, as well as top high school athletes. Brackets for all divisions will be posted

online at Hermiston3on3.org.

Action begins on Saturday at 9 a.m. and will run until about 6 p.m. The slam dunk and 3-point contests will be held at noon at center court.

Action will pick back up at 8 a.m. on Sunday, and championships will be played throughout the day with the final games expected to again finish around 6 p.m. The men's and women's elite championships typically are played mid-afternoon.

Temperatures are predicted to reach 98 degrees at their hottest on Saturday, and organizers said vendors are well prepared with lots of water and other items to help players and spectators beat the heat.

Wimbledon

Querrey stuns Murray in quarterfinals

American in semifinals for first time since 2009

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

LONDON — The first portentous sign of trouble for Andy Murray, surprisingly enough, came right as the two-time Wimbledon champion constructed an ample lead over Sam Querrey in the quarterfinals Wednesday.

The top-seeded Murray flicked a cross-court backhand passing shot so forcefully, placed it so perfectly, that Querrey barely got his racket on the ball, sending a volley well wide. With that, Murray was up by a set plus a break in the second. As he headed to the sideline for the changeover,

See WIMBLEDON/2B



Sam Querrey of the United States returns to Britain's Andy Murray during their Men's Singles Quarterfinal Match on day nine at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London Wednesday, July 12, 2017.

PENDLETON

D-jaxx back up Roberts to earn split

Pendleton beats The Dalles 10-0 in Game 2

East Oregonian

THE DALLES — Pepsi Diamondjaxx pitcher Cooper Roberts was able to count on his defense to get out of jams in the second half of a double-header on Tuesday, and The Dalles left runners on base in every inning as Roberts threw five scoreless frames in a 10-0 win that gave the teams a split.

The Dalles took the first game 11-5, but stranded 10 runners in the

second game. Roberts allowed just three hits, but only struck out one while walking four. Ty Beers pitched a hitless sixth in the run-rule shortened contest.

The Diamondjaxx (11-11) started scoring right away and put one run across in each of the first two innings, then blew the game open with five in the third.

Roberts helped his own cause with a pair of RBI to go with a 2-for-3 game at the plate, and Tanner Sweek (2 for 4), Jonathan Begay (1 for 2), Caden Primus and Greyson Clark also drove in runs.

In Game 1, Colton Henderson started on the mound but left after allowing three earned runs in the second inning. Reliever Nat Hunsaker didn't fare much better, and despite striking out six batters in three innings, he allowed eight runs (four earned) on five hits.

The Diamondjaxx trailed 7-0 before scoring three in the fifth inning, and cut the lead to 7-5 in the top of the sixth, but gave up four in the bottom half of the inning and stranded two runners in the seventh.

Leaders at the plate were Tyler Browning (2 for 4, 3 RBI) and Clark (2 for 3, RBI).

Sports shorts

Lochte returns to competition

LOS ANGELES (AP) Ryan Lochte is returning to USA Swimming competition this week for the first time since his 10-month suspension for his behavior at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics ended.

The 32-year-old new father will compete at the L.A. Invitational, which begins Thursday on the Southern California campus where he trains and now represents Trojan Swim Club.

The six-time Olympic gold medalist is entered in the 50- and 100-meter freestyles and 200 individual medley. His times of 48.16 seconds in the 100 free and 1 minute, 54.00 seconds in the IM are top-seeded.

Lochte was ineligible to compete at the recent U.S. nationals, which kept him from qualifying for the world championships beginning July 23 in Hungary. His suspension ended June 30.



Lochte

"If we want as the NFL, as a union, to get anything done, players have to be willing to strike. That's the thing that guys need to 100 percent realize."

— Richard Sherman
Seattle Seahawks cornerback when asked if NFL players need to consider striking in order to get player contracts up to the level of the NBA and MLB.

Forbes says Dallas Cowboys are most valuable sports team

NEW YORK (AP) — The Dallas Cowboys are worth \$4.2 billion, making them the most valuable sports franchise for the second straight year, according to Forbes.

In its annual rankings, Forbes placed the New York Yankees second — up from fourth a year ago — with a value of \$3.7 billion.

Next are three soccer clubs: Manchester United (\$3.69 billion), Barcelona (\$3.64) and Real Madrid (\$3.58).

The rest of the top 10 includes the New England Patriots (\$3.4 billion), New York Knicks (\$3.3 billion), New York Giants (\$3.1 billion), San Francisco 49ers (\$3 billion) and Los Angeles Lakers (\$3 billion).

The rankings are based on Forbes' valuations done over the last year for all NFL, NHL, NBA, MLB, soccer, NASCAR and Formula One teams.



THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1881 — William Renshaw sets the record for the shortest men's championship match by time and games by beating John T. Hartley 6-0, 6-1, 6-1 in 37 minutes at Wimbledon.

1943 — The first night game in All-Star history is played at Philadelphia's Shibe Park. Boston's Bobby Doerr provides the big blow, a three-run homer, for the AL's 5-3 win.

1972 — Robert Irsay buys the stock of the Los Angeles Rams for \$19 million and swaps the franchise for the Baltimore Colts. The players and coaches are not affected.

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