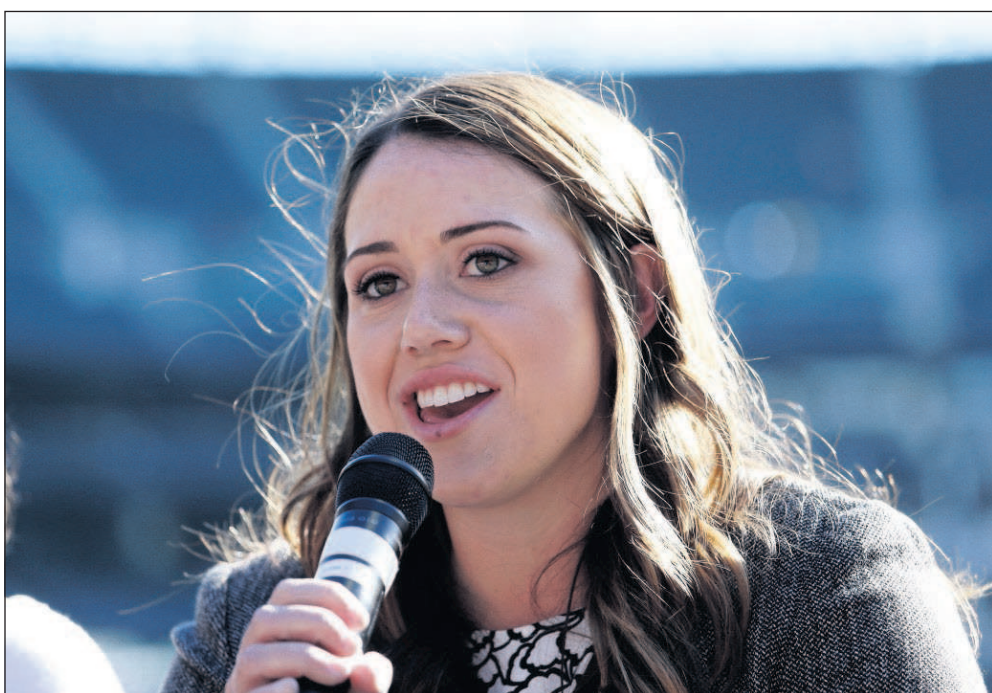


MLB

Seattle employs 1st full-time female scout in over 50 years

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press



AP Photo/Elaine Thompson

Amanda Hopkins talks on a panel on women in baseball before Tuesday's game between the Seattle Mariners and the Baltimore Orioles in Seattle. Hopkins, 24, is about to complete her second year as an area scout for the Mariners, a position that has made her a part of baseball history.

SEATTLE — Nearly two years ago, Amanda Hopkins' phone rang. It was a call she dreamt of receiving, one that broke barriers and made her a part of baseball history.

Almost immediately, her competitiveness took over.

"She put a sign up on her bedroom door saying, 'Stay out, we're opponents,'" recalled her father, Ron Hopkins, a special assistant to the general manager for the Pittsburgh Pirates. "In other words, my bedroom is off limits to you, there is info in here. I got a kick out of it."

The 24-year-old Hopkins is now about to complete her second year as an area scout for the Seattle Mariners. Her responsibility is the Four Corners area of the Southwest, taking her to destinations like Greeley, Colorado, and Hobbs, New Mexico, two of the more challenging places to get to from her base in the Phoenix area.

She is also the first full-time female baseball scout in more than 50 years, breaking through a barrier that required diligence on her end and willingness by the Mariners organization.

Yet, Hopkins does not view herself through that prism or want to be viewed as a trailblazer. She's a scout. That's it.

"I think if anything people

are more shocked sometimes when I will go meet with a player in the office or something like that. Maybe they just know, hey the Mariners' scout is coming in to meet with you today and they walk in and they're like, 'Oh.' That kind of thing," Hopkins said. "It's usually more of like a shocked look. But then they're more curious, they're like, 'How'd you get into this?' And they kind of like want a brief rundown of how I got to where I am. All

the players, all the coaches, are incredibly respectful to me."

While she is believed to be the first woman to work as a full-time baseball scout since Edith Houghton in the middle of the 20th century, Hopkins has been around baseball since she was a child.

She traveled with her father to games, regularly making trips to the Alaskan Summer League or the Cape Cod League in summers.

She would run the radar gun and pass along the speeds to her dad when she was as young as 8. It was obvious early on she possessed the same critical eye as her dad.

"She learned at an early age the difference between a curveball and a slider. As she got older it just sort of grew on her," Ron said.

"I'd go out with my dad and they'd be like 'Oh what do you want to do when you grow up?' And I'd tell them, 'I want to be a baseball

scout,'" Amanda said. "It's like this little girl telling them that and it's like, 'Oh that's cute. She wants to be like her dad.' But really, I think it was kind of like she'll grow out of it. That's kind of what everyone thought."

Instead, her passion for the job only grew. She majored in psychology while playing softball at Central Washington University, yet that failed to satisfy her desire to be around baseball.

"The whole time I was in there I wanted to be a baseball scout," Hopkins said. "And I remember probably my freshman year, sophomore year, I was like I really don't want to do anything but that. So why am I trying to almost talk myself out of it and find a different path?"

Hopkins served as an intern in Seattle's baseball operations department in the summer of 2014, but worked mostly with amateur scouting. A year later, she was sponsored by the Mariners to attend scout school and about a month after returning she got the offer.

"I was a little nervous myself because I knew she was going to be breaking a little bit of a barrier and she was pretty young," said Tom McNamara, who hired Hopkins and is currently a special assistant to the general manager with the

Mariners. "I went into Jerry (Dipoto's) office and I had a lump in my throat and I said, 'This is what I want to do.' And he was all for it. He didn't even hesitate."

When she was hired in December 2015, Hopkins was reluctant to talk about her place in baseball history. She wanted more experience as a professional before talking about a career that was just getting started.

"She was down in Arizona in the beginning and I would check on her and finally she said, 'Tom, I'm OK. You don't need to check on me every other day,'" McNamara recalled.

Hopkins was part of a panel earlier this week about women in baseball organized by the Mariners. She is starting to get comfortable with the history she has made. But she doesn't want that to be her entire story in baseball.

"I have so much to learn still. This is such a profession that takes so many years to fully understand and you're continually learning," Hopkins said. "My dad, 40 years into scouting, is still learning something every time he goes to the park. So I definitely think that I just want to be the best area scout I can be right now. But I love the scouting aspect of it. I really think that I want to stay in the scouting side of the game."

MARINERS: Ariel Miranda starts Saturday's game

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Mariners in the first game of a 12-game trip.

MLB Statcast has been measuring home runs only in the last three seasons. Some players doubt the validity of the measurements, and some of the Mariners had doubts whether it was even Cruz's longest homer. But catcher Mike Zunino, who had two doubles and drove in two runs, said "you could have told me 500 (feet) and I would have believed it."

Cruz acknowledged that he "squared it up pretty good, yeah."

Erasmio Ramirez won his first game for the Mariners since April 1, 2014.

Ramirez, who was traded back to the Mariners on July 28 after pitching 2 1/2 seasons with the Rays, gave up one run and two hits in six innings, leaving the game with a 6-1 lead.

"It feels weird because it's no more than a month, but ... we have to fight for the playoffs so I cannot just come in here and give up," Ramirez (5-4) said. "I have a lot of friends on the other side, but at the same time it's a game and I have to play for



AP Photo/Chris O'Meara

Seattle Mariners' Mike Zunino follows through on his two-run double off Tampa Bay Rays pitcher Austin Pruitt during the fourth inning of a baseball game Friday, Aug. 18, 2017, in St. Petersburg, Fla. Mariners' Ben Gamel and Guillermo Heredia both scored.

my team at this moment."

Hits by Robinson Cano, Cruz, Danny Valencia and Ben Gamel helped the Mariners score three runs in the first off Rays starter Austin Pruitt. Back-to-back doubles by Guillermo Heredia and Zunino and a single by Jean Segura brought in two more runs and made it 5-0 in the third.

Cruz's home run off reliever Brad Boxberger drove in Seattle's final run in the ninth.

"It's great when he gets hot because they're not just singles, they're doubles and homers," Mariners manager Scott Servais said.

Pruitt (6-4) gave up six runs and 11 hits in seven innings, throwing 107 pitches in his sixth major league start.

Kevin Kiermaier, playing for the first time since fracturing his hip on June 8, led off the sixth with a double off Ramirez and scored Tampa Bay's run on a sacrifice fly.

"A long wait for that to happen again, but hopefully you'll see plenty more of that in the next month or so," Kiermaier said.

Wilson Ramos had three hits for the Rays, who lost for the seventh time in eight games and fell four games below .500 (60-64) for the first time this season.

TRAINER'S ROOM MARINERS: 3B Kyle Seager lost about 12 pounds while missing two games with a stomach virus, and "he still looks pretty thin," according to Servais. ... OF Jarrod Dyson (strained groin) said he felt better Friday, but Servais wanted to give him another day off. ... Heredia was in the lineup after negative X-rays on a forearm that got hit by a pitch.

RAYS: RHP Matt Andriese (stress reaction, right hip) took a ground ball off his shin and left Friday's rehab start at Class-A Charlotte after just two pitches.

UP NEXT Mariners LHP Ariel Miranda (7-6) will face Rays RHP Jake Odorizzi (6-6) on Saturday night. Miranda pitched the only complete game of his career against the Rays on June 4, a 7-1 Mariners victory.



Sean Meagher/The Oregonian via AP

Portland Timbers' Jeremy Ebobisse (17) is taken down during an MLS soccer match against the New York Red Bulls in Portland on Friday.

TIMBERS: Defender Mabiala sent off with red card in 80th minute

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Valeri, who scored the lone goal last week in the loss to the Reds, took a pass from Diego Chara in the corner and caught New York goalkeeper Luis Robles off guard from atop the box.

In a scoreless first half, the Timbers couldn't manage to break through despite a few good opportunities, Darlington Nagbe's shot from some 20 yards out in the 39th minute that caromed off the crossbar.

Portland defender

Larrys Mabiala was sent off with a red card in the 80th minute after pulling New York's Gonzalo Veron down outside the penalty box. Fidel Escobar's free kick went just wide.

Timbers goalkeeper Jeff Attinella was able to deflect Sal Zizzo's header in the 90th minute before Mattocks' goal as time ran out.

Robles, New York's captain for the game, made his club-record 164th start.

The Red Bulls will visit Sporting Kansas City in the U.S. Open Cup championship game Sept. 20.

SEAHAWKS: Fant rolled into by teammate Britt

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with two weeks remaining in the preseason.

Fant was injured midway through the second quarter when he was rolled into by teammate Justin Britt and immediately fell to the turf in pain. The team training staff attended to Fant on the field and placed an air splint around his lower right leg before he was taken away.

The team announced Fant had a knee injury and may have significantly changed Seattle's plans for the offensive line. Fant took over at left tackle midway through last season and spent the offseason reshaping his body to be stronger going into this season. Earlier this week offensive line coach Tom Cable said Seattle was set on the left side of the offensive line with Fant at tackle and Luke Joeckel at guard.

Fant's injury overshadowed what was an otherwise solid performance by the Seahawks. Williams continued to make a bid for a roster spot with an acrobatic 27-yard catch, followed by his 1-yard TD on Seattle's opening drive. He nearly had a second TD but couldn't haul in a deep pass from Wilson near the goal line in the second quarter.

Minnesota's Sam Bradford was 7 of 11 for 95 yards, leading three drives for the Vikings before calling it a night. Taylor Heinicke threw a 21-yard touchdown pass to Bucky Hodges in the fourth quarter.

BENNETT SITS: Seahawks defensive end Michael Bennett sat during the national anthem for the second straight game of the preseason.

Bennett was alone sitting on the Seahawks bench during the "The Star-Spangled Banner." But teammates showed support for Bennett with center Justin Britt standing alongside with his hand on Bennett's shoulder. Defensive back Jeremy Lane also stood next to Bennett.

KICKER REVENGE: Walsh took great joy in having success against his former team that released him last season. Walsh made a pair of 52-yard field goals in the second half and made gestures toward the Minnesota sideline after each kick. Walsh pointed at the sideline after his first make and walked toward the bench and appeared to say something after the second.

Walsh nearly had three made kicks of beyond 50 yards but a 53-yard attempt in the first half hit the



AP Photo/Stephen Brashear

Seattle Seahawks offensive tackle George Fant is helped onto a cart after he went down on a play against the Minnesota Vikings during the first half of an NFL preseason game on Friday in Seattle.

crossbar. **START COOKIN':** Vikings' rookie Dalvin Cook ran well in the first half against most of Seattle's starting defense. With the Vikings bringing back Latavius Murray slowly from ankle surgery in March, Cook had seven carries for 40 yards in the first half, including a 15-yarder. Cook also had one reception for 10 yards.

KICKIN' IT: Both of Minnesota's kickers converted their opportunities in the first half. Marshall Koehn hit for 29 yards in the first quarter

and Kai Forbath was good from 51 yards just before halftime. That was the only opportunities for either kicker as the Vikings had only two drives inside the Seattle 40.

CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES: Davis' touchdown was his first since signing with the Seahawks in the offseason and he had a unique celebration. Davis ran into the end zone then laid down using the ball as a pillow as his teammates joined him to celebrate. It was the most extensive of any of the touchdown celebrations.

+ If you were suddenly transported into the presence of God and you heard a prosecuting attorney listing all the reasons you should be sent to hell, how would you plead? Guilty or not guilty?

The apostle Paul said, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God? (Romans 3:23). That makes us guilty as charged. What is the penalty for our sin? "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord? (Romans 6:23)

What could we say in our defense? "God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8)

Because Jesus became our substitute, the penalty has been paid. But we must accept His forgiveness as a gift. The only requirement is that we recognize our need and accept His offer.

"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved... For 'whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved' (Romans 10:9, 13)

If you haven't done so before, tell Jesus that you believe He died as your substitute and accept the free and undeserved gift of forgiveness. That's the only way to be right about your wrong, to be accepted by God, and to be sure of heaven.