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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2018

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NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE



In this Jan. 7, 2018, file photo, Jacksonville Jaguars defensive end Yannick Ngakoue, right, draws a penalty by hitting Buffalo Bills quarterback Tyrod Taylor with helmet-to-helmet contact during the first half of an NFL wild-card playoff football game in Jacksonville, Fla. The NFL's new rule making it a penalty when a player leads with his helmet is generating plenty of grumbling about taking the football out of the sport, but more practically it's led to confusion about how it'll be enforced.

AP Photo/Stephen B. Morton, File

Head-to-head

While some players, coaches question new NFL helmet rule, others eager to see game change

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**
AP Sports Writer

Visceral blowback to the NFL's updated rule that players can't lead with their helmets to make contact is straight out of tough-guy football 101. Hard-hitting defensive backs say the league is destroying the physical element of the game or lament that it's changing the sport entirely.

"Do they want us to play flag football?" Dolphins cornerback Xavien Howard said. "It's crazy."

Beyond the criticism from old-school players bristling at another rule change or point of emphasis is legitimate confusion as

to how the enhanced regulations will actually be enforced. No longer can a player initiate contact with his head anywhere on an opponent's body, penalized 15 yards or possibly by ejection in egregious cases, and players and coaches — offensive guys, too — are bracing for how it will be applied.

"You just hope it's not called as frequently, because if they are going to call it on every single offensive and defensive lineman, the game is going to be played at a snail's pace," 49ers cornerback Richard Sherman said. "It seems like they are neglecting the impact it is going to have on the game, and I don't think they fully understand the scope and how huge it will be."

Contact to a player's head and neck has been a penalty for some time now, but this rule was ramped up to take it a step further. A ball carrier or an offensive lineman can't lower his head into a defender, and a defensive player can't make any part of his helmet the primary point of contact when attempting to tackle.

It's similar to the NCAA rule that has been in place since 2013, though at the college level, "targeting" carries an automatic ejection, reviewable by replay. The league estimated that just two plays last season would've led to an ejection under the new rule that's forcing players to adjust their

See NFL/3B

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— **Richard Sherman**, 49ers cornerback

Colon beats Hernandez, gets record 246th win

Passes Dennis Martinez for winningest Latin American pitcher

By **STEPHEN HAWKINS**
AP Sports Writer

ARLINGTON, Texas — Bartolo Colon became the top-winning pitcher born in Latin America, punctuating his 246th career victory with a nifty snag as the Texas Rangers roughed up Felix Hernandez and the Seattle Mariners 11-4 on Tuesday night.

The 45-year-old Colon, from the Dominican Republic, made his sixth start since earning his 245th win on June 30 that matched the mark held by Dennis Martinez from Nicaragua.

Colon (6-10) gave up four runs and eight hits in seven innings. The portly and popular right-hander walked none and struck out one.

Colon retired 14 of the last 16 batters he faced after Seattle had two triples in the third, an inning after back-to-back homers by Nelson Cruz and Kyle Seager.

After throwing his 94th and last pitch, Colon reached out and snagged Dee Gordon's comeback liner while slipping into a squat on the mound, but managing to stay upright on the inning-ending play.

Adrian Beltre, Jurickson Profar and Rougned Odor all homered off Hernandez (8-10), who allowed a career-high 11 runs — seven earned — in six innings. Odor also had a two-run double.

When Beltre struck out in the first against his old friend and former teammate, Hernandez laughed while playfully pointing him back toward the dugout. Beltre grounded into a double play in the third, but his 468th career homer was a solo shot to straightway center in the sixth that made it 11-4.

Hernandez, whose 168 career wins are the most by a Venezuelan-born pitcher, struck out two

MLB
Rangers
11
Mariners
4

See MARINERS/3B

HERMISTON

Catch a local at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo

By **BRETT KANE**
East Oregonian

Local cowboys and cowgirls will take to the Farm-City Pro Rodeo arena to defend their home turf — or dirt — this week.

Several local competitors are currently ranked within the top 20 on the 2018 Columbia River Circuit and will perform throughout the week's rodeo events.

You can catch steer wrestlers Dalton Massey and Ryan Bothum of Hermiston on Friday at 2 p.m. during that day's slack. Massey is currently ranked at No. 8 and Bothum at No. 13. Bothum will

also compete that night at 7:45 p.m.

Team ropers Andy Carlson and Jake Stanley of Hermiston, currently holding down the No. 6 and 9 spots, respectively, will compete in the slack matinee on Saturday at 2 p.m. and the rodeo's fourth night at 7:45 p.m. Other local team ropers include B.J. Roberts of Hermiston and Phoenix Everano of Pendleton.

Brad Goodrich and Michael Pederson of Hermiston will compete in the rodeo's tie-down competitions on Friday and Saturday. Goodrich is ranked at No. 3 in the event, and Pederson is at No. 9.

Seth Hopper of Stanfield stands

at No. 10 and will perform for the slack on Thursday, and during the second night at 7:45 p.m.

Other local athletes include barrel racers Jordan Minor, currently ranked at No. 4, Mary Shae Hays, and Jami Erwert of Hermiston, and Amy Coelho and Libby Gibson of Echo, bull rider Clay Hall, and Stanfield steer wrestler Travis Taruscio.

"The idea of this rodeo is to attract the best contestants for the fans to watch," said director Jon Gill. "We have the best contestants and livestock out there. It's a pretty good draw. We're honored to have them."



EO file photo

Ryan Bothum turns his steer in 5.1 seconds in steer wrestling at the 2016 Farm-City Pro Rodeo in Hermiston. He will compete Friday.

Go see it

The Farm-City Pro Rodeo is Wednesday through Saturday at the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center in Hermiston.

- Start: 2 p.m. slack, 7:30 p.m. main performance
- Cost: \$17 for general admission

Sports shorts

Yankees OF Ellsbury out after hip surgery

NEW YORK (AP) — New York Yankees outfielder Jacoby Ellsbury is out for the season after surgery on his left hip.

The Yankees said Tuesday that Ellsbury had arthroscopic surgery to repair a torn labrum the previous day. The expected recovery time is about six months.

The 34-year-old Ellsbury, a Madras native and Oregon State University graduate, has been out all season with a number of injuries, including an oblique strain and sore back.



Luck to start, play most of quarter at Seattle

(AP) — Andrew Luck spent two straight offseasons contemplating how it would feel to play football again. He'll find out Thursday night.

Coach Frank Reich announced Tuesday that Luck would start and could play most of the first quarter in the Indianapolis Colts' preseason opener at Seattle.

"I'll be excited and a little nervous," Luck acknowledged after practice. "There were one or two moments where I wondered if, 'Am I ever going

to be able to do this again?'"

He wasn't the only one asking that question during a nearly 600-day wait between starts. And he's not the only one who will be nervous lining up against the Seahawks' traditionally strong defense.

Much has changed since Luck performed in a televised game.

There's a new general manager and a new coach in town. There's been another new offense installed and Luck is still trying to learn everybody's names.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1936 — At the Berlin Olympics, the United States finishes 1-2-3 in the men's decathlon.

1984 — Carl Lewis sets the Olympic record in the 200 meters with a 19.80 clocking.

2001 — Damion Easley goes 6-for-6 with a home run and three RBIs as Detroit routs Texas 19-6. The Tigers tie a modern major league record by scoring 13 runs in the ninth inning.

2006 — Roger Goodell is chosen as the NFL's next commissioner.

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