

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 23, 2018

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1B

MARINERS BASEBALL



Houston Astros' Carlos Correa (1) races past Seattle Mariners third baseman Robinson Cano to score in the first inning.

AP Photo/Elaine Thompson

SEAHAWKS FOOTBALL

Ex-Vikings finding fit with Seahawks

By CURTIS CRABTREE
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — As the Seahawks try to keep their defense playing at its traditionally high level despite the absence of five former Pro Bowl selections, a pair of veteran additions from Minnesota along the defensive line could help steady the ship.

Seattle added former Vikings defensive tackles Tom Johnson and Shamar Stephen as veteran pieces along the defensive front on consecutive days in March. While Johnson and Stephen don't directly replace Cliff Avril, Michael Bennett, Richard Sherman or Kam Chancellor, they are experienced veterans that played on a Vikings defense that was among the league's best last season. Johnson and Stephen get a chance to return to Minnesota to face their former team in Seattle's third preseason game Friday night.

"This was the place that kind of wanted both of us," Johnson said. "I ended up telling him I was going to come here and shortly after he made the decision to come out. It was a great deal."

Johnson — one of the few players still in the NFL to have played in NFL Europe — brings the ability to rush the passer from the interior. He posted a career-high 6.5 sacks with Minnesota in 2014 before netting just two in each of the last two seasons.

"I wish we found him six or seven years ago," coach Pete Carroll said of Johnson. "He's one of our guys. He's got the chip on his shoulder and he shows it day in and day out by the way he approaches his work. ... He's fantastic and we love the fact that he's in that room (and) got a lot of young guys with him. He's got a fantastic influence on those guys."

Stephen is more of a space-eating force

See SEAHAWKS/2B



AP Photo/Elaine Thompson, File

Seattle Seahawks defensive tackles Dion Jordan (95) and Shamar Stephen (98) share a snack during an NFL football practice.

M's come up short

Gonzales roughed up, Astros hang on for victory

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Martin Maldonado and Tyler White helped the Astros build an eight-run lead, and Houston's bullpen made it hold after a little scare in the sixth inning.



Maldonado and White each homered and had three hits, Roberto Osuna got his first save with Houston and the Astros beat the Seattle Mariners 10-7 on Wednesday.

The Astros led 9-1 before the Mariners got one back in the fifth and added five more in the sixth, all off starter Charlie Morton (13-3).

After Joe Smith and Tony Sipp closed out the sixth, Ryan Pressly, Hector Rondon and Osuna pitched a scoreless inning each.

"You can't hate how you win if you win," Astros manager A.J. Hinch said. "It was good for us, especially the last three innings with the guys we threw. That's exactly how you draw it up. All three were dominant. The way those guys responded and held it down was pretty nice."



AP Photo/Elaine Thompson

Seattle Mariners starting pitcher Marco Gonzales looks out from the dugout after being relieved against the Houston Astros in the fourth inning.

Osuna pitched the ninth to earn his 10th save. The closer was acquired from Toronto last month and joined the team a week later after finishing a 75-game suspension for violating Major League Baseball's domestic violence policy.

Maldonado had three RBIs and White had two. Maldonado was acquired from the Angels on July 26.

"Overall, the way we swung the bats was pretty impressive," Hinch said. "Today it was a complete offense. And Martin has come over and provided a nice spark for us."

Marco Gonzales (12-9) was pitching on eight days of rest but allowed eight runs and 11 hits before leaving with no one out in the fourth. Gonzales has given up 23 earned runs and 38 hits in his last 20 innings over four starts.

"I don't think Marco threw the ball that badly," Mariners manager Scott Servais said. "Obviously, it had been eight days since he'd been out there. They put some balls in play, got some hits, hit a few balls hard. It just wasn't a

See MARINERS/2B

Rivalry Week turns intensity up a notch in MLS

By ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

It's rivalry week in Major League Soccer, but there's one match that would be important even if there weren't rivals involved.

On Friday night, Atlanta United will visit Orlando City, a matchup that has grown in intensity in the two seasons since Atlanta joined the league as an

expansion team.

All eyes will be on United striker Josef Martinez, who is on the verge of making MLS history.

Last weekend in a 3-1 United victory over the Crew, Martinez scored his 27th goal of the season to tie the record for most in a single season. He joined Tampa Bay's Roy Lassiter (1996), San Jose's Chris Wondolowski (2012), and the Red Bulls' Bradley Wright-Phillips

(2014).

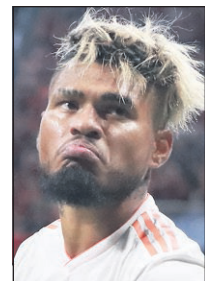
The 25-year-old Venezuelan was asked afterward about joining the elite group.

"I mean, I tied it, but what I really want is to break it. So once I break it, I'll be even more happy," he said.

Martinez scored in the 31st minute, dedicating his goal to his pregnant aunt, who lives with him, by tucking the ball under his shirt.

"I thought about it, and I had thought about doing it before at some point this season. But I wanted it to be a special occasion," he said afterward.

Martinez is in his second season in MLS. His first year he scored 19 goals in 21 matches. His 46 (and counting) goals in back-to-back seasons are a league record. His six career hat tricks



Martinez

See MLS/2B

Sports shorts

Ohio St. suspends Meyer for 3 games

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Ohio State on Wednesday night suspended head football coach Urban Meyer three games, including Sept. 1 against Oregon State, for mishandling domestic violence accusations, punishing Meyer for several years after that coach's wife accused him of abuse.

The move followed a two-week investigation into how Meyer reacted to allegations that former assistant Zach Smith abused his ex-wife, Courtney Smith.

Mariners, A's to open 2019 season in Tokyo



20-21.

NEW YORK (AP) — Major league baseball says all 30 teams will play on March 28, the earliest opening day in history, excluding international openers.

The previous earliest opening day was March 29 of this year.

MLB released the 2019 schedule Wednesday. It will begin with the Japan opening series between the Seattle Mariners and host Oakland Athletics at the Tokyo Dome on March

The Boston Red Sox and New York Yankees will also play the first-ever MLB games in Europe, June 29-30 in London.

The 2019 season will be the second under the scheduling format agreed to as part of the 2017-2021 basic agreement. That format adds an additional weekend at the beginning of the season and gives each team three to four additional off days throughout the season to provide added rest and opportunities for



THIS DATE IN SPORTS

1947 — The College All-Stars beat the Chicago Bears 16-0, before a record crowd of 105,840 at Chicago's Soldier Field.

2004 — The U.S. softball team wins its third straight gold medal with a nearly unblemished romp through the Olympics.

2015 — Ohio State becomes the first unanimous preseason No. 1 in The Associated Press college football poll. The defending national champion Buckeyes receive all 61 first-place votes from the media.

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