

Catching up with Jacoby Ellsbury at Safeco Field

By Will Robbins
for the Spilyay

When the Boston Red Sox come to the Pacific Northwest, it's a big deal. One reason is that Red Sox Nation is alive and well in the Pacific Northwest; another is, Jacoby Ellsbury!

Mariners fans might even be confused at times when Boston's fans seem louder than their own during home games in Seattle. Such was the case earlier this month when the Red Sox came to Safeco Field.

Since becoming a professional baseball player, Jacoby Ellsbury has accomplished a lot, and the road he traveled to get there is impressive.

Ellsbury attended Madras High School, where he was a 4-year letterman in football and baseball, and played varsity basketball his sophomore through senior years.

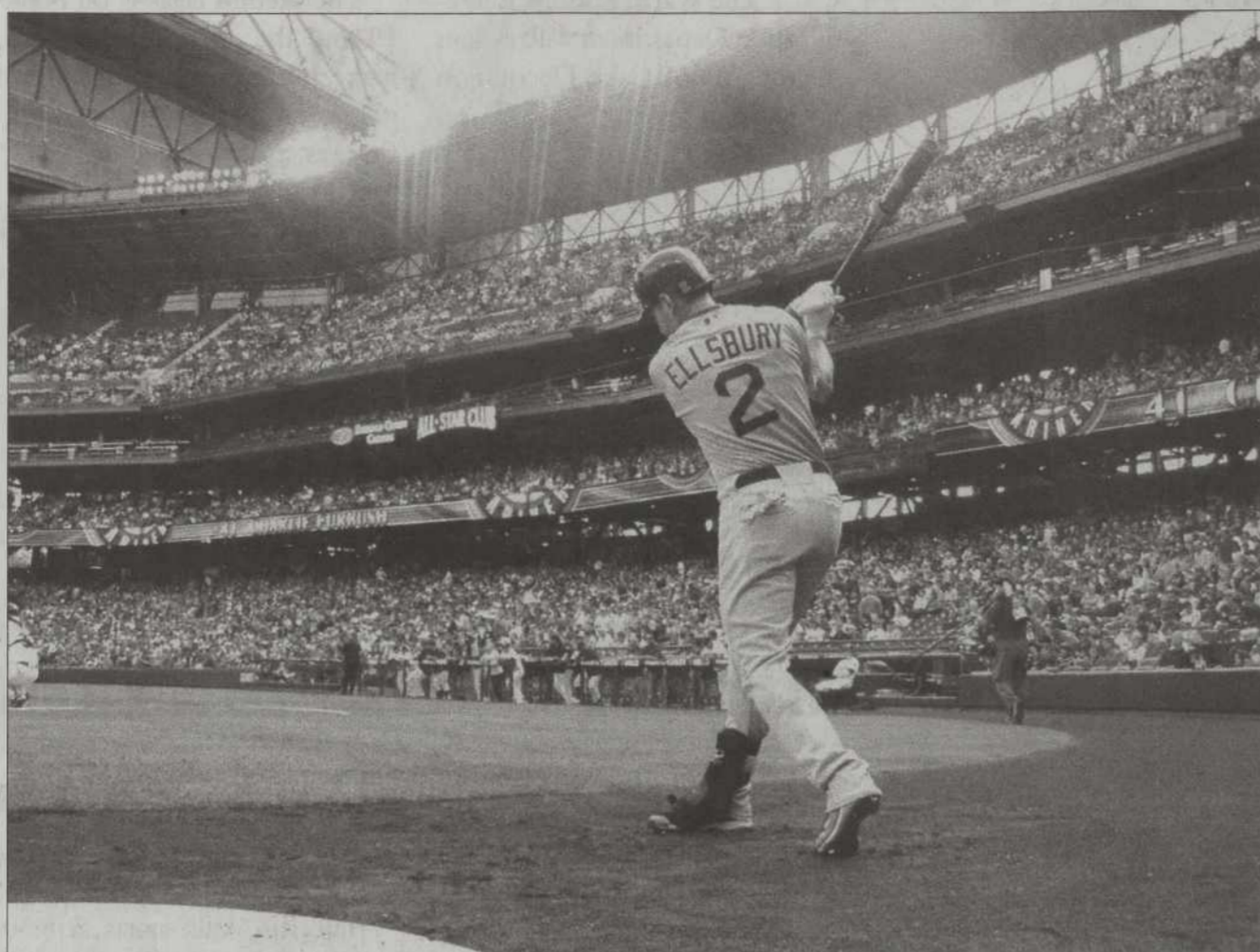
Ellsbury's high school career batting average of .567, and being caught stealing only once, are Oregon high school state records.

Ellsbury was first drafted by the Tampa Bay Devil Rays in the 23rd round of the 2002 MLB Draft but did not sign. He was then drafted 23rd overall by Boston in 2005, after three years at Oregon State University.

Ellsbury began his professional career in 2005, with the Lowell Spinners in the short season Single-A New York-Penn League. Before the season ended he tied a Lowell team record with three stolen bases in a game. He finished the season batting .317 with 23 stolen bases in 35 games.

Ellsbury was named Red Sox Minor League Base Stealer of the Month for July 2005, when he went a perfect 9-for-9 in stolen base attempts.

In 2006 Jacoby Ellsbury be-



Ellsbury ion deck at Safeco, and in the dugout.

gan the season as the number six prospect in the Red Sox organization. He played with the Single-A Wilmington Blue Rocks of the Carolina League, and finished the Double-A season in Portland, Maine, batting .308 with 16 steals in 50 games. He was selected by the Red Sox as their minor league Defensive Player of the Year and Base Runner of the Year.

Ellsbury was invited to the Red Sox 2007 spring training camp in Fort Myers, Florida, as a non-roster invitee. He was assigned to the minor league camp where he was rated the number one prospect in the Red Sox organization, and the number 33 prospect in baseball for 2007 by Baseball America and the number 43 prospect by *Sports Illustrated*.

The *New York Times* described him in a September 2007 article as a "cult hero" who brings "speed, improved de-

fense, and unbridled enthusiasm.

In June of 2007 Ellsbury got a taste of what it would be like playing at Fenway park. With an injury to Coco Crisp, Ellsbury had his contract purchased and received a call-up to the Red Sox on June 30, 2007, where he made his MLB debut in center field and hit ninth against the Texas Rangers at Fenway Park.

During the 2007 postseason, with Coco Crisp struggling, Ellsbury got the start in center field for Game 6 of the American League Championship Series against the Cleveland Indians, starting every subsequent postseason game. In eleven total postseason games, he hit .360 in 25 at-bats with two stolen bases.

Ellsbury was lifted to almost legendary status... On October 27, with his performance in Game 3 of the World Series, he became the first rookie to hit



two doubles in the same inning of a World Series game. After hitting another double in the eighth inning, he became the fourth rookie ever to hit three doubles in a World Series game.

His four hits, including a single in the first inning, made him only the third rookie to ever accomplish the feat in the World Series, after Freddie Lindstrom in 1924 and Joe Garagiola in 1946.

For the World Series, he batted .438 with four doubles and a stolen base.

After the 2007 World Series Ellsbury continued to set records and collect accolades. In 2008 he was voted Red Sox rookie of the year, and in 2008 and 2009 he received the Red Sox Heart and Hustle award.

In 2009 he was selected as MLB's defensive player of the year by MLB.com, and in 2011 was selected for the American League All Star team and has been the talk of the Major League Baseball Writers Association... He might even have a shot at an MVP award.

To date Ellsbury this season has 33 stolen bases and 22 home runs. He recently tied legendary Boston speedster Carl Yastrzemski for most stolen bases in his career at 168. With his MLB baseball career just underway, it seems that record will be shattered.

In the three game series against Seattle at Safeco field August 12-14, Ellsbury proved once again that he is not only fast on his feet but can be a

power hitter at times. In game two of the series he blasted a two run homer to help his team come close to tying the Mariners. But it wasn't to be, as Seattle won two of the three games.

Jacoby Ellsbury is among a small group of Native Americans currently involved in professional sports. He joins Joba Chamberlain in baseball, Notah Begay in golf, Sam Bradford and Levi Horn in the NFL, and the WNBA's Tahnee Robinson.

Like many individuals of affluence Ellsbury is generous when it comes to giving. In 2010 Ellsbury released a Zinfandel wine called ZinfandelEllsbury through Charity Wines with 100 percent of the proceeds donated across three charities: The Navajo Relief Fund, Project Bread: The Walk for Hunger, and the Ellsbury Read Project. Everything he does is just another step in trying to do the right thing.

At the current pace there seems to be no limit as to what he might accomplish.

Tribes seeking Head Start Community Representative

The Confederated Tribes are seeking a community representative for the Warm Springs Head Start program, 2012 school year.

Applicants must be interested in furthering the goals and objectives of the Head Start program. Must attend policy council regular meetings, twice a month.

Please send your letters of interest to:
Urbana Ross, Chief Operations Officer
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs,
PO Box C
Warm springs OR 97761

The deadline for submission is 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 2.

Head Start parents, please contact Early Childhood Education for applications for the upcoming school year.

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