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Fresh Look Mariners Begin Their 2022 Campaign

George Burquest, Staff Reporter

For months, it seemed like the 2022 MLB season would not begin on time as the league's owners and players union failed to agree on a deal to end the lockout. At the 11th hour, the two sides reached a deal, salvaging the chance to have a full-length 162-game season.

The lockout ending so close to the start of the season triggered a free-agency frenzy. Teams spent \$3.265 billion during the 2021-22 MLB offseason, a 36% increase in the amount of money ever spent on free-agent contracts during one offseason. Jerry Dipoto, general manager for the Seattle Mariners, made sure that the team would not be left out. The Mariners enter the 2022 season with a fresh look. They are hoping that their mix of young talent and key signings will lead to the team's first playoff berth since 2001.



Luca Del Carlo

Tallying up the six new additions to the roster, the Mariners notably brought in four previous all-stars. They acquired second baseman Adam Frazier in a trade from San Diego, outfielder Jesse Winker who previously played for the Cincinnati Reds and third baseman Eugenio Suarez in a trade from the Reds. The Mariners also signed last season's American League Cy Young Award winner Robbie Ray to a five-year deal for \$115 million.

After a heartbreaking end to the 2021 season, which saw the Mariners finish 90-72, their best record since 2003, they came in second place in the AL West behind the Houston Astros. Inches away from a wildcard spot, the Mariners dropped their final series of the year against the Los Angeles Angels. Finishing only one and a half games back from the playoffs, the hopes could not be higher for the 2022 season given the team's revamped roster and new winning attitude.

Seattle University Executive Vice President Tom Leary is one of those Mariners fans holding on to hope, but with quite a bit of caution. Certain players the Mariners will rely on this year, such as MLB's number three overall prospect, Julio Rodriguez, have yet to be tested in the big leagues.

"In talking about Rodriguez, I'm old enough to remember when Ken Griffey Jr. came up, and the same stuff was being said, 'don't bring them up yet.' You know, he really should have some time in the minors no matter how good you think he is," Leary said.

"The bottom line for Griffey was a month in, they realized this guy is here to stay. It looks to me like Rodriguez has that same kind of potential from everything I have heard."

The hype is real around the city. Cian Torres, a second-year business management major at Seattle U, has noticed a real change in the expectations and discourse surrounding the team as the season starts.

"Honestly I feel like this season will be different. Obviously, we have the playoff drought, but there has not been this much excitement about the Mariners going into the season in a long time," Torres said, "I didn't used to hear about the Mariners on ESPN or any medium like that. Now with J-Rod and all the big new signings, I feel like they are a part of the conversation this year."

For Torres and other on-campus students the ability to walk, bus or take the light rail to T-Mobile Park and catch a game has never been more convenient, and inexpensive. Along with demarcated "Value Games," which offer tickets as low as \$10, the Mariners are offering "fan-friendly" food and drink options for the 2022 season. This includes \$3 hot dogs, refillable fountain drinks and peanuts along with a list of other discounted items.

Seattle U Second-year Nursing major Jason Carpenter is a Giants fan who is still looking forward to going to Mariners games this season after hearing the buzz surrounding the team.

"I'm not sure of anything the university does in regards to helping encourage students to go to games, but I think it would be really exciting," Carpenter said. "I definitely want to go to a couple of games, especially with the weather turning around here soon."

Compared to the high ticket prices for Kraken Games at Climate Pledge Arena where a hot dog will run you up \$8, the Mariners and T-Mobile park offer an affordable and entertaining outing, especially for Seattle U students. T-Mobile park is just a 30-minute walk away and the Link also stops at the Stadium for easy and cheap transportation options. As the season kicks off, Seattle U fans are eager to see how the new look of the team unfolds.