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Mariners Are Done and So Are Fans

Daniel Truog, Sports & Opinion Editor

With the Major League Baseball (MLB) postseason underway, the Seattle Mariners have been eliminated from playoff contention. The Mariners' slim hopes of making the Wild Card qualification were dashed by a late-season rally from the Kansas City Royals.

The Mariners finished the season only one game out from the Royals and Detroit Tigers. The team was eliminated on an off day, denying the team control over its own fate. This happened after the Royals bested the Washington Nationals 7-4 Sept. 26 to clinch a spot in the American League Wild Card.

The tight American League Wild Card race kept Mariners fans clinging to shreds of hope. The final weeks of September had a close race between the Tigers, Royals, Mariners and Minnesota Twins for the last two spots in the playoffs.

The Mariners finished the season with a batting average of .224, the second-worst in the league. For anyone seeking a silver lining in the fact that the Mariners were not the worst-hitting team in 2024, they need only look at the season record of the only team that was hitting worse than them.

The Chicago White Sox, with a seasonal batting average of .221, finished the season with a record of 41 wins and 121 losses. This was the worst record of any team in modern MLB history. Viral clips of dropped fly balls and Chicago fans booing after wins turned the team's miserable season into a spectacle. The White Sox's official Twitter account even stopped reporting the scores of their many losses.

Despite the Mariners being in bad company on the hitting side, their pitching staff can not be faulted for their role in the 2024 season. They finished strong with a 3.49 ERA, the second highest in the Major Leagues behind the Atlanta Braves. Still, shortcomings at the plate mean that the Mariners will be watching the playoffs from home. Their 2022 playoff run was the only time in the last 23 years that the Mariners took the field after the regular season.

One of the biggest reasons for the Mariners' struggles this year involves people who never set foot on the field during a game. Much of the fans' frustrations have been directed at the decisions made by management, specifically their decision to fire former manager Scott Servais. Servais, who had been managing the team for nine years, found out he was being dismissed via a notification on his phone.



Austin Harper

T-Mobile Park stands empty after the end of the season, following the Mariner's playoff loss.

“It was alarming that I found out that way. But it happened. I can’t say it didn’t happen. It absolutely happened that way,” Servais said in an interview with MLB.com reporters. “My expectation was that I’d get a chance to finish out the year. Unfortunately, it just didn’t happen.”

Servais was known to have a close relationship with Jerry Dipoto, the president of the Mariners and architect of the roster with the second-lowest batting average in the recent season. Firing Servais was Dipoto’s decision. It was confirmed by majority owner John Stanton that Dipoto will be returning in the 2025 season. The decision to keep Dipoto has been poorly received by Mariners fans and local news anchors alike.

One spark of hope for Mariners fans comes from the players who are expected to stay with the team. Pitchers like Logan Gilbert, George Kirby, Bryce Miller and others are likely to stay on the roster and maintain the team’s defensive strength. Luis Castillo is expected to recover from the hamstring strain that took him off the field for most of September.

Julio Rodríguez, considered the face of the team, will return, with his growing hitting talent boosting the team’s lineup throughout the past season. Cal Raleigh, a record-breaking hitter nicknamed “Big Dumper,” will also return as catcher next season. Both players are showing promise early in their careers and time in the offseason should help further develop their skills.

Even with bright spots in the lineup, this past season ended on a sour note with the team narrowly missing the playoffs amid dramatic management shifts. The excitement of 2022’s postseason run fades ever further into the rearview mirror of Mariners fans.