

Q1. What is a recent (within the past one to two years) mistake the Mariners organization has made, and why do you consider it a mistake?

As the Mariners were the only team left in the MLB to have never played in a World Series and had a future of mediocrity, Jerry Dipoto made the decision to rebuild. There are many facets to rebuilding a major league baseball team, but the three mentioned most commonly are:

1. Trade valuable veterans for prospects
2. Develop young players to peak at the same time
3. Have enough money to acquire a few notable veterans when ready to compete

The Mariners have done a great job on trading its aging and expensive veterans, and it seems that there will be money available during the expected contention years (~2021 on). The minor league is on track, improving its ranking from worst to 11th, according to [FanGraphs.com](https://www.fangraphs.com), and ranking 4th on the [BleacherReport](https://bleacherreport.com), but one mistake the organization has made is not putting enough resources to develop its players once they have reached the majors.

It is expected that there will be growing pains transitioning from the minors to the majors. However, it is also expected that a player making mistakes will learn from them and improve. Part of the onus is on the player, but the other part is on the player development coaches. Looking at young players that are likely to be part of the core team around 2021, a few have made positive gains (Shed Long), but too many have not. John Trupin from [LookoutLanding.com](https://www.lookoutlanding.com) reviewed Yusei Kikuchi 2019 performance. One of Trupin's disappointments was the pitcher's poor showing despite the [plan](#) that was set up for Kikuchi to assimilate into the MLB. For a large contract player, the staff should have addressed his inconsistencies early to see improvement by September. Mallex Smith is another player that could have benefited from additional development. His base stealing ability is fantastic, but that ability alone is not enough. His slash line went from .296/.367/.406 in 2018 to .227/.300/.335 at the end of 2019. Although not on a Kikuchi sized contract, a team should do everything it can to make a player as good as he can be (or was). On the other hand, Shannon Drayer from mysports.northwest.com wrote in May 2019 that Omar Narvaez was a powerful hitter and improving in defense. Trading Narvaez in December to the White Sox might have been beneficial to the Mariners, but the time spent on his development should have been redirected to other players more likely to stay on the team.

With roughly one third of MLB teams rebuilding, the Mariners need to have a competitive advantage. Many are following the same rebuild formula jockeying for the same prospects, incorporating analytics, and implementing technologies. Player improvement needs to be a priority in the major leagues as well as the farm system.