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1998 Broncos	Game 14
1985 Bears	Game 13
1972 Dolphins	Did not lose
1934 Bears	Game 14*

* - NFL title game

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SECTION C



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2007

projoSPORTS

Red Sox are biding time with Santana

BY SEAN McADAM
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — It now seems increasingly unlikely that the Red Sox will leave here today with Johan Santana figuratively in tow, but all is not lost for the Sox. While they may have failed to complete a deal with the Minnesota Twins for the ace left-hander, they successfully maneuvered to block the Yankees from doing so.

With talks with the Twins at an impasse, it has struck some that that was the Red Sox' primary goal all along. They weren't so much motivated by obtaining Santana as much as they were ensuring that he didn't join the Yanks.

By all indications, the Red Sox have made two proposals to the Twins, neither of which has been deemed sufficient by Minnesota. One package is headed by Jacoby Ellsbury and another is led by Jon Lester and includes Coco Crisp. Both packages would be augmented by other prospects, likely chosen from a list that includes infielder Jed Lowrie and pitcher Justin Masterson.

Last night, without the Yankees to leverage, the Twins seemed intent on baiting another team to join the bidding. Despite reports otherwise, Santana is not on the Los Angeles Dodgers' radar. The Seattle Mariners have shown some interest, and according to Peter Greenberg, Santana's agent, so have the New York Mets.

But nothing has grabbed the Twins' attention enough to do a deal and open the 72-hour window for Greenberg and a team to discuss a contract extension, which Santana will demand in exchange for waiving his no-trade clause.

So the Red Sox, perfectly content, sit and wait. Particularly with the Yankees on the sideline — for the

SEE SANTANA, C2



ON THE SPOT

Ellsbury is wondering whether he'll be dealt

BY JOE McDONALD
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

While the Red Sox and Twins have spent much of their time at the winter meetings in Nashville attempting to hammer out a trade for Minnesota pitcher Johan Santana, Boston rookie sensation Jacoby Ellsbury has anxiously awaited word on whether he'll be included in a deal.

The Red Sox had considered him untouchable in any transaction. But earlier this week, general manager

Theo Epstein dangled the 24-year-old outfielder's name to the Twins while the Yankees were still in talks with Minnesota for Santana, its two-time Cy Young Award winner.

Whether Epstein was using Ellsbury as leverage in the Yankees'

negotiations or if he really wanted to trade the rookie for Santana's services remains to be seen. Ellsbury served as a sparkplug for the Red Sox during the regular season and especially in the postseason, helping the club to its second World Series title in four seasons.

As of late last night, he was still a member of the Red Sox. Ellsbury is home in Oregon working out in preparation for the 2008 season. That won't change no matter where he's playing, but it's been difficult

for him to ignore the speculation. "I've been trying not to pay too much attention to it," he said. "But it's hard when all your friends, my parents and brothers are calling me because they want the inside scoop on everything. It's tough just knowing that I have no control over where I play or anything like that."

The Red Sox selected him in the first round (23rd overall) of the 2005 draft, and since then he has grown comfortable in the organization. Leaving it would be difficult. "It's something I hope gets done sooner rather than later, and I'm sure Johan feels the same," he said. "I'm just working out here in Oregon and staying in shape for anything possible. Wherever I go,

"It's something I hope gets done sooner rather than later and I'm sure Johan [Santana] feels the same."

JACOBY ELLSBURY

Regarding his possible trade

THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / BOB BREIDENBACH

SEE ELLSBURY, C2

Steelers safety guarantees victory over Patriots

Anthony Smith says, "I think we have a real good chance to win the game and we will win the game."

BY SHALISE MANZA YOUNG
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

One question for Steelers safety Anthony Smith: What were you thinking?

Smith, a second-year safety, yesterday told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette that not only does he believe Pittsburgh has a chance to beat New England on Sunday afternoon in Foxboro, but added, "I can guarantee a win."

To a team that uses even perceived slights to help stoke its fires, Smith's words will likely have a place of prominence with

in the halls of Gillette Stadium this week.

"Now we have our swagger back on defense and we're playing great ball and they're playing great on the offensive side, too," Smith said. "I think we have a real good chance to win the game and we will win the game."

The free safety, who replaced the injured Ryan Clark as the starter midway through the season, is not worried about giving New England extra motivation because of what he said.

And he said plenty.

"They said Baltimore was the most physical game (for the Patriots), but I think we hit harder than Baltimore, so they haven't seen nothing like us yet," he said.

But Smith didn't stop there.

In his eyes, New England receivers Randy Moss, Wes Welker and Donte Stallworth aren't the best trio of wideouts Pittsburgh has faced this year. Smith thinks Cincinnati's Chad Johnson, T.J. Houshmandzadeh and Chris Henry are better.

"I think we were facing great receivers last week, too, and we shut them down," he said, alluding to the Steelers' 24-10 win over the Bengals. "Those three guys — I don't think it gets much better than Cincinnati's corps of receivers. We've already seen the best."

"They should be worried about us. We never worry about receivers. We're the ones doing the hitting. They have to run

SEE PATRIOTS, C4



AP / MIKE MCCARN

Anthony Smith, celebrating an interception against the Panthers last year, says the Steelers will beat the Patriots on Sunday.

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