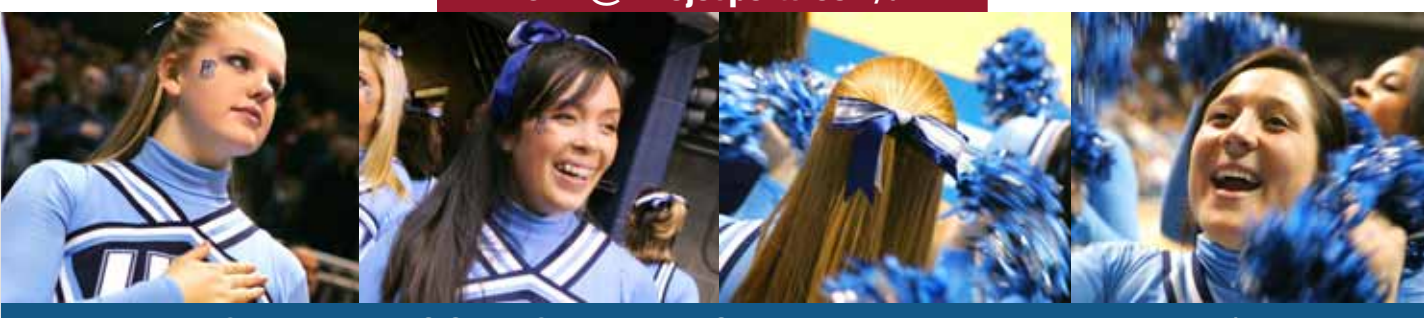


Tell us what you think about Anthony Smith's guarantee

Post your comment at projosports.com/patriots



URI CHEERLEADERS SPUR ON THE RAMS: View the gallery at Projosports.com/uri

Wrestling GameTime

See a photo gallery of yesterday's wrestling match between Cranston West and Toll Gate at hsgametime.com

Tale of the tape

How the two ace pitchers available for trade, Johan Santana and Danny Haren, compare (2007 stats):

Table comparing stats for Santana and Haren: Age, IP, H, SO, ERA.

For up-to-the-second stats and scores: projosports.com/redsox



SECTION C FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2007

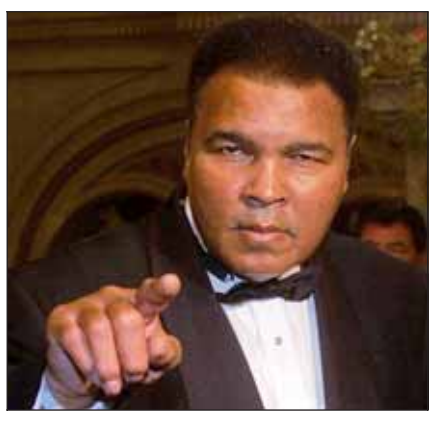
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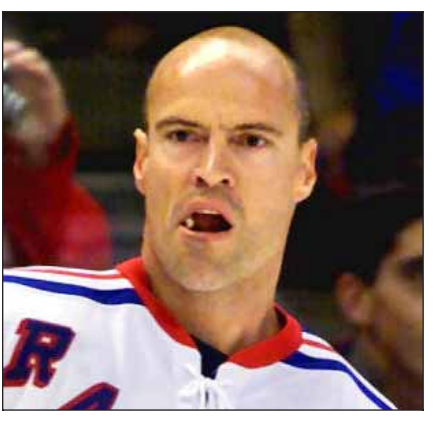
SOME ARE PROPHETS



Joe Namath: Delivered on the most famous promise of all: Predicting a New York Jets' victory over the heavily favored Baltimore Colts in Super Bowl III in 1969.



Muhammad Ali: Defeated Sonny Liston, just as he said he would, to win the world heavyweight boxing championship in 1962 in what was one of the greatest upsets of all time.



Mark Messier: With the New York Rangers teetering on the edge of elimination in the 1994 NHL semi-finals, Messier said a Game Six win was in the bag. His hat trick helped make it so.

GUARANTEED

Some predictions come true, while others come back to bite you

BY SHALISE MANZA YOUNG JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

FOXBORO — Anthony Smith can say all he wants. The Patriots will do their talking on the field. That was the sentiment one day after Smith, a second-year safety for the Steelers, guaranteed victory for Pittsburgh on Sunday night at Gillette Stadium. New England, which brings its 12-0 record into the game against a team that has struggled on the road, by and large would not respond to Smith. "Those are some big words," said Jabar Gaffney. "To come in here [and beat us], we are a pretty good football team as well, so we are going to get their best and they are going to get our best." Speaking after Pittsburgh's practice on Wednesday, Smith, who has started the last seven games for the injured Ryan Clark, guaranteed a win, said New England "should be worried" about the Steelers, that the Steelers are harder hitters than the Ravens, and that the Pats' receiver trio of Randy Moss, Wes Welker and Donte Stallworth are not as good as the Bengals' T.J. Houshmandzadeh, Chad Johnson and Chris Henry. Steelers coach Mike Tomlin spoke privately with Smith yesterday, and essentially chalked his comments up to inexperience. Smith isn't the first opposing player to run his mouth, and his words recall the famously stupid comments of then-Philadelphia receiver Freddie Mitchell, who claimed before Super Bowl XXXIX that he didn't know the names of the players in the New En-



AP / MIKE MCCARN

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

SEE TALK, C5

PC's rally ends in agonizing defeat

Trailing by 12 points, the Friars mount a late charge but fall to the Gamecocks on a missed free throw in the final second.

BY KEVIN McNAMARA JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

PHILADELPHIA — Tempting fate, or the luck of the bounce, is no way for a college basketball team to live. The Providence College Friars learned that painful lesson last night as a late comeback fell less than one second short as South Carolina escaped with a 68-67 win in the Big East-SEC Invitational at the Wachovia Center.

Scoreboard: S. CAROLINA 68, PC 67

NEXT GAME Sunday vs. Brown 7:30

After trailing by as many as 12 points in the second half, the Friars mounted a charge in the final nine minutes after a switch to man-to-man defense. That set up a frantic final minute that looked very much like the plays in the waning seconds of an overtime win over Boston College five days earlier.

This time, the ball didn't bounce PC's way.

After a steal by Weyinmi Efejuku set up a Brian McKenzie 3-pointer and Geoff McDermott hit two free throws with six seconds left, the Friars trailed by just 67-66. One of two free throws by the Gamecocks' Dominique Archie gave PC life with five ticks remaining. Efejuku took an inbounds pass, raced up the right sideline and knifed to the basket. South Carolina's Devan Downey jumped to defend against the tying shot but fouled Efejuku.

Less than a second - 0.2 - was left on the clock.

"I told Zam (Fredrick), 'He's going to miss one. He said, 'I hope so,' " Downey said.

Efejuku toed the line but missed the first shot, draining the life out of his body.

SEE FRIARS, C3

Tigers gain elite status after trade at meetings

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Keeping one eye on the Yankees during the week, the Red Sox successfully kept ace Johan Santana's status up in the air.

But while the Sox were driving the price up for the lefty and blocking their rivals, the Detroit Tigers made their move and may have emerged from the winter meetings as the Sox' chief competition.

Unless things change, the battle for the American League pennant may have to go through Motown instead of the Bronx.

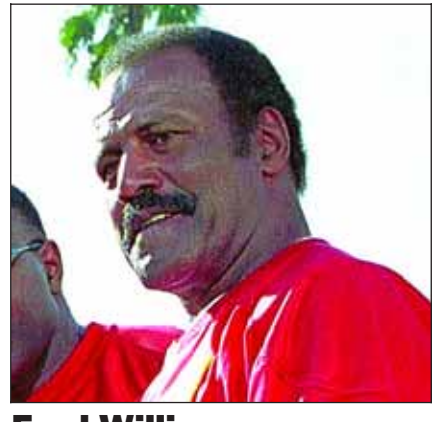
After adding outfielder Jacque Jones and shortstop Edgar Renteria earlier this offseason, the Tigers pulled off the meetings' one true blockbuster, landing slugger Miguel Cabrera and lefty Dontrelle Willis.

"If they're not the team to beat," said one top talent evaluator, "then they're certainly in the mix."

The Tigers won the A.L. pennant in 2006, but injuries dropped them to second place in the A.L. Central in 2007, behind the Cleveland Indians. But by adding Cabrera to a lineup that already features Curtis Granderson, Carlos Guillen, Gary Sheffield, Magglio Ordonez and Pudge

SEE MCADAM, C5

SOME ARE BLOWHARDS



Fred Williamson: "The Hammer" boasted that the Chiefs would beat the Packers in Super Bowl I. Not only did they lose, 35-10, but Williamson was knocked unconscious and carried off the field.



Tony Pena: While managing the Kansas City Royals in 2004, Pena proclaimed his team would win the A.L. Central championship. They finished last, with a record of 58-104.



Matt Hasselbeck: "We want the ball and we're gonna score!" That's what the Seahawks' quarterback said — to an open TV mike — when he won the coin toss prior to overtime in a 2004 playoff game at Green Bay. Instead, he threw an interception that was returned by the Packers' Al Harris for the game-winning touchdown.