

How much action will the Giants' starters see this weekend?

Tell us what you think at projosports.com/patriots



BARRINGTON ROMPS PAST JOHNSTON: View the gallery at HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland

Texas two-step

Paul Kenyon previews URI's two weekend games in an audio presentation posted by noon at projosports.com/uri

Middle of the pack

How the Giants fared in 8 years under Bill Parcells, and in the 17 years since he left.

	Parcells era	Since he left
Regular season	77-49-1 (.610)	138-132-1 (.511)
Playoff record	8-3	3-6
Division titles	3	3
Number of coaches	1	4

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

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STARTING POINT

Giants could rest regulars in season finale vs. Pats



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GRETCHEN ERTL

Patriots linebacker Tedy Bruschi, tackling Miami's Lorenzo Booker last Sunday, says he and his New England teammates are preparing to face the Giants' best players tomorrow night.

BY SHALISE MANZA YOUNG
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

FOXBORO
To borrow a phrase from Bill Belichick — a mantra that both he and Tom Coughlin may have picked up from Bill Parcells — Coughlin will do what is best for his New York Giants football team tomorrow night.

One of the few debates surrounding the regular-season finale between the Giants and Patriots has been whether Coughlin will play his key players for the entire game in an all-out effort to end

New England's bid at an undefeated regular season.

New York clinched its spot in the NFC playoffs with a win over Buffalo, and is locked in as the number-five seed with a first-round date against Tampa Bay regardless of whether they win or lose against New England.

They won't have a bye and several of their starters have been battling injuries throughout the season.

So for Coughlin, the question is which is more important: making sure your team is as physically

ready as possible for the playoffs, or winning a game that's essentially meaningless for your club?

Were they to upset the Patriots but then lose to Tampa Bay, nothing would be gained for New York, just the distinction of being the team that kept the Pats from an undefeated season. There are those out there who would like nothing more than to see Belichick and New England kept out of the record books, but it is no more the Giants' responsibility to do that than it was for the Patriots' first 12 opponents over their first 15 games.

Coughlin has insisted, both with the New York media and New England media via a conference call yesterday, that his team will prepare for this game no differently than it has for the previous 15 this season.

"The only way we know how to do it is to prepare as best we can with the idea of preparation, practice and then performing on Sunday — or Saturday night, in this case," Coughlin said. "Do the best we possibly can do and give ourselves the best opportunity to win."
SEE PATRIOTS, C7

PATS vs. GIANTS

■ **TIME:** 8:15 p.m. tomorrow

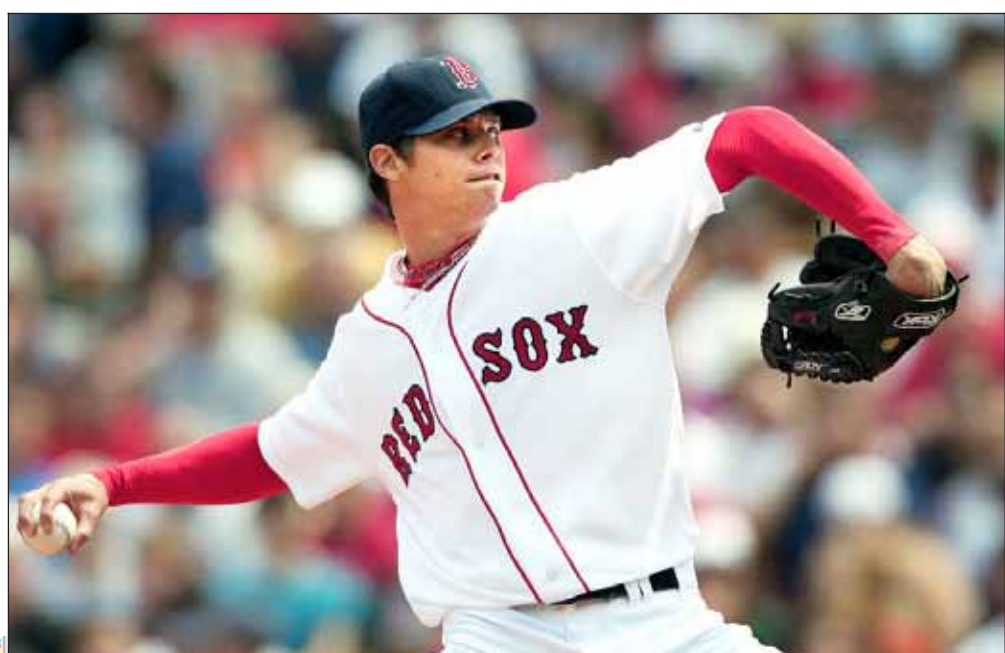
■ **SITE:** Giants Stadium

■ **TV:** The NFL Network (Cox Channel 137, Cox HD Channel 726), over-the-air Channel 10, Cox Channel 10, Cox HD Channel 700, over-the-air Channel 12, Cox Channel 12, COX HD Channel 701.

■ **ANNOUNCERS:** Bryant Gumbel and Cris Collinsworth

■ **TEAM RECORDS:** Patriots 15-0, Giants 10-5

■ **THE LINE:** Patriots by 14½



PROVIDENCE JOURNAL PHOTO / BOB BREIDENBACH

The Red Sox are keeping a close eye on rookie pitcher Clay Buchholz, who threw a no-hitter last season, but was shut down in late September because of arm fatigue.

For Red Sox pitchers, there's no such thing as an offseason

Boston calls in some pitchers for a winter physical evaluation, saying it doesn't want any "surprises" come spring training.

BY JOE McDONALD
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

BOSTON — The offseason for the Boston Red Sox didn't last too long.

Just over a month after winning their second World Series title in four seasons, the team's pitching staff returned to Fenway Park in late November to participate in an offseason evaluation process, which management felt was necessary to prepare for spring training properly.

"We felt it was our responsibility to bring guys in for a check up, no more than that," said Red Sox pitching coach John Farrell. "We just want to make sure progress is being made to-

wards the individual program that's been laid out for them from a physical standpoint. This provided the opportunity to do that in one setting rather than others flying around the country to check up on people."

According to Farrell, it was a combination of guys who had different needs, including Curt Schilling, Tim Wakefield, Jon Lester, Manny Delcarmen, Clay Buchholz, Justin Masterson, Mike Bowden and Caleb Clay.

The Sox' pitching coach said the team didn't want to get to spring training and learn of some "surprises" that could possibly hamper the

staff's progress.

"It's our responsibility we're up to date on every individual pitcher," said Farrell.

The biggest offseason concern for the Red Sox was with Buchholz, who needed to be shut down at the end of the season due to shoulder fatigue. The rookie right-hander, who no-hit the Baltimore Orioles in his second major-league start on Sept. 1, was told on Sept. 28 by general manager Theo Epstein and manager Terry Francona that his season was over because the team wasn't happy with the pitcher's strength and mobility — among the things the organization tests for on a

SEE RED SOX, C5