

Post your comment on Bill Belichick's Coach of the Year award

Tell us what you think at projosports.com/patriots



CUMBERLAND WRESTLERS DOWN S. KINGSTOWN: View the gallery at HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland

Friars weekend

Kevin McNamara previews PC's game against DePaul in an audio slideshow posted this afternoon at projosports.com/pc

Pulling rank

Prior to last night, URI and PC were both in the Top 25 on RealTime-RPI.com. The top and bottom teams, along with three R.I. schools:

TEAM	REC.	RPI
1. Memphis	11-0	.7012
13 Rhode Island	14-1	.6331
23 Providence	9-3	.5784
103 Brown	7-5	.5420
341 E. Illinois	0-11	.2561

Last night's games not included

SECTION C



FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, 2008

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Friars fall down on job in visit to the top

PC is mostly a no-show and is easily subdued by 10th-ranked Marquette at Milwaukee's Bradley Center.

BY KEVIN McNAMARA
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

MILWAUKEE — The Providence College Friars paid a visit to the top of the Big East in their conference opener last night. It was a neighborhood they weren't ready for.

The Friars showed up for only a first-half spurt and were easily blown out by 10th ranked Marquette, 96-67, before 17,041 fans at the Bradley Center. PC fell to 9-4 while the Golden Eagles improved to 11-1.

"We battled for about a half," said PC coach Tim Welsh. "In the second

half they made a couple threes and stunned us with that and we didn't respond. That's disappointing."

PC's lack of a point guard hindered the offensive attack all night, but major defensive breakdowns all over the floor and a bad effort off the backboards (37-23) were the story of the game. Marquette shot 53 percent and received strong efforts from numerous players. The Eagles' best is All-America candidate Dominic James, a junior point guard who led all scorers with 21 points, dished for six assists and had no turnovers in 28 minutes. Lazar Hayward added 17 points and Wes Matthews had 16.

The Friars' only double-figures scorers were Brian McKenzie with 21 points, Jeff Xavier with 11 and Jamine Peterson with 10.

"We have a lot of respect for Prov-

idence. I picked them high in the league," said Marquette coach Tom Crean. "They're dealing with some injuries right now but they're going to be a force in this league. We're happy to get off to a fast start in this league. Any win is big."

Welsh wasn't as quick to place the blame for this one on the lack of injured guards Sharaud Curry and Dwain Williams. Instead, he was upset with the defensive issues that saw Marquette shoot 53 percent and the own the boards as Geoff McDermott, Randall Hanke and Jon Kale combined for only five rebounds.

"We've got to battle better. It's the Big East," said Welsh. "We can't let

them get up on the glass and beat us up in the paint."

MARQUETTE
96
PC
67

NEXT GAME
Tomorrow
at DePaul
8 p.m.

The Friars managed one more field goal (13) than turnover in the first half and fell behind, 41-32. Then the start of the second half turned truly ugly as PC's defense broke down. Marquette opened the half with a 22-5 knockout punch to mount a 63-37 lead.

Welsh then emptied his bench and at one point had his three freshmen — Peterson, Marshon Brooks and Alex Kellogg — all in the game. Peterson and Brooks played well in spurts but the final dozen minutes were reduced to garbage time.

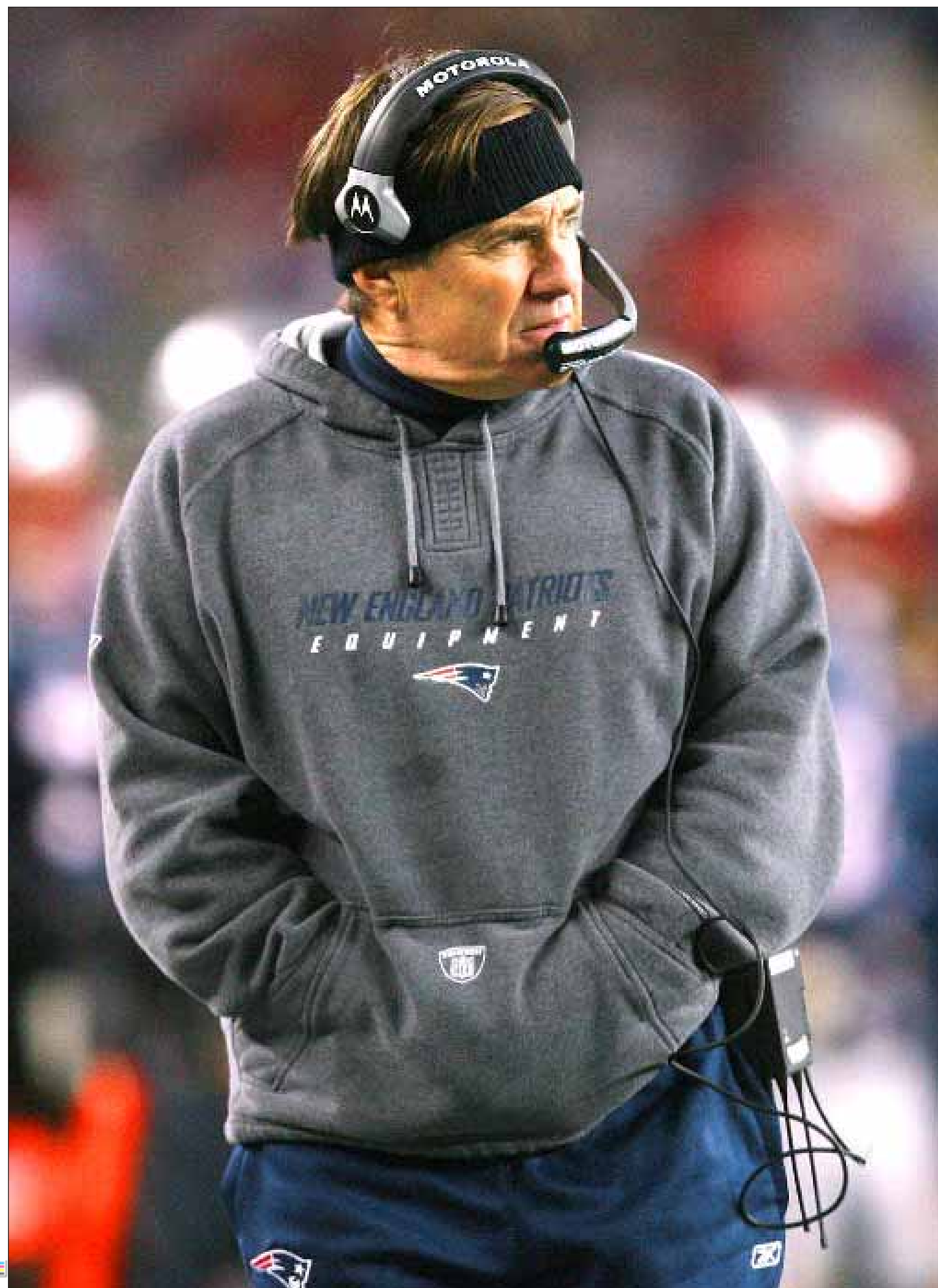


AP / MORRY GASH

The Friars' Jeff Xavier grabs a loose ball in front of Marquette's David Cubillan last night.

SEE PC, C3

SECOND TO NONE



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GLENN OSMUNDSON

Pats' Belichick voted AP's Coach of Year

BY SHALISE MANZA YOUNG
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

FOXBORO — Bill Belichick won his second Associated Press NFL Coach of the Year Award yesterday, being rewarded for leading his New England Patriots to the league's first 16-0 regular season.

Twenty-nine of 50 voters nationwide cast their ballot for Belichick; Green Bay's Mike McCarthy received 15 votes.

The Journal contacted four voters last night, three of whom voted for Belichick and one who did not, and the Spygate scandal was not a factor in the final decision for the majority.

USA Today's Jarrett Bell, who voted for Belichick, said he couldn't overlook the achievement of the league's first undefeated regular season since the 1972 Miami Dolphins went 14-0.

"You know, I really wrestled with it and I actually didn't think I

was going to do it a few weeks ago. The fact that they had the incident a few months ago, it was like Shawne Merriman: Do you deserve to be honored when you violate the game's integrity?,"

said Bell, referring to the San Diego linebacker who was suspended for four games last season for violating the league's substance-abuse policy but still went to the Pro Bowl.

"If they had gone 15-1, I probably would not have voted for him; I would have voted for Romeo [Crennel, in Cleveland] or [Jacksonville coach] Jack Del Rio, but the fact that there was this historical significance — I couldn't see myself not voting for him."

Historical significance is what got nbc.com (and former Journal) writer Tom Curran to pick Belichick.

"Sixteen-and-oh clinched it,"

SEE BELICHICK, C2

Patriots view pressure in a variety of ways

Having faced the best its opponents have offered, New England is still enjoying one game at a time.

BY ROBERT LEE
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

FOXBORO — As the Patriots' season progressed this year and the wins kept coming, there was more and more pressure put on them by their friends, fans, the media — and themselves — to finish the regular season undefeated.

Now that they have accomplished that goal, the stakes are higher, and with it, the pressure to win Super Bowl XLII and complete the first perfect season in the NFL since the Dolphins did it in 1972 is immeasurable.

Some media outlets have gone as far as to say that the Patriots' season would be a disappointment without them winning the Super Bowl. Not all of the Patriots disagree with them.

"What happened in the past,



THE JOURNAL / MARY MURPHY

Pats safety Rodney Harrison isn't dwelling on the past.

happened in the past," Patriots defensive back Rodney Harrison said. "We really have to focus on the here and now. No one cares

SEE PATRIOTS, C2

Bill Belichick easily won the 2007 Associated Press' NFL Coach of the Year Award, his second such honor in four years.