

**Are the Jaguars capable of upsetting the Patriots?**

Tell us what you think at [projsports.com/patriots](http://projsports.com/patriots)



**UNBEATEN FEINSTEIN TOPS WEST WARWICK:** View the gallery at [HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland](http://HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland)

**HotBytes is back**

Tom Meade gives you the latest fishing reports, plus special audio features, at [projsports.com/hotbytes](http://projsports.com/hotbytes)

**Sack attack**

Both the Patriots and Jaguars were in the top five in the AFC in quarterback sacks this year:

TEAM	SACKS
New England Patriots	47
San Diego Chargers	42
Tennessee Titans	40
Jacksonville Jaguars	37
Kansas City Chiefs	37

For up-to-the-second stats and scores: [projsports.com/patriots](http://projsports.com/patriots)

SECTION D  
The Providence Journal  
[projo.com](http://projo.com)  
FRIDAY, JANUARY 11, 2008

**projo**SPORTS

Phone: 401-277-7340 Fax: 401-277-7444 E-mail: [pjsports@projo.com](mailto:pjsports@projo.com)

# THE JAGGED EDGE

## If certain players perform well, Jacksonville will have reason for hope

BY SHALISE MANZA YOUNG  
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

As a playoff team with just one Pro Bowler — and that honoree, Fred Taylor, was named as an injury replacement — and in one of the NFL's smallest markets, Jacksonville's roster is largely unknown. Here are several players who will probably play big roles for the Jaguars in tomorrow's matchup with New England:

■ **David Garrard, quarterback:** The 29-year-old first-year starter has a great story: A little more

than a year ago, he was benched in Jacksonville's season finale for third-string quarterback Quinn Gray. But Garrard discovered his confidence in the off-season and won the starting job. He is a steady presence both in the huddle and in the pocket, and doesn't get rattled easily; Rodney Harrison said one of the things he learned watching the Jags' game with the Steelers was Garrard's ability to stay cool under pressure. Jacksonville will need him to revert to his regular-season form — just three interceptions in 325 pass attempts — and not repeat his two-pick performance against

Pittsburgh last week if it hopes to win in Foxboro.

■ **Fred Taylor, running back:** One of the most underrated backs in the league, partly due to injury problems, as he's missed nine games over the last four seasons and has appeared in all 16 games just twice in his 10-year career. Still, he has over 10,000 career yards and the clear respect of coach Bill Belichick and Pats players, who praised him on several occasions this week. Taylor is a punishing runner, and the Jaguars' best chance against New England is for Taylor and Maurice Jones-Drew to

run effectively and keep the Patriots' offense off the field. Taylor did not play when New England and Jacksonville met in Florida last Christmas Eve.

■ **Maurice Jones-Drew, running back/kick returner:** This tough-as-nails second-year back relishes leveling a defender with a block almost as much as breaking a long touchdown run. His hits on San Diego's Shawne Merriman and Carolina's Julius Peppers were impressive. But Jones also

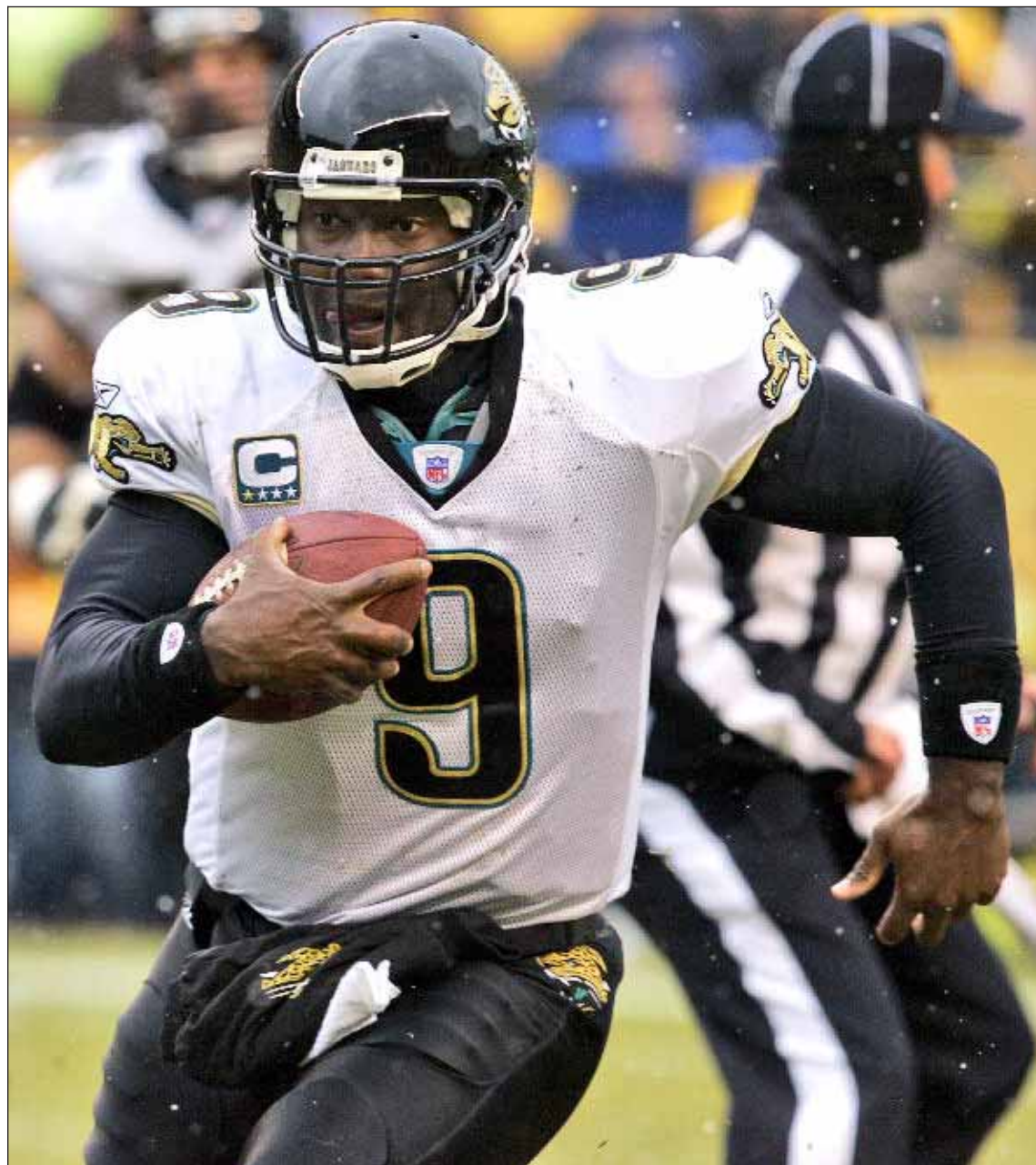
SEE PATRIOTS, D2



AP / DICK WHIPPLE

**FRED TAYLOR:**

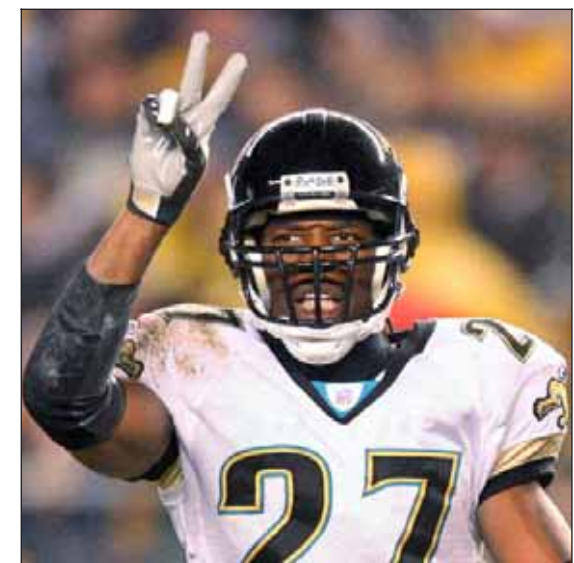
Rushed for more than 1,000 yards for the seventh time in his career.



AP / GENE J. PUSKAR

**DAVID GARRARD:**

With only three interceptions during the regular season, the Jags went 10-3 with him at quarterback.



MCT / GARY W. GREEN

**RASHEAN MATHIS:**

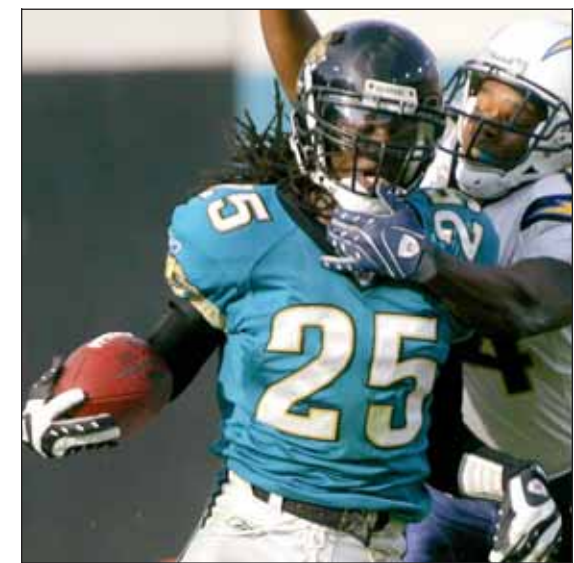
Has 21 career interceptions in five seasons.



AP / KEITH SRAKOCIC

**MAURICE JONES-DREW:**

Had 768 rushing yards, 407 receiving yards and 811 yards on kickoff returns.



AP / PHIL COALE

**REGGIE NELSON:**

Has 57 tackles, a sack, and five interceptions in this, his rookie season.

## Cothran, Ulmer are playing key roles off the bench for URI's quintet

The sophomores from Connecticut have speed and some impressive numbers as reserves.

BY PAUL KENYON  
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

SOUTH KINGSTOWN—If they wanted to, Keith Cothran and Lamonte Ulmer could be complaining right about now.

The two sophomores from Connecticut have emerged as major factors for the URI basketball team this season. They are two major reasons the Rams have gotten off to the program's best start in modern history and earned a ranking among the top 25 teams in the country.

Still, even as well as they have played, Ulmer and Cothran have begun every game on the bench. They perform like starters once they get in, though, and they

produce numbers that make them, as coach Jim Baron says, "two of the most valuable guys we have."

On some teams, players in that situation tend to get upset and wonder why they don't get their name introduced before the start of each game. Not Cothran and Ulmer. They both say they are fine with the situation.

"We feel comfortable coming in off the bench. It's no problem. We're a team,"

Ulmer says. "We just have to think about going out there and giving our all. If you go out there and think, 'I should be starting,' that can just bring frustration and you can't focus on the game. We just go out and play the best basketball we can."

Cothran agrees, saying much the same thing.

All of which is music to Jim Baron's ears. The URI coach shakes his head when he hears the question about wheth-

er Ulmer and Cothran should be starters.

"These are guys that are young and talented," Baron says. "They're as important as all the other guys. I make them feel that way because of the need factor . . . Bringing them in, with the high energy they give us, it adds to the puzzle. It's addition when they come in, not subtraction."

SEE RAMS, D5

the **BEST** in the STATE

coming tomorrow: **GIRLS VOLLEYBALL**

Sunday, January 13th: Boys & Girls Cross Country

To find out more go to [HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland](http://HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland)