

Predict how the Red Sox-Angels playoff series will end

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LA SALLE BLANKS MOUNT, STAYS UNBEATEN: View the gallery at HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland

Projo Video

See scenes from Monday's Westerly-Warwick Vets football game, from the cheerleaders' view, at hsgametime.com

Postseason prowess

The following is a list of MLB teams with the best winning percentages in postseason play (with two or more playoff appearances) since 2003:

TEAM	W-L	PCT
Boston Red Sox	28-15	.651
St. Louis Cardinals	23-17	.575
Houston Astros	13-13	.500
New York Yankees	19-22	.463

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

SECTION C



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IT'S A PICK 'EM

American League Division Series

GM	SITE	DATE	TIME
1	Anaheim	Tonight	10:07 p.m.
Jon Lester (16-6, 3.21) vs. John Lackey (12-5, 3.75)			
2	Anaheim	Friday	9:37 p.m.
D'suke Matsuzaka (18-3, 2.90) vs. Ervin Santana (16-7, 3.49)			
3	Boston	Sunday	TBA
Josh Beckett (12-10, 4.03) vs. Joe Saunders (17-7, 3.41)			
4*	Boston	Monday	TBA
Lester vs. Lackey			
5*	Anaheim	Oct. 8	TBA
Matsuzaka vs. Santana			

* — if necessary
All games televised on TBS



Jonathan Papelbon (above) vs. Francisco Rodriguez pits two of baseball's finest closers. **Page C2**

NOW ON PROJO.COM

■ Art Martone's daily collection of links to stories of interest, both local and national, posted each weekday by 9 a.m.

SOON ON PROJO.COM

■ Kevin McNamara discusses the Red Sox-Angels series on the daily Projo Sox Talk update.
■ Workout-day video from Gretchen Ertl.

LATER ON PROJO.COM

■ Reports from Kevin McNamara and Jim Donaldson, and photos from Ertl, as soon as they arrive at Angels Stadium, providing news as it happens.



Kevin Youkilis is one of the reasons why David Ortiz likes these Red Sox. **Page C3**

TONIGHT ON PROJO.COM

■ News and commentary during the game.
■ Story and stats as soon as the game is finished.

OVERNIGHT ON PROJO.COM

■ A complete postgame package from McNamara and Donaldson, with reaction from both clubhouses.

INSIDE

■ Red Sox-Angels report. **Pages C2 and C3.**



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GRETCHEN ERTL

Sox third baseman Mike Lowell, suffering from a right hip-flexor, works out yesterday. His status for tonight's game will be announced this morning.

In the past, the Red Sox have dominated the Angels in the postseason, but this year could be different. All things being equal, this series has the potential to be a classic. But Boston is hampered by injuries to key players, including ace Josh Beckett. The Red Sox have relied heavily on their depth all season and will need to continue that if they are to be successful in the playoffs. The Angels are confident that this will be their year to erase their recent October struggles and dismiss Boston from the postseason.

STARTING PITCHING

Josh Beckett, who suffered an oblique strain while throwing a side session last Friday, causing him to miss tonight's opener against the Angels, also has had to deal with other injuries this season, including elbow and back problems. He thrives in pressure games, especially in October, but his health is a concern. Because of that, the Red Sox will send Jon Lester to the mound for Game One. The left-hander has been outstanding for the majority of the season, and by working the first game he will be available to pitch Game Four (if necessary) at Fenway Park, where he's 11-1 this season.

John Lackey, meanwhile, nearly no-hit the Red Sox in July and will be the Angels' Game One starter.

If you take a quick look at Daisuke Matsuzaka's stats — 18-3 with a 2.90 ERA — you would give him the advantage over Angels Game Two starter Ervin Santana. But Matsuzaka has struggled with his pitch count and rarely has been able to work deep into games this season. Despite putting a lot of runners on base, he's been able to work out of trouble. But the Angels are a team that will take advantage of mistakes. It's hard to bet against a guy with 18 wins, but Santana (who had 16) is a strikeout machine and has been very good this season.

While Beckett's health remains a question for Game Three, Joe Saunders will start for the Angels, and he should have the advantage there. Still, you can never count Beckett out.

If rain forces the need for a fourth starter in Game Four, the Angels have the edge in Jon Garland.

EDGE: Red Sox Angels

OFFENSE

The Angels are not a great offensive team. They play to contact and don't have a lot of power. They were ninth in home runs in the American League, with 159; the Red Sox finished sixth with 163. Boston dominated the league with a .358 on-base percentage while the Angels were 11th at .330. It was the same story in slugging percentage, where the Red Sox were third (.447) and the Angels ninth (.413). Boston was second in the American League with 845 runs scored. Anaheim was 10th with 765. Boston finished second with a .280 team average while Anaheim placed seventh at .268. The Angels hit both right-handers and lefties equally well. They may not be an explosive offensive club, but Anaheim will pitch you to death and play great defense.

EDGE: Red Sox Angels

SPEED

The clubs are neck and neck in this category. The Angels finished sixth in the majors with 126 stolen bases. Boston followed with 120. Anaheim will run more and take advantage of the hit-and-run. The key for the Red Sox is for leadoff hitter Jacoby Ellsbury to get on base.

EDGE: Red Sox Angels

DEFENSE

Both clubs play solid defense, but Boston, if healthy, is loaded at every position.

EDGE: Red Sox Angels

MIDDLE RELIEF

The Angels are loaded with right-handers, with only one lefty in the bullpen. If Angels starters are able to work deep into games, the Red Sox will see Scot Shields a lot. Plus, because of the short series, Anaheim is able to move starter Jered Weaver into the bullpen. Boston's bullpen has struggled this season and still has some questions. Experience is on Anaheim's side.

EDGE: Red Sox Angels

CLOSER

Angels closer Francisco Rodriguez became the all-time single-season saves leader this season, with 62. The Sox' Jonathan Papelbon also had a strong season and finished third in the league with 41. Despite those numbers, Papelbon is considered one of the game's most dominant closers. Teams are even.

EDGE: Red Sox Angels

MANAGER

This is a tossup. Mike Scioscia and Terry Francona are among the most respected managers in the game, and both have won World Series titles. Scioscia is very aggressive and isn't afraid to play small ball. Francona has proven that he can get the most out of his club. Teams are even.

EDGE: Red Sox Angels

BENCH

The Angels have more versatility on their bench, but the Red Sox have an edge in experience.

EDGE: Red Sox Angels

INTANGIBLES

The Angels benefited by playing in the weak A.L. West, which helped them win 100 games. Both clubs had relatively easy travel schedules in September. The Red Sox spent the majority of the month at home while the Angels had short trips to Oakland and Seattle before finishing the season at home. Because the Angels wrapped up the division title and a postseason berth early, they were able to rest their players and prepare for the postseason. The Red Sox are inundated with injuries to key players, including Mike Lowell, J.D. Drew and Beckett. The Angels have home-field advantage.

EDGE: Red Sox Angels

CONCLUSION

If the Red Sox can get a split in Anaheim, they'll return to Fenway Park and have Beckett scheduled to pitch Game Three, followed by Lester. If that scenario plays out, Boston has an excellent chance to advance to the ALCS.

— JOE McDONALD

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POSITION BY POSITION: HOW McDONALD SEES IT

	ANGELS	RED SOX	EDGE
First base	Mark Teixeira	Kevin Youkilis	Angels
Second base	Howie Kendrick	Dustin Pedroia	Red Sox
Shortstop	Erick Aybar	Jed Lowrie	Even
Third base	Chone Figgins	Mike Lowell	Red Sox
Left field	Garrett Anderson	Jason Bay	Red Sox
Center field	Torii Hunter	Jacoby Ellsbury	Angels
Right field	Gary Matthews Jr. / Juan Rivera	J.D. Drew	Red Sox
Catcher	Jeff Mathis / Mike Napoli	Jason Varitek	Angels
DH	Vladimir Guerrero	David Ortiz	Angels