

How do you explain the Sox' playoff dominance of the Angels?

Tell us what you think at projosports.com/redsox



MOSES BROWN PREVAILS IN GIRLS TENNIS: View the gallery at HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland

Projo Video

Shalise Manza Young tells you what to watch for in Sunday's Patriots-49ers game, at projosports.com

League leaders

Since 1994, only one team from North America's four major sports leagues has appeared in more championship games/series than the Patriots:

TEAM	LEAGUE	NO.
N.Y. Yankees	MLB	6
N.E. Patriots	NFL	5
L.A. Lakers	NBA	4
S.A. Spurs	NBA	4
Detroit Red Wings	NHL	4
N.J. Devils	NHL	4

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



SECTION D
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2008

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American League Division Series

- GM SCORE**
1 Red Sox 4, Angels 1
- SITE DATE TIME**
2 Anaheim Tonight 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
Jon Lester vs. John Lackey
- 5* Anaheim Wednesday TBA
Matsuzaka vs. Santana
- * — if necessary

HOW TO WATCH

■ **TV TONIGHT:** Cable channel TBS (not available over-the-air; Cox Channel 45 and Cox HD Channel 736; Verizon FIOS Channel 52 and Verizon FIOS HD Channel 552)

■ **TV ANNOUNCERS:** Chip Carey, Buck Martinez and Craig Sager.

HOW TO FOLLOW

■ Come to projosports.com/redsox for complete pregame, in-game and postgame coverage.

DEFENSE



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GRETCHEN ERTL

Dustin Pedroia was one of a number of Red Sox defenders who flashed the leather in Wednesday's opener, and defense played a key role in the 4-1 victory.

Evolution of Dice-K a big leap

Now fully a member of the Sox family, Matsuzaka is more comfortable as a person . . . and as a pitcher.

BY KEVIN McNAMARA
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

ANAHEIM, Calif. — When David Ortiz thinks back to Daisuke Matsuzaka's first season with the Red Sox, he cracks a quick smile.

Big Papi loves to have fun, and he and his Red Sox teammates made sure to try to have as much fun as possible with their new Japanese pitcher last year. That was the easiest way for the Sox to roll out the red carpet and make Matsuzaka's transition from Japanese idol to major-league rookie as smooth as possible.

"Last year was his first year and he's coming from the other side of the planet to America," said Ortiz. "We got him on the bus last year singing. In Spanish. We had the rookies singing on the last road trip and he came out with it. It was pretty funny."

This season, Ortiz and the Sox

SEE **RED SOX, D2**

They've got it all
Red Sox playing like champions

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Tonight is the Big Game.

You know it. The Red Sox know it. The Angels most definitely know it.

It's always dangerous to say such things in the postseason. But after what we saw in Wednesday night's series opener, who can argue?

The Red Sox are the defending World Series champions and, more important, they played like it in winning Game One. They did the things champions do while pinning a 4-1 defeat on the Angels, who had beaten them in eight of nine games during the regular season.

Clutch hitting — in particular, Jason Bay's two-run homer with two out in the sixth inning that gave Boston a 2-1 lead.

A quality start from Jon Lester, who was pitching as well — no, even better

— in his last inning than he was in the first.

A lights-out, three-strikeout performance from closer Jonathan Papelbon, who has yet to give up a run in 10 postseason appearances.

A couple of spectacular defensive plays in the eighth inning that preserved the one-run lead — Jacoby Ellsbury sprinting in to make a sliding grab of Mark Teixeira's leadoff blooper in shallow center field, followed by Kevin Youkilis' spot-on throw across the diamond from down the right-field line to Mike Lowell at third to nail Vladimir Guerrero and quench a rally by the Angels.

So now they've won eight straight postseason games, going back to Game Five of the ALCS last year against the Indians. They have beaten assorted aggregations of Angels a total of 10 consecutive times in the playoffs — a streak that began with Dave Henderson's home run heroics in Game



JIM DONALDSON

SEE **DONALDSON, D2**

PITCHING



Jon Lester picked up where Josh Beckett left off and looked like the October ace every successful playoff team needs.

OFFENSE



Jason Bay's sixth-inning home run, which put Boston ahead to stay, was the biggest of the clutch hits the Red Sox received Wednesday night.

The firestorm caused by Manny is out . . . but the smoke lingers

He is the ghost that hovers over these playoffs.

You can send Manny out to the Dodgers at the trading deadline, but that doesn't mean he goes away.

So it's not surprising that here it is roughly two months after Manny left Boston, but he's still a presence, both in talk shows and conversations, like the relative that moves away but still lingers in the family like some secret. Curt Schilling recently buried

him on Boston sports-talk radio station, WEEI, David Ortiz talked about him Tuesday in Anaheim. And if nothing else, the absence of his bat in the middle of the lineup makes the Red Sox less dangerous.

Manny, Manny, Manny. Sometimes it seems as if it's all about Manny Ramirez, even when it's not.

Then again, maybe it always was. He was always stranger than fiction when he was here, the perennial man-child with the unique ability to hit a baseball as well as few people in the game ever have been able to do. But it never was just about that, of course. It always was more nuanced, com-

plete with the sense that he was such a fan favorite, the darling of the pink-hat set, part great player, part cartoon, a baseball version of an enigma wrapped inside a riddle.

It still is. So what are we to make of the news the other day that Manny now says he was unhappy during his eight-year career with the Red Sox?

What are we to make of the news that he now says that when he first got to Boston he told Pedro Martinez he wanted to be traded, saying that "this place was not for me," ostensibly because people cared too much?

What are we to make of the news

that every day in L.A. he thanks God for the chance to be there and be out of Boston?

Are we supposed to take this seriously?

Or is it just Manny being Manny, all part of the sideshow that always seems to be following him around like an entourage follows a pop star.

All this burst into the public arena Sunday in a story in the Los Angeles Times by T.J. Simers, in which the highlight — or maybe lowlight — was Manny's assertion that baseball was simply too important in Boston, and that



AP / DAVID ZALUBOWSKI

SEE **REYNOLDS, D2**

Manny's gone, but not forgotten.