

Should players and coaches get bonuses for going to Japan?

Send in your answer at projosports.com/redsox



SCHOOL HOCKEY FINALS ON TAP: View the gallery at HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland

Sox in Japan

Sean McAdam and Bob Breidenbach are traveling with the team; find their reports at projosports.com/redsox

Caught in a nice draft

The Boston Celtics considered taking Dirk Nowitzki in the 1998 NBA draft, but when Dallas picked the All-Star forward just ahead of them, the Celts chose Paul Pierce. Nine-plus years later, here is a comparison of the two careers:

	G	PPG	RPG	APG	3P%
Nowitzki	748	22.4	8.6	2.7	37.9
Pierce	719	23.2	6.4	4.0	36.2

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

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10:45 A.M.



The Red Sox met with general manager Theo Epstein and other officials all morning after voting to delay the start of yesterday's game.

NOON



Manny Ramirez takes advantage of the unexpected down time by sending a personal message home, via the ESPN cameras.

12:15 P.M.



The Sox players, including Jonathan Papelbon, left, and Mike Lowell, middle, leave the dugout for a meeting to discuss the issue.

12:30 P.M.



One disgruntled fan, David Ferazzi of Fort Myers, displays the personal check he wrote to cover the coaches' payments.

IT'S ABOUT THE MONEY



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / BOB BREIDENBACH

Boston's dugout was empty early in the afternoon as the Sox threatened not to play their exhibition game against the Jays because of a dispute over payments to support staff for their trip to Japan.

Boycott threat leads to decision to pay Sox coaches for Japan trip

BY JOE McDONALD
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

FORT MYERS, Fla. — It started innocently enough.

On Tuesday morning a member of the Oakland A's staff called Terry Francona and asked if Red Sox coaches were being paid the \$40,000 "appearance fee" that the players received for traveling to Japan. Francona assumed they were ... but when he looked into it further, he found they weren't.

That was the beginning of a series of events that culminated in the Sox' refusing to take the field for yesterday's nationally televised exhibition game against the Toronto Blue Jays — and

threatening not to go to Japan for the week-long visit that includes two regular-season games against the A's — until the coaches and other support personnel, about 15 people in all, were guaranteed the same \$40,000 Francona and the players were getting. The issue was settled about 45 minutes after the scheduled 12:05 p.m. start, the game began at 1:10 p.m., and last evening the Sox boarded a charter for the 17-hour flight to Tokyo that, because they cross the International Date Line along the way, won't arrive until about midnight tonight Japanese time (11 a.m. Providence time).

"The coaches are a huge part of our

success and have been for many years," said Kevin Youkilis, who is the team's union representative. "This was just something, as players, that we felt very strongly about. We want to apologize to all the fans at the game who had to sit around a little longer, and to other fans who might have been upset at first, but this is something we felt strongly about."

Neither the Red Sox nor Major League Baseball will say who came up with the \$600,000 to pay the Red Sox staff members. But as they boarded the bus to take them to the airport, Curt

SEE RED SOX, C2



But everything was settled and the Sox, as planned, took off for Tokyo. Mike Lowell signs autographs as he heads to the bus that transported the team to the airport.

PC recruiting iffy without a new coach

Prospective players want assurances that their scholarships are intact, and to know who will coach them next season.

BY KEVIN McNAMARA
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

PROVIDENCE — Soon after the next Providence College basketball coach moves into his office at Alumni Hall, a stark, cold reality will chill his bones.

The coach will meet his new team and smile broadly at the sight of five seniors and as many as eight players who've enjoyed big nights in the Big

East. But while a veteran-laden team gives the next coach a chance to compete in the league in 2008-09, a major reconstruction of the program will be his top priority this summer.

The Friars lose one senior (Charles Burch) off this year's team and have already replaced him with 6-foot-8 New Jersey high schooler Bilal Dixon. That was the easy part. Replacing seniors-to-be Weynmi Efejuku, Geoff McDermott, Jon Kale, Jeff Xavier and Randall Hanke will prove to be much tougher.

Tim Welsh and his staff always knew that filling the scholarships of their present junior

class would require an awful lot of hard work. Steve DeMeo, PC's associate head coach, says he's thought about the incoming class of 2009 for two years and worked on identifying replacements when prospects were mere high school freshmen.

But when PC decided to let Welsh work this year with just one season left on his contract, it restricted the ability of the coaching staff to close the deal with recruits. After all, the head coach is almost always the most decisive factor in where prep stars go to college and Welsh's

SEE PC, C5

CELTICS 94, ROCKETS 74

No shame on Rockets for falling to 'the best'

BY DAVID MOORE
DALLAS MORNING NEWS

HOUSTON — A team can thumb its nose at the competition for a week or two — or maybe even seven — before someone stands up and shouts that they have had enough.

Houston's transcendent run has come to an end. The most amazing regular season streak

the NBA has seen in 36 years was put to rest on a stormy south Texas evening.

Boston did what 22 victims before them were unable to accomplish. They beat the Rockets, 94-74.

If you're going to go down, you might as well do it against the best. And that's what the Celtics are this season, the best team in the league.

Some of you out there aren't

For a gallery of photos of Tuesday night's Celtics-Rockets game, go to: projosports.com/celtics

impressed by what the Rockets have done. You diminish the streak and grope to explain how what Houston did was nothing special. You argue the Rockets didn't beat many good teams over the last 50 days and the ones they did were without their stars.

Houston did pick up a win over the LA Lakers without Pau Gasol.

A win over the Mavericks came without Dirk Nowitzki.

SEE CELTICS, C6