

How many games will the Celtics need to defeat the Hawks?

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Bronx bombers

Manny Ramirez's homer vs. the Yankees last Saturday tied him with Hank Greenberg for 3rd most home runs all-time vs. the New Yorkers:

RANK	PLAYER	HOMERS
1	Jimmie Foxx	70
2	Ted Williams	62
3	Manny Ramirez	53
3	Hank Greenberg	53

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

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A BRONX BOMBING



AP / JULIE JACOBSON

Yankees third baseman Alex Rodriguez, above left, fails to tag the Red Sox' Jason Varitek on a rundown in the second inning last night. Varitek was caught off base on a ball hit by Jacoby Ellsbury and was ruled out for leaving the baseline. Below, Boston's Manny Ramirez argues with home plate umpire Tim McClelland after being called out on strikes in the third inning.

Inept starters and sinking pen are woeful mix

NEW YORK — In almost every one of the Red Sox' seven losses this season, there's been an obvious common denominator: not enough delivered by the starters, and thus, too much asked of the bullpen.

That's a dangerous combination, as supported by the final score last night: Yankees 15, Red Sox 9.

After being shutout and nearly no-hit by Chien-Ming Wang last Friday at Fenway, the Sox mount-

SEAN McADAM

SEE McADAM, C4



Yankees batter Buchholz and do a number on Sox

BY JOE McDONALD
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

NEW YORK — When Red Sox pitcher Clay Buchholz made his debut against the New York Yankees last Friday he pitched very well. The rookie right-hander was calm and cool on the mound as he allowed just one run on four hits over six innings of work.

The most important aspect of that start was the fact Buchholz was pitching within the friendly confines of Fenway Park and in front of the hometown fans.

He wasn't in Boston last night. Buchholz really got a taste of the storied rivalry by making his Yankee Stadium debut before a sold-out crowd of 54,667 in the

YANKEES 15
RED SOX 9

NEXT GAME
Tonight at New York 7:05

Bronx. He wasn't as sharp in this outing, lasting just 3½ innings and allowing seven runs on eight hits.

The Yankees conducted a hitting display en route to a 15-9 victory over the Red Sox and New York got to Buchholz early and often, including a pair of back-to-back home runs in the first inning. After Bobby Abreu's two-run shot and Alex Rodriguez's solo homer no one visited the mound. Buchholz

SEE RED SOX, C4

Rejuvenated Pierce envisions title run

The Celtics' stalwart, along with Kevin Garnett and Ray Allen, are aiming to propel Boston to its first NBA title since 1986.

BY KEVIN McNAMARA
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

BOSTON — At the end of the last few, losing seasons, Paul Pierce would always walk out to mid-court before the final home game and thank the suffering Boston Celtics fans.

Last night at the Garden, Pierce again walked to center court. This time, the team's captain wore a large smile on his face, pumped his fist toward a cheering crowd and reveled in the Celtics' best season in 22 years.

"All I could remember the last two, three years is coming out here promising you better days," Pierce said to

the crowd of 18,624, the same number that's filled the arena for every game. "Now look. Better days."

As Pierce continued, he asked the crowd to focus on the next two months as the Celts enjoy home-court advantage throughout the playoffs which start this weekend against the Atlanta Hawks. The playoff schedule is expected to be announced today.

"We were talking in the locker room that this has been a good year. We want to make this a great year," Pierce said. "The only way to do that is to get another banner up in

CELTICS 105
NETS 94

NEXT GAME vs. Atlanta TBA

SEE CELTICS, C2



Boston's Paul Pierce pursues New Jersey's Richard Jefferson in the first quarter last night.

THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / KRIS CRAIG

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Complete Celtics stats and a live scoreboard featuring all the NBA playoff action, at projosports.com/celtics

La Salle boys, Westerly girls are real sports

He has been teaching high school hockey players the techniques of a game for more than 30 years.

He has taught them effective fore-checking; the finer points of a power play and how to protect a one-goal lead in the final minutes of a game.

But maybe the most lasting lesson Mike Gaffney has passed on to his players is the ability to maintain a positive attitude regardless of what the final win-loss record reads.

"He has given his players a positive attitude during a rebuilding year. His players have been a reflection of his attitude," a veteran hockey official wrote about

JOHN GILLOOLY

All-State wrestling team, Page C8

SEE GILLOOLY, C6