

Can Junior Seau help the Patriots on the field this season?

Tell us what you think at projosports.com/patriots



RED SOX CONTINUE ROYAL BATTLE: View the gallery at projosports.com/redsox

HotBytes blog

Fish stories by Tom Meade, plus an audio interview with surf fisherman Tim Yvon, at projosports.com/hotbytes

Knuckling down

By the time he calls it a career, Red Sox pitcher Tim Wakefield could end up leading the franchise in just about every positive pitching stat:

CATEGORY	RANK	TOTAL
Games	2	496
Starts	2	359
Wins	3	161
Strikeouts	2	1,772
Innings	3	2,541.2

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NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS TRAINING CAMP



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GRETCHEN ERTL

Mike Vrabel wants another Super Bowl title before he retires.

Vrabel considers business unfinished

The Patriots not only take the veteran linebacker off the PUP list, but he returns to practice for the first time this season.

BY ROBERT LEE
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

FOXBORO — In the days leading up to Super Bowl XLII, Mike Vrabel said he had thought long and hard about retiring before the 2007 NFL season.

After all, he said, he never dreamed of being a part of three Super Bowl-winning teams and being selected to the Pro Bowl when he entered the league in 1997 as a third-round draft pick out of Ohio State.

But when the Patriots signed Adalius Thomas in the offseason last year, it meant that Vrabel, who had been playing inside linebacker, would have a chance to move to his more natural position, outside linebacker.

He also still felt healthy and he had the passion to continue playing, so Vrabel returned and remained part of one of the most storied teams in NFL history.

He also had a career season, setting a personal record for sacks with 12.5, which was also the most since Patriots Hall of Famer Andre Tippitt racked up 12.5 in 1987, and Vrabel was selected to his first Pro Bowl.

A victory in Super Bowl XLII would have been a perfect storybook ending for the 11-year NFL veteran. But the Giants prevailed, 17-14, so Vrabel decided to return for at least one more season.

SEE PATRIOTS, C2

RED SOX

Beckett is back on top

Boston ace Josh Beckett brings his 'A' game against the Royals

BY SEAN McADAM
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Two fellow starters began the night with more victories and it had been almost a month since he last recorded a win. But just in case anyone had forgotten, Josh Beckett showed last night how good he can be.

Beckett was nicked for a run in the first inning, then blanked the Royals for the next five innings to propel the Red Sox to an 8-2 victory over the Kansas City Royals.

He allowed just four hits while striking out seven and walking two. After the first inning, he allowed just two hits — a leadoff single in the second and a one-out double in the seventh, both to Alex Gordon — the rest of the way.

When he walked Ross Gload with two down in the seventh on another night of oppressive heat and humidity, he left after 90 pitches. Mike Timlin surrendered an inherited runner, then retired the next four hitters he faced before handing the game over to Chris Smith in the ninth.

The win enabled the Sox to stay within three games of Tampa Bay in the American League East.

Beckett's sparkling effort came one start after arguably his worst outing of the season in which he was charged with eight runs on 11 hits in 5½ innings and compounded matters by failing to back up home plate on one play. It also snapped a personal three-game losing streak, as he won for the first time since July 9.

In a balanced 13-hit attack in which every member of the starting lineup except Mike Lowell collected a hit, Jason Bay continued to wield a hot bat, collect-

RED SOX 8
ROYALS 2

NEXT GAME
Tonight at Kansas City, 8:05 p.m.



MCT / JOHN SLEEZER (above), and AP / ED ZURGA

The Sox' Jason Bay, right, just misses a home run in the seventh inning last night as Royals center fielder Mitch Maier, above, can't glove the ball, but it rolled along the top of the wall before being knocked back into play.



2008 OLYMPICS

Security measures at the Beijing Games looking a lot like theater of the absurd

BY JOHN LEICESTER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BELJING — For their high-security Beijing Olympics, Chinese police have their bomb detectors and metal detectors. They could do with an absurdity detector, too.

Take the example of blacklisted author Yu Jie. Because the games are in town, police are keeping him under close watch at his Beijing home, 24/7, with

plainclothes officers stationed outside in three rotating shifts. Yu says that only by police car, under escort, is he allowed to leave the gated middle-class community where he and his wife are raising their 4-month-old boy, Justin, who was born in the United States.

So much for the Olympic spirit. The Summer Games aren't much fun and games for those

rights activists, public critics of the government and outspoken free-thinkers like Yu who aren't welcome at the party, are under watch or have been driven out of town.

COMMENTARY "I was uncomfortable and I felt unsafe," outspoken AIDS activist Wan Yanhai said, explaining why he has quit the Olympic city for the duration. "I didn't want to see police follow me every day."

Even in authoritarian China, there's no legal grounds for such harassment. But China's police are a law unto themselves, regardless of the eyes of the world turning to Beijing.

In the case of Yu, who met with President George W. Bush at the White House in 2006, the police agents seem aware that they are on shaky legal ground. He says they told him that he should look upon their surveillance as a "service," not as a constraint. With gas prices high and Beijing traffic subjected to Olympic restrictions, it is cheaper and easier to ride in our car, Yu says the officers have told him.

Over the years, Yu has learned that it's sometimes best not to resist. These guys can get nasty. They have previously threatened

SEE SECURITY, C6



Members of the Chinese military hold security scanners outside the National Stadium in Beijing. The Games open on Friday.

AP / ITSUO INOUE