

Will Clay Buchholz some day be a top-of-the-rotation starter?

Tell us what you think at projosports.com/redsox



YESTERDAY'S ACTION AT BEIJING: View the gallery at projosports.com

He plays on
Read Paul Kenyon's story and see video of Tom Johnson, who golfs despite many health challenges, at projosports.com

No more easy marks
Of their four A.L. East opponents, only the Baltimore Orioles have a losing record vs. the Boston Red Sox at this point in the season:

TEAM	WON	LOST
Baltimore Orioles	6	9
New York Yankees	6	6
Tampa Bay Rays	6	6
Toronto Blue Jays	6	2

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

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 22, 2008

RED SOX

Starts are giving 'em fits



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / KRIS CRAIG

Bartolo Colon, who may be counted on as a late-season starter for Boston, pitched four hitless innings in a rehab start for the PawSox last night at McCoy Stadium. Story, Page C5.

Rotation has become major concern going into stretch

BY JOE McDONALD
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

TORONTO — Whoever coined the phrase, "You can never have too much pitching," obviously didn't have much.

And the Red Sox certainly know what he was talking about.

They're rounding the turn and heading down the stretch of the pennant race with more questions than answers in their starting rotation. One of their best young arms, rookie Clay Buchholz, has imploded. Two of their most trusted veterans, Josh Beckett and Tim Wakefield, are question marks physically. A veteran acquisition, Bartolo Colon, is still working his way into shape. Even their biggest winner, Daisuke Matsuzaka, is so erratic as to be almost unreliable, at least in terms of how many innings he'll pitch in a start.

That leaves a rotation with one constant — Jon Lester, who has become the ace of the staff and looks to be getting stronger as the season progresses — and many uncertainties.

Manager Terry Francona is looking at the problem in the short term, rather than focusing on the big picture.

"Well, we [had yesterday] off and we have Monday off," Francona said after Wednesday night's 11-6 loss in Baltimore, meaning he'll be able to juggle the rotation so everyone's pitching on proper rest and they won't miss a beat if someone has to miss a start.

But there is a bigger question: Can they depend on the people they put out there?

That may hold the key to the rest of the season.

They'll need Beckett to regain some

SEE RED SOX, C4

PATRIOTS



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / RUBEN W. PEREZ

Tom Brady, center, could play in tonight's game against the Eagles if his sore right foot is well enough.

Brady's status is big question

A sore right foot has kept New England's quarterback on the sidelines and it's unknown if he'll play in tonight's exhibition game against Philadelphia.

BY SHALISE MANZA YOUNG
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

FOXBORO — Typically, the third exhibition game is treated like a "real" game by most NFL teams, in that the projected starters see their highest number of snaps, though they don't play the whole game.

So it will be interesting to see if things unfold that way tonight, when the New England Patriots welcome the Philadelphia Eagles to Gillette Stadium.

Against the Buccaneers on Sunday, Randy Moss and Wes Welker saw their first action of the preseason for the Pats. The defensive starters have gotten some playing time in both of the team's previ-

SEE PATRIOTS, C5

THEY DEPEND ON ...

THEY WANT TO SEE MORE FROM ...

THEY HOPE FOR GOOD HEALTH FROM ...

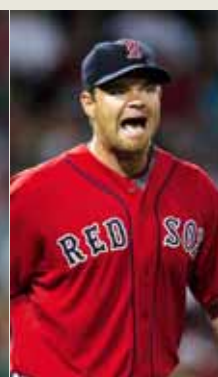
THEY'VE GIVEN UP (FOR NOW) ON ...



Jon Lester
12-4, 3.17



Daisuke Matsuzaka
15-2, 2.77



Paul Byrd
7-11, 4.55



Josh Beckett
11-9, 4.34



Tim Wakefield
7-8, 3.67



Bartolo Colon
4-2, 4.09



Clay Buchholz
2-9, 6.75

2008 SUMMER OLYMPICS

Americans fall far short in their quest for glory

The failures of the heralded softball team and men's and women's 400-meter relay teams to attain gold medals epitomize United States letdowns.

By JAIME ARON
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIJING — Crystl Bustos rocked slowly from side to side, kicked away some dirt, then started rocking again. As she and her U.S. softball teammates waited to receive their silver medals — yes, silver — the slugger clearly wanted to get this over with.

Instead of capping their sport's fourth and possibly final Olympic appearance with a fourth gold medal, the Ameri-

cans lost, 3-1, to Japan in a game they never led.

"You train your whole life and you want to win," Bustos said. "It hurts a lot."

What was supposed to be a coronation turned into humiliation.

The softball gals weren't the only Americans feeling that way yesterday, a rainy day that was practically a washout for the U.S.

SEE OLYMPICS, C3



AP / NATACHA PISARENKO

U.S. runners Torri Edwards, right, and Lauryn Williams mishandle the baton in a women's 400-meter relay heat, which led to the United States being disqualified.

U.S. women reach goal, and bring home gold

Goalkeeper Hope Solo rises to the occasion as the United States shuts out Brazil, 1-0, in soccer.

By NANCY ARMOUR
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIJING — They came to the Beijing Olympics as a team trying to find its way, still adjusting to a new coach and each other, still smarting from a loss that brought humiliation on and off the field.

They dropped their first game, hardly an auspicious start for a country that had lost only one other in three Olympics. But bit

by bit, game by game, they came together, figuring out what it would take to win.

Last night, the U.S. women's soccer team stood as one, Olympic gold medals around their necks, champions once again.

"Vindicated? I feel great, I feel amazing. I just won a gold medal," said goalkeeper Hope Solo, whose banishment at last year's World Cup symbolizes the struggles these Americans have had and without whom they wouldn't have won this game.

Solo made save after save to

SEE SOCCER, C3