

How concerned should fans be about the linebacking crew?

Send in your answer at [projosports.com/patriots](http://projosports.com/patriots)



SCENES FROM THE FALL CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES: View the gallery at [HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland](http://HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland)

**Patriots-Ravens**

Pregame blog reports in-game photos from Baltimore, plus a live scoreboard and stats, at [projosports.com/patriots](http://projosports.com/patriots)

**Pats vs. Ravens**

How the Patriots and Ravens match up statistically on a per-game basis heading into tonight's game (league rank in parentheses):

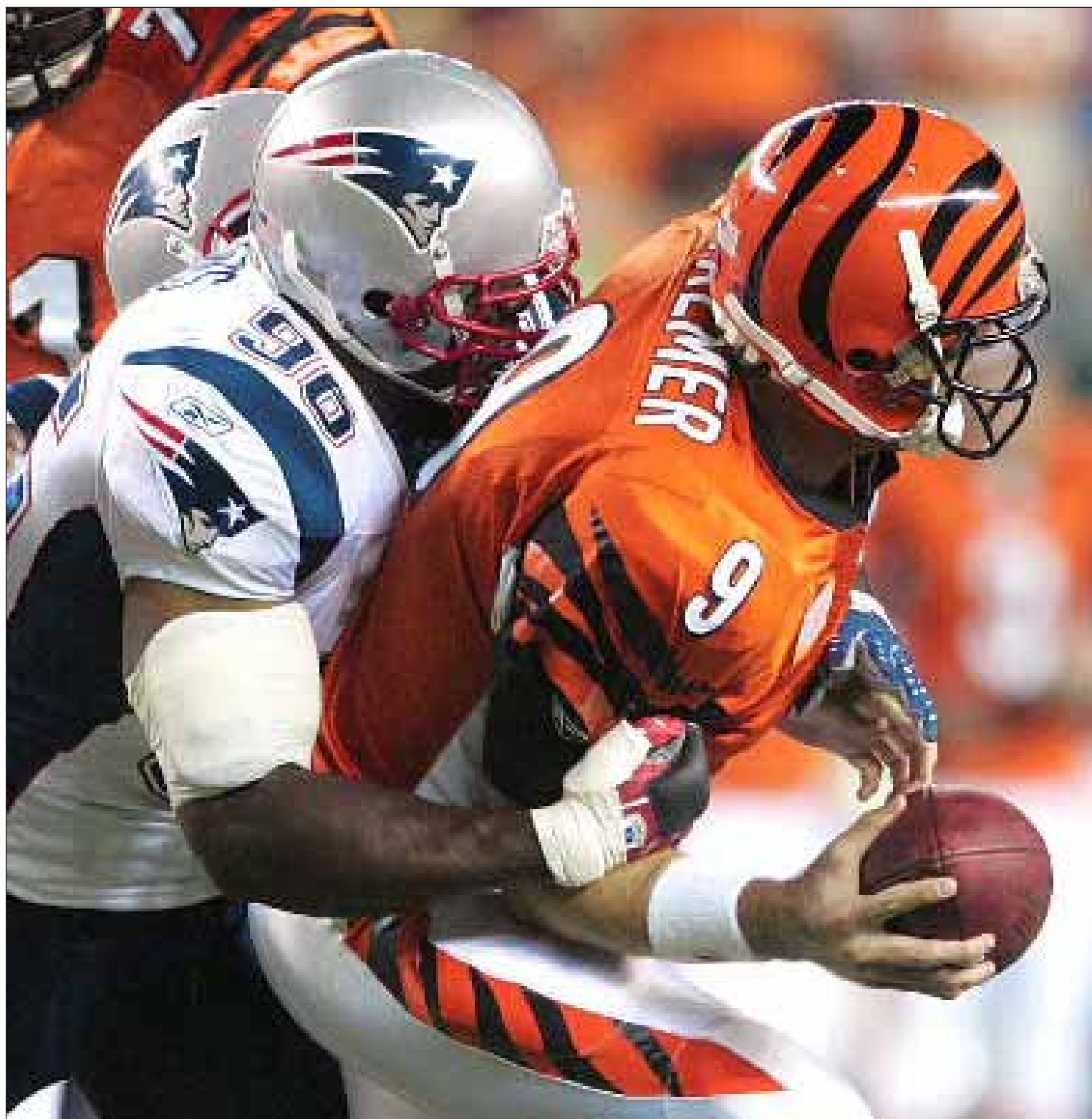
	PATS	RAVENS
Yards	434.4 (1)	294.6 (24)
Points	40.2 (1)	16.5 (25)
Yds. allowed	281.5 (3)	291.4 (4)
Pts. allowed	16.8 (5T)	22.1 (17T)

For up-to-the-second stats and scores: [projosports.com/patriots](http://projosports.com/patriots)

SECTION B  
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# MARKED FOR SUCCESS



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GLENN OSMUNDSON

Pats linebacker Adalius Thomas, sacking the Bengals' Carson Palmer in October, can laugh off life's bumps in the road.

## Surviving a crash fuels Adalius Thomas' zeal

BY SHALISE MANZA YOUNG  
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

FOXBORO — It is there for all the world to see, for him to see when he looks in the mirror, and it's not going anywhere.

That's the way Adalius Thomas wants it.

The dark brown scar that mars his forehead, trails down to his left eye, is a constant reminder of a day when he came frighteningly close to losing his life. But it is part of him, a part of his past that continues to mold his present, and it is something he refuses to cover up.

In 1991, Thomas was riding in the passenger's side of the family Ford Galaxie, with his older brother driving them from their home in Nixburg, Ala., to pick up

**THOMAS PROFILE**

- **HEIGHT:** 6-foot-2
- **WEIGHT:** 270
- **NFL EXPERIENCE:** Ravens (2000-06), Patriots (2007)
- **CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:** Named to two Pro Bowls (2003, '06) . . . is eighth among active linebackers in career sacks (41) . . . has six career defensive touchdowns, three by interception and three by fumble recoveries . . . is fourth on the Patriots in tackles (53) and second in sacks (3) this year.

two younger siblings at daycare. As Thomas dozed in the front seat, an oncoming car hit them

SEE **THOMAS, B5**

## Patriots appear to have only a pair of obstacles

BALTIMORE — Just because Bill Belichick makes it a point never to look ahead, and insists that his players do likewise, it doesn't mean that Patriots fans can't sneak a peek at what lies ahead for the best team in the National Football League.

With the Pats just five games away from completing the first 16-0 regular season in NFL history, let's take a look at the remaining schedule — starting with tonight's game against the Ravens.

Can anybody beat the Pats? Will anybody beat the Pats? Belichick, of course, is concerned only with whether his team will win in Baltimore. Consider this exchange with

**Patriots vs. Ravens**

- **TIME:** 8:30 p.m.
- **SITE:** M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore.
- **TV:** ESPN (over-the-air Channel 5, Cox Channel 30, Cox HD Channel 71).
- **TEAM RECORDS:** Patriots 11-0, Ravens 4-7.
- **THE LINE:** Pats by 19.

a determined, but clearly over-matched, media member last Monday in Foxboro:

"As the season goes on," Belichick was asked, "does it get tougher to forget about the big record looming over your heads

SEE **DONALDSON, B5**

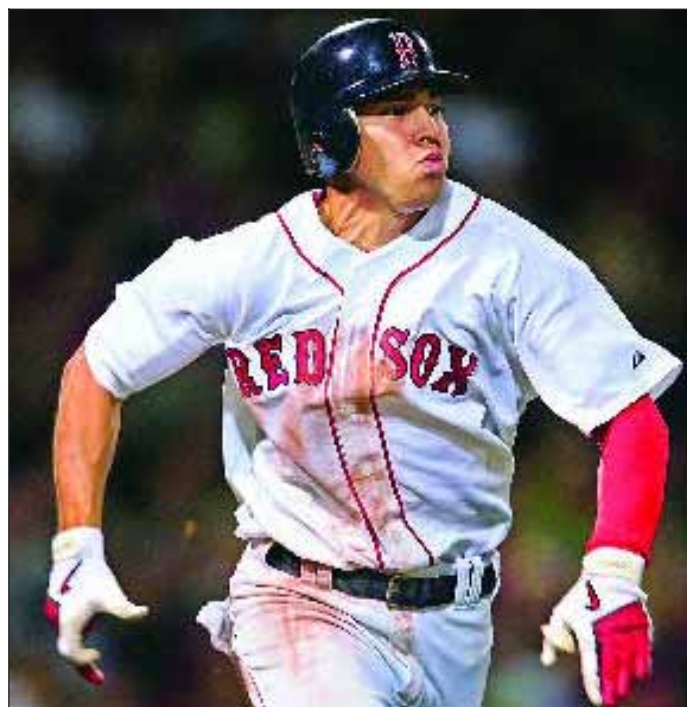
## PC's mascot, cheerleaders to stay home

BY KEVIN McNAMARA  
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

PROVIDENCE — There will be no trouble awaiting the Friars' mascot when Providence College's basketball team travels to Kingston tomorrow. He isn't going.

PC has decided to keep its mascot — as well as its band and cheerleaders — away from the sold-out Ryan Center for the renewal of the state's premier sporting event. The move comes one season after PC's mascot insulted URI's cheerleaders by ringing a cowbell and running through the girls' routine during a timeout. URI officials also claimed that PC students handed out "cheer

SEE **PC, B3**



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / GLENN OSMUNDSON

Red Sox outfielder Jacoby Ellsbury, running to first during a game against the Yankees in September, is reportedly included in a package for Twins lefty Johan Santana.

## Red Sox raising ante for Santana

Boston has added phenom Jacoby Ellsbury to its offer for the Twins' standout left-hander.

BY SEAN McADAM  
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

BOSTON — On the eve of the start of the winter meetings, the intrigue surrounding Minnesota Twins left-hander Johan Santana took one more unexpected turn.

The Red Sox yesterday did an about-face and decided to include outfielder Jacoby Ellsbury in a package for the premier pitcher. Previously, the Red Sox had declared both Ellsbury and pitching prospect Clay Buchholz off-limits in trade talks.

That, however, was before the New York Yankees — the Red Sox' chief rival on the field and in these negotiations — reluctantly agreed to include top pitching prospect Phillip Hughes in their offer to the Twins.

Over the last few days, the feeling had been that the Sox were merely continuing their negotiating for Santana in an effort to further drive the price up for the Yankees. But Boston's reported move to include Ellsbury in the deal casts the Sox' strategy in a new light.

That tactic led some associated with the Yankees to express concern yesterday that the Red Sox were nearing an agreement for Santana.

The decision to include Ellsbury in their offer, however, also resulted in the Sox removing lefty Jon Lester from their previous package of players. Initially, the Sox had offered the Twins Lester, Coco Crisp, infield prospect Jed Lowrie and an unspecified minor-leaguer.

The addition of Ellsbury probably means that Crisp is out, since

the Twins would have no use for two center fielders.

The Yankees' latest offer is said to include Hughes and outfielder Melky Cabrera. The Twins have been pushing for the Yankees to also include Ian Kennedy in the package, and the Sox' upgraded offer may give them leverage there to extract more from New York.

For their part, the Yankees have refused to part with both Hughes and Kennedy and have told the Twins that a third player in the deal cannot come from the team's remaining elite crop — Kennedy included.

According to a source familiar with Santana's thinking, the pitcher over the weekend was growing tired of the uncertainty and had given the Twins several

SEE **RED SOX, B2**

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