

What team do the Patriots not want to see in their first playoff game?

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BAY VIEW FLEXES MUSCLE VS. CUMBERLAND: View the gallery at [HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland](http://HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland)

Follow the Friars

Kevin McNamara blogs before, during and after tonight's game against Sacred Heart, at [projsports.com/pc](http://projsports.com/pc)

Top three

Tim Welsh is the third-winningest coach in PC basketball history:

	WINS	YEARS AT PC
Joe Mullaney	319	18
Dave Gavitt	209	10
Tim Welsh	151	10

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

SECTION C

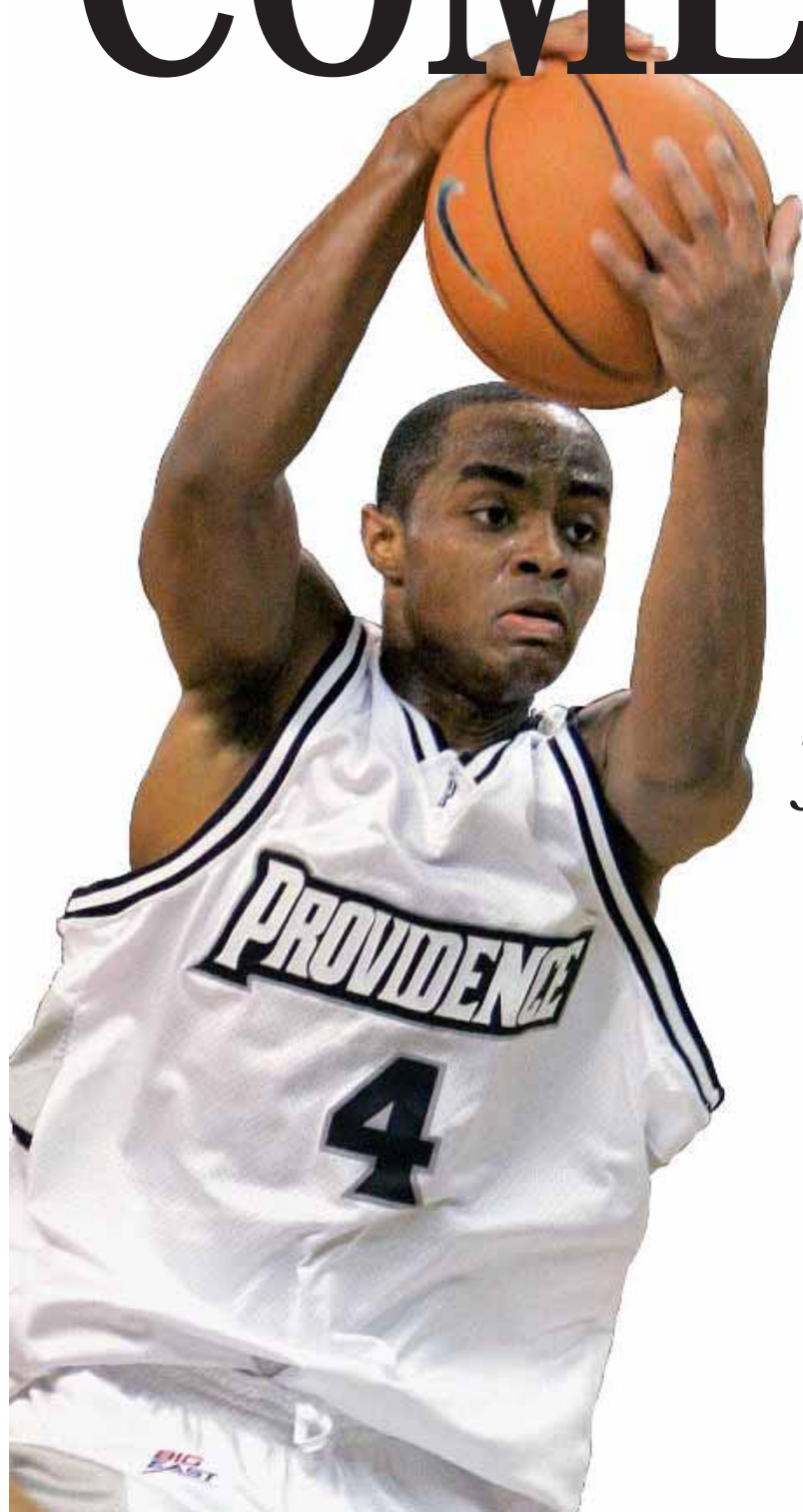


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# projo SPORTS

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# COME TOGETHER



With the returning Sharaud Curry (left) joining the high-flying Brian McKenzie (right), PC has three more chances — starting tonight — to get ready for the Big East season



BY KEVIN McNAMARA  
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

PROVIDENCE — The clock is ticking. As Tim Welsh and his Providence College Friars juggled practice and study halls during the nine-day semester exam break, dual realities hung over the team. First was the completion of a three-game homestand that will end PC's nonconference schedule. That stretch begins with tonight's matchup against Sacred Heart at the Dunkin' Donuts Center. The other, starker reality is that the Big East sea-

son is right around the corner. In 15 days, the Friars will be in Milwaukee's Bradley Center staring at the 10th-ranked Marquette Golden Eagles. Ready or not, here it comes.

First things first, of course. PC (6-3) needs to enter Big East play with a 9-3 mark, but getting by Sacred Heart, Florida State and St. Peter's is no walk in the park. The FSU game looms as a particularly stiff challenge, with last season's 92-62 Seminoles win serving as a reminder.

"If we can get these three and go into the Big East

with three more wins, we should be in good shape," said Brian McKenzie, the most pleasant surprise of the year's opening nine games.

Unlike many teams around the country, the Friars are still coming together with the Big East schedule just weeks away. Center Randall Hanke has played meaningful minutes in only one game. Sharaud Curry, the team's leading returning scorer, has yet to suit up. He returned to practice during the exam break and ran well the last two days, but Welsh is listing

SEE FRIARS, C5

Sacred Heart at PC

- TIME: 7:30 p.m.
- SITE: Dunkin' Donuts Center.
- TV: None.
- RADIO: WEEI-FM (103.7).
- ANNOUNCERS: John Rooke and Joe Hassett.
- TEAM RECORDS: PC 6-3, Sacred Heart 3-6.

## Pats' dominance extends to AFC Pro Bowl team

New England places a franchise-record eight players on the roster, seven of them starters.

BY SHALISE MANZA YOUNG  
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

Eight New England Patriots players were named to the AFC Pro Bowl roster yesterday, tying the most ever for the franchise since the 1970 AFL-NFL merger.

Quarterback Tom Brady, receiver Randy Moss, left tackle Matt Light, left guard Logan

Mankins, linebacker Mike Vrabel, cornerback Asante Samuel and nose tackle Vince Wilfork have all been selected as starters for the Feb. 10 exhibition; center Dan Koppen was chosen as a reserve.

Conspicuously absent from the list are defensive end Ty Warren and receiver Wes Welker.

PATRIOTS' PRO-BOWLERS

- Tom Brady, QB
- Randy Moss, WR
- Matt Light, OL
- Logan Mankins, OL
- Mike Vrabel, LB
- Asante Samuel, CB
- Vince Wilfork, DL
- Dan Koppen, C

Mankins, Vrabel, Samuel, Wilfork and Koppen are all first-time honorees. This is the

SEE PATRIOTS, C2

## URI gridders will win, Rizzi declares

Darren Rizzi, named the Rams' football coach yesterday, is convinced he can lead Rhody to success.

BY MIKE SZOSTAK  
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

SOUTH KINGSTOWN — After thanking teammates with whom he shared memorable experiences playing football and living "down the line," and offering his gratitude to his old coach, his old position coach, his current coach, his step-

father, his in-laws, family friends, his five children, his wife, the search committee that interviewed him, the university president and the athletics director who overwhelmed him with his passion and enthusiasm during a 3½-hour breakfast meeting, the University of Rhode Island's new football coach made a bold prediction.

"Make no mistake about it, folks," said Darren Rizzi. "This program will win, will consistently win and will win championships. I



RIZZI

wouldn't be standing up here at this podium if I didn't feel that way. That's going to happen."

Win? Consistently? Championship? The words sounded refreshing for a program that has experienced only three winning

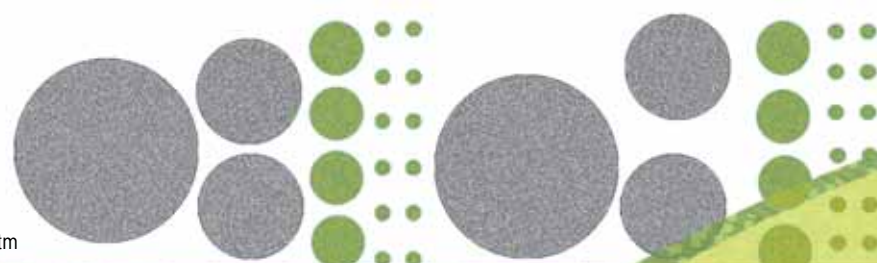
SEE URI, C3

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