

# Things to think about while...

# Youth in competition

Just a couple of thoughts that have been going through my head as I sit here trying to figure out what my column will be about this week.

• Does Red Sox manager Terry Francona realize there is a designated hitter rule in the American League? The National League, which doesn't have the designated hitter, has an automatic out in every lineup in the pitcher's ninth spot. The Red Sox have an automatic out in their lineup with the fifth spot, occupied by David Ortiz. Ortiz' bat speed has diminished dramatically. In last Wednesday's game against the Minnesota Twins, Ortiz couldn't even catch up with an 86-mile-an-hour changeup. Shouldn't Jeremy Hermida be hitting against right handed pitchers and Mike Lowell against lefties?

• Why are the Bruins having such a hard time scoring this season? They were the lowest scoring team in the league in 2009-2010. Their leading scorer, Patrice Bergeron, had 19 goals and 33 assists for 52 points. Heck, Alexander Ovechkin, of the Washington Capitals, had 50 goals all by himself this season. He almost had more goals than the Bruins' leading scorer that included assists. The Bruins will only go as far in the playoffs as goalie Tuuka Rask will take them with his 1.94 goals against average.

• Ever wonder why Jonathan Papelbon gives up so many home runs in the ninth inning? I figured it out last week. With Daniel Bard as the set up man throwing 100-mile-an-hour fastballs at hitters, by the time Papelbon comes

into the game, his 95-mile-an-hour throws look like practice pitches to the hitters.

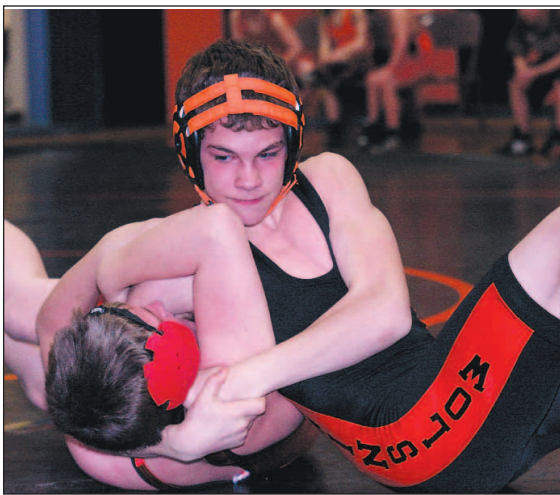
• Why are Red Sox fans going into such a panic? After eight games this season the team was 4-4. Last year after eight games, they were 2-6, and recovered to make the playoffs. Relax!

• While worrying about the Red Sox on April 15, how would you like to be a Houston Astros fan? They were mathematically eliminated from playoff contention on that day. The Baltimore Orioles are not far behind. It's a good thing in a way, if it wouldn't be for the Orioles, the Sox would be in last place in the division.

• I'd like to be a fly on the wall in the executive offices of the New England Patriots, and find out what they are thinking. What are they doing during the off season? I know the draft is coming up next weekend, and that they own a lot of picks. I just hope they are going to make some wise picks or make the last-minute trades to bring in some more offense. The New York Jets are looking scary after all the moves they have made and the Miami Dolphins have improved themselves, also. I would hate to think the Patriots will be battling with the Buffalo Bills for third place in the AFC East.. The Pats don't exactly have a cup cake schedule.

• If Minnesota's Denard Spann is hitting .152, why did the Red Sox walk him four times in a game last week?

• And what's with the Celtics? They limped in as the fourth seed in the NBA Eastern Conference, leaking oil along the way to finish off the season in less than sparkling fashion. All the experts



say they are built for the playoffs. I'm not sure I know exactly what that means?

• Have you noticed how the Red Sox look like a Little League team at times. In case some of you haven't been to a Little League game in a while, I can tell you a little. My grandson plays, and during those games, you rarely see the catcher throw down to second in an attempt to throw out a potential base stealer. You walk someone, it's an automatic double. Sound familiar? The Red Sox catchers have not thrown out anyone yet this year, and in a lot of instances, don't even bother to throw down to second.

• And, while starting the season off at 4-9, six games out of first place, the Red Sox have lost six of seven games against the New York Yankees and Tampa Bay Rays, the teams they are chasing.

The more I think about this, the more depressed I get.

Now, I wonder what I'm going to write about this week.

**Roland's trivia question of the week:**

The top three pitchers in Red Sox history in innings pitched are Roger Clemens, Tim Wakefield and Cy Young. Who is number four?

Answer on page 15.

Left, Winslow Junior High wrestler Brandon Metten, 13, scraps with a Skowhegan wrestler in a meet earlier this year. Above, Winslow youth baseball pitcher Dylan Hutchinson, 11, hurls during a 2009 game at Mini Fenway Park in Oakland. Central Maine Little League teams are gearing up for the beginning of the season.

Photos by Mark Huard/Central Maine Photography

## SCORES & OUTDOORS



by Roland D. Hallee

### UMaine-Machias announces dean's list for fall 2009 semester

The following area students have been named to the dean's list at University of Maine-Machias for the fall 2009 semester: Stacey Rae LaCombe, Benton, Sheena Lynn Hanson, South China, Sue Ellen Love, South China, Katherine B. Paquette, Waterville, Margaret E. Davis, Windsor, Charles Eric McDaniel, Winslow, Stacy Lynne Lash, Jefferson and Kaitlyn Lydia McCaslin, Fairfield.

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