

TV HIGHLIGHTS

Exhibition baseball: Red Sox-Yankees, 1:05 p.m., ESPN
NCAA Tournament: Albany-Mount St. Mary's, 6:30 p.m., Tru
NHL: Bruins-Devils, 7 p.m., NESN
NCAA Tournament: N.C. State-Xavier, 9:10 p.m., Tru
Listings, C2

Sports

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Why Buffett will keep his billion

Warren Buffett is offering a billion dollars to anyone who picks the perfect NCAA bracket. He will only accept 15 million brackets on a first-come, first-entered basis. Buffett can rest easy — the odds are overwhelmingly in his favor. With some analysis from Yale School of Management professor Ed Kaplan, here's why:



FILE/JONATHAN WIGGS/GLOBE STAFF

Harvard's Tommy Amaker says he's not concerned with expectations, good or bad.

GARY WASHBURN

Success story growing Harvard making a connection

Success was expected for the Harvard basketball program this season, and that's a paramount statement considering the history of the program. The 50 years without an NCAA Tournament berth. The times when the Crimson were nothing more than scrimmages for Penn and Princeton.

As Harvard begins a third consecutive Tournament run Thursday, against Cincinnati in Spokane, Wash., there is a lack of appreciation for a program that has dominated a conference that hardly emphasizes athletics by fearlessly challenging opponents with better facilities, higher budgets, and more pure talent.

Ten years ago, Harvard was that convenient late-December nonconference opponent, an easy victory before conference season began. Now certain Division I schools are wary of playing Harvard, and those who do — such as Boston College, Connecticut, Colorado, and California — come away with a newfound respect for the program and the Ivy League.

Yet as the victories have mounted, the NCAA Tournament no longer a once-in-a-lifetime experience and the seeds rising every year, the Crimson, especially coach Tommy Amaker, have been peppered with criticism about recruiting practices, the two players who withdrew last season because of accusations of academic improprieties, and the perception that this success at such a prestigious institution with such athletic constraints can't be organic or legitimate.

"What we've always talked about in our program and used this extensively and really believe in this is we are never concerned with whatever the expectation may be," Amaker said. "Whether it's good or bad."

"We weren't concerned about it a year ago when we weren't considered very good because of the guys that we lost. We'll feel good about whatever happens for our program, our team, and our season."

Amaker was fired at Michigan in 2007 because he was un-

WASHBURN, Page C9

INSIDE

Candidate Sizemore
Big day has new Sox outfielder closing on in starting job. **c2**

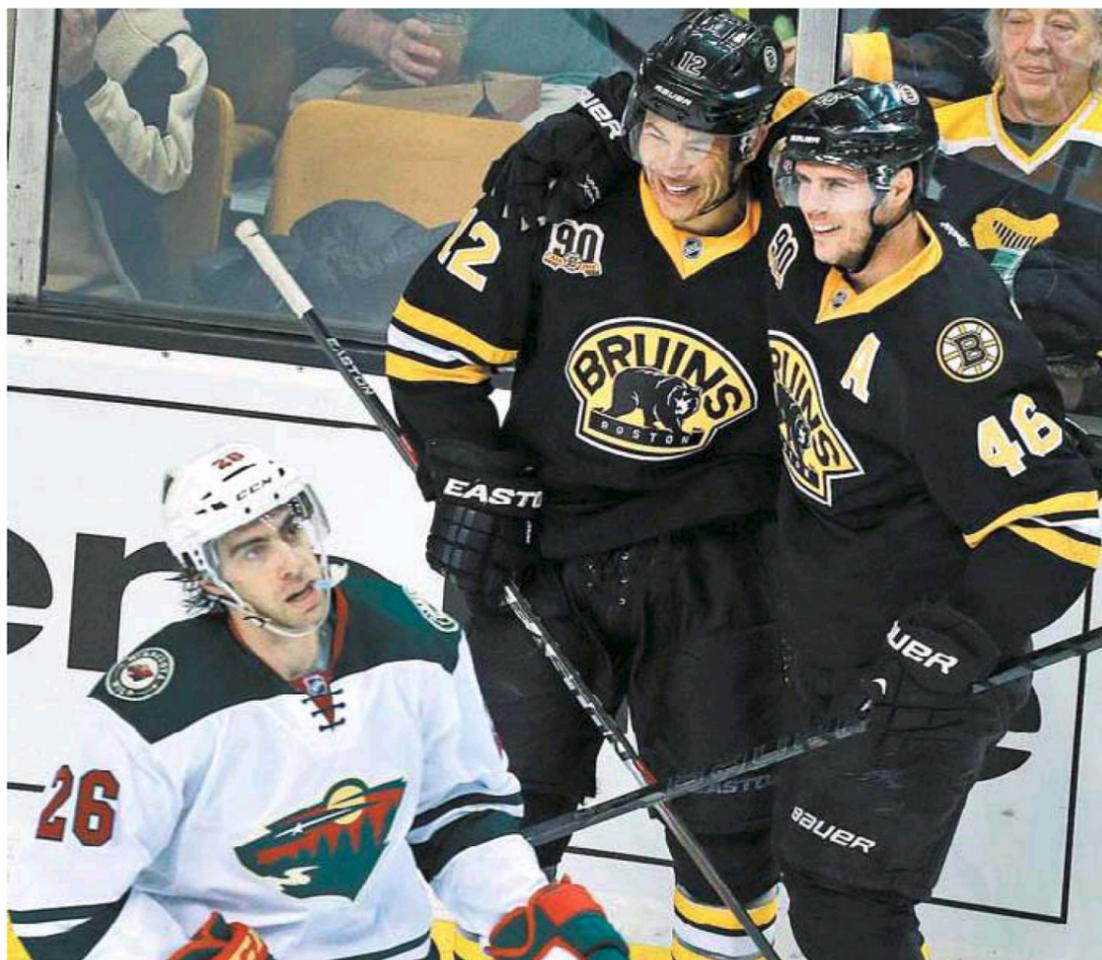
Revis revved up
New Patriot defender says decision was 'about winning.' **c6**

UConn top seed
Undeclared women eye ninth title; women's bracket. **c7**



This 1.5-inch line represents the 15 million brackets Buffett is accepting.

This line represents the 9.22 quintillion different conceivable brackets. We don't have enough space in the newspaper, but to make it to scale, this line would be 14.56 million miles long. Enough to go from the Earth to the moon 60.9 times. Even if all of these entrants turn out to be unique (which almost surely will not be the case), they would cover only 1.6 in 1 trillion of the total number of possibilities.



JIM DAVIS/GLOBE STAFF

Jarome Iginla (12) and David Krejci (46) outnumbered the Wild's Matt Moulson after Iginla gave the Bruins a 1-0 lead.

Great length

Bruins win their ninth in a row as Smith breaks out and Iginla stays hot

By Amalie Benjamin
GLOBE STAFF

Bruins 4 Reilly Smith is not Brad
Wild 1 Marchand. There was no real celebration after he scored his first goal in 16 games, nothing over the top, no monkey being taken off his back, as Marchand had mimed after ending his own drought back in November. But Smith could have been excused for uttering "finally," as it appeared he did, after slamming a Patrice Bergeron rebound past Darcy Kuemper for his first goal since Jan. 28.

"I'll have to check the replay," Smith said with a smile, when asked if that was what he said.

Smith scored the deciding goal in a shootout March 8 in Tampa Bay, but hadn't scored in regulation in nearly seven weeks. He ended that drought by crashing the net and cleaning up the puck at 7:50 of the third period, the third goal in the Bruins' 4-1 win over Minnesota.

"I don't think I've scored a pretty goal this year, so I figured it was going to come that way," Smith said. "But it was a long time, so it was definitely a good feeling."

By beating the Wild at TD Garden — the first time Boston had done that in seven games against Minnesota — the Bruins pushed their winning streak to nine games. It is the team's longest such streak since winning 10 in a row in November

2011. Not that coach Claude Julien was satisfied.

"We had some stuff to look at before tonight — in case you guys didn't know that," he said. "Just another one of those games where goaltending was good. Again, too many breakaways or good scoring chances, and we have to fix that. But, again, we played well enough to win."

Jarome Iginla added two goals, the Bruins' first of the night (3:52 of the second) and an empty-netter with 1:05 left. Those goals gave Iginla six in his last five games, bringing him to 25 on the season and 555 in 1,300 NHL games.

BRUINS, Page C5



LARRY W. SMITH/EPA

Dallas star Dirk Nowitzki, shooting over the Celtics' Kris Humphries, finished with a team-high 19 points in the Mavericks' 94-89 win.

A uniform occurrence: Celtics lose fifth straight

By Baxter Holmes
GLOBE STAFF

Mavericks 94 DALLAS — Not
Celtics 89 even on St. Patrick's Day? Not even on such a holiday could a green-clad team that wears shamrocks, that's named the Celtics, find some luck?

Not this season. Monday night's result at the American Airlines Center was typical for the Celtics, a carbon copy of so many that preceded it elsewhere.

Despite another valiant effort, one that most winning teams don't

even produce on a nightly basis, the Celtics added another loss to the ledger, this time courtesy of the Dallas Mavericks, who held on to issue their guests a 94-89 defeat.

It was the fifth straight loss for the Celtics (22-46), and it was their third straight loss while wearing their festive sleeved uniforms.

But more importantly, at least as far as history is concerned, the Celtics finished their season winless on the road vs. the Western Conference (0-15) for the first time in franchise history.

CELTICS, Page C3

BEN VOLIN
ON FOOTBALL

Patriots still have some holes to fill

The Patriots were uncharacteristically active in the first week of free agency, filling lineup holes and improving depth at key positions with the signings of four impact players — cornerbacks Darrelle Revis and Brandon Browner, and receivers Julian Edelman and Brandon LaFell.

The Patriots probably don't have any major signings left, but they're far from being done with the offseason. There's still a hole to plug at center, depth to build at several positions, a messy contract negotiation with Vince Wilfork and, of course, the draft May 8-10.

An in-depth look at what's next for the Patriots:

■ Resolution with Wilfork. There are only two outcomes — either a contract extension with a lower salary and cap number for 2014, or an outright release. He can stomp and scream all he wants, but no team would let Wilfork play next season with a \$7.5 million salary and \$11.6 million cap number. And the negotiations with Wilfork likely will need to be resolved sooner than later because of the team's salary cap situation.

While we don't know for certain how much salary cap space the Patriots have right now because of a few unknown contract figures, we do know this — it's not much.

The Patriots entered the weekend with \$16.889 million in salary cap space, according to NFL Players Association records. Revis has a cap number of \$7 million to bring it down to \$9.889 million, and LaFell, Edelman, and Browner also must be subtracted, leaving the Patriots with at most \$3 million to \$4 million.

Considering the Patriots only have 60 players on the roster (offseason maximum: 90), they al-

ON FOOTBALL, Page C6