

**Patriots' loss: The most disappointing in New England sports history?**

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**BARRINGTON, HENDRICKEN HIT THE POOL:** View the gallery at [HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland](http://HSGameTime.com/rhodeisland)

**PC-DePaul coverage**

Kevin McNamara's multimedia preview this afternoon, live scoreboard and blog reports tonight, at [projosports.com/pc](http://projosports.com/pc)

**Winning ways**

The NFC now holds a 22-20 edge in Super Bowls:

**NFC (22)** 49ers 5, Cowboys 5, Giants 3, Packers 3, Redskins 3, Bears 1, Bucs 1, Rams 1

**AFC (20)** Steelers 5, Patriots 3, Raiders 3, Broncos 2, Colts 2, Dolphins 2, Chiefs 1, Jets 1, Raiders 1

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

SECTION C



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# The Last Drive

**THE AFTERMATH**



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / KRIS CRAIG

Special-teams captain Larry Izzo takes time to greet the fans at Gillette Stadium who turned out last night to welcome home the Patriots from the Super Bowl.

## A staunch band of loyalists goes the extra mile for their Pats

BY JOE McDONALD  
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

FOXBORO — There are many homes in the Blackstone Valley region of Rhode Island with Patriots flags flying at half-staff. Businesses along Route 1 heading toward Gillette Stadium still haven't taken down their good-luck messages to the home-town team.

The aftereffects of the New England Patriots' devastating loss at the hands of the

New York Giants in Super Bowl XLII were still visible last night as Gillette Stadium was literally and figuratively in the dark.

A few floodlights cast a dim shadow over a sparse-but-loyal group of 200 fans who stood in the

cold weather near the team's pro shop to welcome home the NFL's runner-up team. The Pats remain champions in the hearts and minds of the fans. It was quite different from the 15,000 fans who were at Gillette two weeks ago for the Super Bowl sendoff.

Fans began to gather last night around 5 o'clock in anticipation of the team's arrival home. Around 8 o'clock a security guard screamed out, "Five minutes," and the fans began to cheer. In the distance, a lone football was being tossed back and forth between a father and son. Finally, at 8:16, the blue lights from the police escort could be seen coming into the parking lot with five buses of players, personnel, friends and family.

"We're here to support our guys," said Sue LaFauci of Smithfield. "We still love them and we will love them. We're disappointed like everyone else, naturally, but we won 18 and we tried."

The buses moved slowly past the fans. One Patriots employee later described the flight home from Arizona as "somber."

Al and Claudia Inglesse of North Attleboro

SEE RETURN, C5



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / BOB BREIDENBACH

Giants quarterback Eli Manning's ability to evade the grasp of Patriots defensive lineman Richard Seymour (93) and heave a pass that New York wide receiver David Tyree, below, was able to muscle away from New England safety Rodney Harrison kept the Giants' historic Super Bowl winning fourth-quarter drive alive.

## Storybook ending for Eli, Giants

BY ROBERT LEE  
JOURNAL SPORTS WRITER

PHOENIX — For 21 years, when football people talked about "The Drive," they were referring to the 98-yard march by the Broncos in the final five minutes of the AFC Championship Game at Cleveland on Jan. 11, 1987, which tied the score and set the stage for Denver's overtime victory.

But that phrase may now belong to the Giants.

The latest drive, which will live in football history, was engineered by Eli Manning, earning him MVP honors of Super Bowl XLII. It went 83 yards, took 2 minutes and 7 seconds to complete, and when it was over the Giants were Super Bowl champions and the Patriots, the team many NFL experts said couldn't be beaten, had been ... well, beaten.

"Some things just don't make sense," said New York receiver David Tyree, who made one of the key plays not only of the drive, but also in Super Bowl history, when he outwrestled Rodney Harrison for a jump-ball pass by Manning on the Patriots' 24-yard line, putting the Giants in scoring position.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves.

Start at the beginning. The Patriots had just scored with 2:42 remaining to take a 14-10 lead that seemed to ensure they would a) complete their perfect 19-0 season and b) win their fourth Super Bowl in seven years.

SEE DRIVE, C5

**WHAT HAPPENED ON THE GIANTS' GAME-WINNING DRIVE:**

- **Ball on Giants' 17, first-and-10, 2:39 to play** — 11-yard pass from Eli Manning to Amani Toomer
- **Ball on Giants' 28, first-and-10, 2:09 to play** — Incomplete pass from Manning to Plaxico Burress
- **Ball on Giants' 28, second-and-10, 2:04 to play** — Incomplete pass from Manning to Burress
- Two-minute warning
- **Ball on Giants' 28, third-and-10, 1:59 to play** — nine-yard pass from Manning to Toomer
- **Ball on Giants' 37, fourth-and-1, 1:34 to play** — two-yard run by Brandon Jacobs
- **Ball on Giants' 39, first-and-10, 1:28 to play** — five-yard scramble by Manning
- First Giants' timeout
- **Ball on Giants' 44, second-and-5, 1:20 to play** — Incomplete pass from Manning to David Tyree, nearly intercepted by Asante Samuel
- **Ball on Giants' 44, third-and-5, 1:15 to play** — 32-yard pass from Manning to Tyree
- Second Giants' timeout
- **Ball on Patriots' 24, first-and-10, 0:59 to play** — Manning sacked for one-yard loss
- Third Giants' timeout
- **Ball on Patriots' 25, second-and-11, 0:51 to play** — Incomplete pass from Manning to Tyree
- **Ball on Patriots' 25, third-and-11, 0:45 to play** — 12-yard pass from Manning to Steve Smith
- **Ball on Patriots' 13, first-and-10, 0:39 to play** — 13-yard touchdown pass from Manning to Burress



AP / GENE PUSKAR

## Friars' Welsh deserves better than to be the target of fans' wrath

It began Saturday night.

The Providence College basketball team was trailing West Virginia in the second half and the boos started.

**BILL REYNOLDS**

And if you didn't know any better, it could have been nearly 30 years ago when Gary Walters was booed, and several years later when — as unbelievable as it was — Joe Mullaney was booed, and later when Rick Barnes was booed all the way to Clemson.

Tim Welsh is just the latest, in this dirty little secret of PC basketball over the years.

The president pays dearly for his White House?

So does the PC basketball coach, which is a great job as long as you win.

Booing Welsh became the new parlor game late last year when his name was announced before games, a smattering of discontent. Saturday night it bordered on becoming ugly.

So what is going on here?

I suspect it's several things.

At the most obvious, it's the fact that the Friars are not as good as the fans want them to be. The basketball world has changed. Not only is the Big East a monster of a league that takes few prisoners, it's a league with an unofficial tier system. The top teams are trying to get to the Final Four and win the national championship. The Friars are trying to get to the NCAA Tournament once every three or four years and save the coach's job.

That's the first disconnect.

It's not the only one.

I have sat in the office with every PC coach since Mullaney's second term, a list that includes Rick Pitino, Gordie Chiesa, Barnes and Pete Gillen. All have told me the same thing: this is a tougher job than they thought it was going to be, a tougher job than people realize. And yet people here expect this program to win and win big, as if for no other reason than once upon a time it did.

SEE REYNOLDS, C3



Texas Tech coach Bob Knight, the winningest coach in men's college basketball, abruptly resigns. **Story, C3.**