

Jones: Cheers to athletes with degrees for dedication

Continued from page 9

will prove that my skills far outweigh the inexperience. I will prove I got what it takes to make it.

I understand that the Fargo Forum in North Dakota has the first pick in the draft, but I'm going to pull an Eli Manning and refuse to write for that squad. The inclement weather doesn't fit my writing style, nor can I live in a place where cows outnumber people.

This decision of mine may come as a surprise to my family and fellow sportswriters, but I hope they will support and have confidence in me to do this.

This has been my dream since 2002 — ever since the moment I realized my talents as an athlete were inferior and nobody wanted to have a right-handed pitcher who tops out at 85 mph with a flat curveball.

I know my early entrance will cause problems with the NCAA, seeing as I haven't been writing for a Division-I school for at least two years.

But I haven't hired an agent or received any advanced money, so I could buy the Escalade of laptops, complete with a leather Gucci case, gold-plated mouse, a

seriously iced out keyboard, platinum disk drive with whoofers on the side.

I'm going to continue to leave my options open until the draft gets closer and see where my stock goes. I hope the University and the Emerald will have me back if my decision changes.

If only all this could be real.

Instead, I am here, continuing my education (a good thing I guess) and sitting through classes wondering how this all pertains to my future career.

I imagine many premier athletes ponder this as well.

This is what makes me respect professionals like Tim Duncan, Emeka Okafor and Eli Manning, who stayed at college and got their degrees, because it must be tough.

Tough to say no to making millions and having a secure financial future.

But like they always say, you need something to fall back on, and I guess getting my degree will do that.

Unless someone is really interested.

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Boston evens up series 3-3 with 4-2 win against New York

Red Sox come back from 0-3 in its series against the Yankees to force game seven in the ALCS

BY RONALD BLUM
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Gritting his teeth and grimacing throughout the game, Curt Schilling willed away the pain in his right ankle and the Boston Red Sox got the benefit of two reversed calls to move within one win of the most shocking comeback in baseball postseason history.

For the second straight year, the New York Yankees and the Red Sox will go to Game 7, a winner-take-all battle for the AL pennant between baseball's perennial pinstriped power and a Boston team desperately trying to win the World Series for the first time since 1918.

Pitching with a dislocated ankle tendon that forced him out of the opener, Schilling smothered the Yankees by allowing one run over seven innings to lead the Red Sox over New York 4-2 Tuesday night. This pulls Boston into a 3-3 tie in an AL championship series that was three outs from a sweep just two days earlier.

New York was ahead 3-0 in the series before blowing a ninth-inning lead Sunday night in Game 4 at Fenway Park and losing in the 12th. The Yankees led Game 5 in the eighth Monday, but lost that one also — another 5-hour marathon that stretched for 14 innings.

Of the 25 previous major league

teams that fell behind 3-0 in a best-of-seven series, none had forced a Game 7. But back in the Bronx, where they wasted a four-run lead in Game 7 last year, the Red Sox broke through with a four-run fourth against Jon Lieber.

The team that is still trying to put an end to The Curse benefited from two big reversed calls.

In the fourth, Mark Bellhorn hit a ball over the left-field wall that was at first ruled a ground-rule double before it was correctly changed to a three-run homer that made it 4-0. It was his first postseason homer.

Then in the eighth, after Miguel Cairo's double and Derek Jeter's RBI single off Bronson Arroyo pulled the Yankees to 4-2, Alex Rodriguez hit a ball between the mound and first. Arroyo picked it up and ran toward first, where just before the base the striding Rodriguez slapped the ball out of his glove.

Jeter came all the way around to score as the ball bounced down the right-field line. After Boston manager Terry Francona came out to argue, the umpires huddled, discussed the play, then called Rodriguez out for interference and sent Jeter back to first.

Rodriguez raised both hands and put them on his helmet, screaming about the reversal. The game was held up for 10 minutes while fans tossed debris on the field and Yankees manager

Joe Torre argued. Gary Sheffield then fouled out, ending the inning.

After Boston's Orlando Cabrera was ruled safe at first base in the ninth, preventing the Yankees from completing a double play, public address announcer Bob Sheppard made his second announcement for fans to maintain order. The umpires talked with Kevin Hallinan, senior vice president of security in the commissioner's office, as Yankees reliever Tanyon Sturtze warmed up.

Helmets police then came on the field and knelt in foul territory along the stands on both the left- and right-field sides in the top of the ninth.

Schilling took a three-hit shutout into the seventh before allowing Bernie Williams' solo homer on the 91st of his 99 pitches. Arroyo allowed a run in the eighth, and Keith Foulke pitched the ninth.

Knuckleballer Tim Wakefield, who lost Game 7 last year on Aaron Boone's 11th-inning homer, starts for the Red Sox on Wednesday night, most likely against Kevin Brown or Javier Vazquez.

From the start, on a cold night with an intermittent, misty rain, nothing went right for the Yankees. Jorge Posada's deep drive to right was held up by the wind.

While the Red Sox looked loose, especially after the initial call of a double on Bellhorn's ball was reversed, the Yankees looked tight, overswinging for the second straight night and never testing Schilling's ankle with a bunt on the slick grass.



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Continued from page 9

Cactus State rivalry

Arizona (11-7, 3-5 Pac-10) and Arizona State (8-8, 3-5 Pac-10) will duke it out this weekend in Tucson, Ariz. The Wildcats drew the fifth-largest crowd in Pac-10 history with 5,275 fans in attendance for their match against Washington State.

Junior outside hitter Kim Glass picked up a season-best 28 kills against Washington. Bre Ladd contributed 27 kills over the weekend. The junior middle blocker has 303 career blocks after posting 10 total blocks last week.

Arizona State's Nicole Morton hit .315 last week and averaged 5.00 kills per game, with 40 total. The sophomore has recorded a double digit total for kills in 13 of 16 matches and leads the Sun Devils with 206 kills this season.

Both teams have identical records of 1-3 at home and 2-2 on the road.

Off the bench

Oregon's competitive chain has been missing links for a majority of the season. The Ducks have had to resort to backup plans due to the permanent loss of Lauren Westendorf and the absence of Sarah Mason.

Sophomore Erin Little filled in and immediately responded after Westendorf's injury with notable offensive output. Last week, Little became ill in the middle of the Ducks' Bay Area road trip, and Oregon devised another plan.

Oregon's second wave of replacements included junior Jaclyn Jones and sophomore Allyson Leavitt. Jones exceeded expectations Saturday night with 17 kills against

Stanford. Preceding that performance, Jones' season-best was seven kills. Leavitt is still adapting to the outside hitter position after playing defensive specialist for most of her career. Nine of her 10 kills this season have come in the last three matches.

Air time

The Ducks will star in their only televised match this Thursday at McArthur Court. Fox Sports Net will broadcast the UCLA versus Oregon match Saturday.

This season, the home team is 3-1 in televised matches. However, the Bruins (4-3, 11-5 overall) hold a 39-1 all-time advantage against the Ducks. Oregon's only victory came at home in 1987.

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Volleyball: Oregon takes on UCLA Saturday

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