

# SPORTS

## NEW ENGLAND SAVORS VICTORY

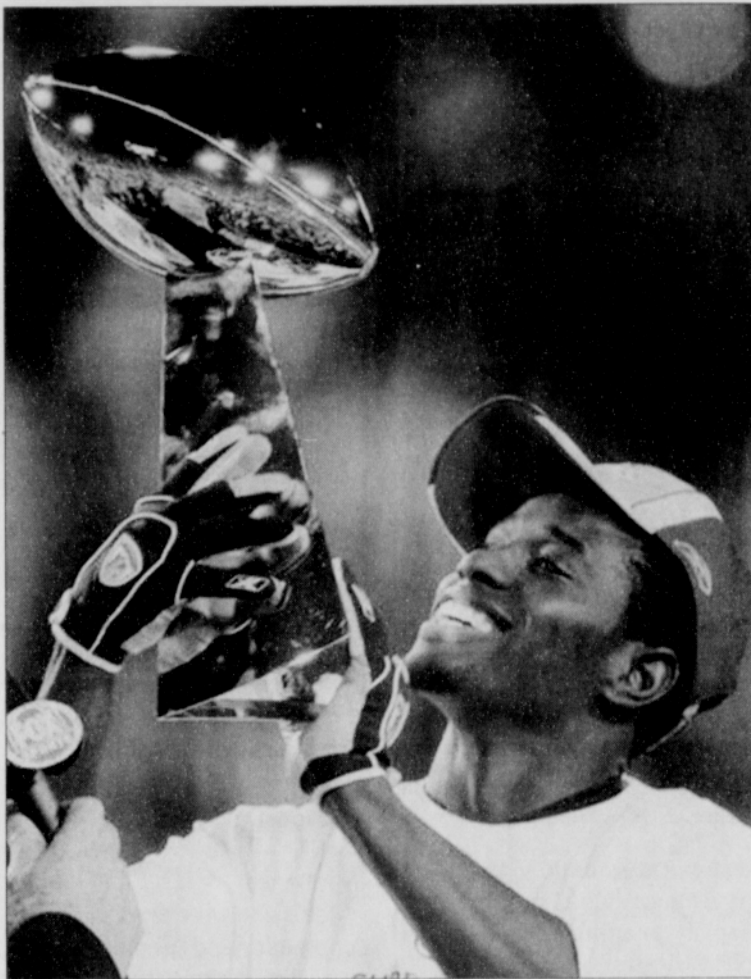
### MVP award given to Patriots' Deion Branch

(AP) - The Super Bowl couldn't have worked out better for New England Patriots receiver Deion Branch: He won the game's MVP, and then he got to celebrate with a huge rooting section from his hometown.

"A lot of them didn't go to the game," Branch said Monday, a day after catching a record-tying 11 passes to help New England beat the Philadelphia Eagles 24-21. "I didn't have enough tickets."

Jacksonville is the smallest market to host the Super Bowl, and it strained to house and entertain the estimated 100,000 guests who came for the game and the parties surrounding it. Local officials spent much of the week defending their efforts, and NFL commissioner Paul Tagliabue defended the decision to come to city without the warmth of Miami and San Diego or the nightlife of New Orleans.

Branch said 70-75 of his friends and family drove a couple of hours from Albany, Ga., to watch native son tie Jerry Rice and Dan Ross



Super Bowl XXXIX Most Valuable Player Deion Branch of the New England Patriots holds up the Vince Lombardi trophy after the Patriots beat the Philadelphia Eagles, 24-21 in Jacksonville, Fla., on Sunday. (AP photo)

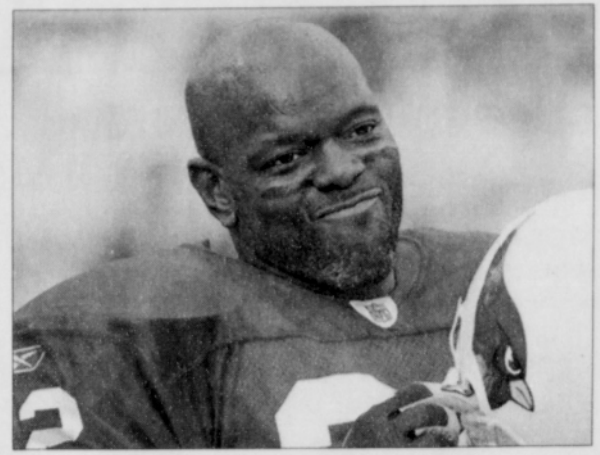
with 11 catches that totaled 133 yards. In all, eight of his catches for 106 yards came on New England's scoring drives.

"He's our biggest, strongest receiver. He does all the dirty work," fellow receiver Troy Brown said. "He leveled a guy on one of runs down the sideline. He doesn't get enough credit. He's a big-time playmaker. Our whole group of receivers doesn't get the credit they deserve."

Brown had been New England's most recognizable pass-catcher - and he got most of his headlines for playing defense. And the Patriots receiving corps had been entirely overshadowed by Philadelphia's Terrell Owens, who made a gutsy, early comeback from a leg injury to catch nine passes for 122 yards.

But it was Branch who walked off with a third championship ring and the Pete Rozelle Trophy that quarterback Tom Brady took home in the Patriots' last two Super Bowl wins.

"They say big players step up in big games," Branch said after the game. "All the hoopla was about T.O. He's a great player. He really sucked it up tonight. But I want to show I have the same type of talent as those guys."



Emmitt Smith

### Emmitt Smith Retires from NFL

(AP) - Breaking down in tears and grasping his beloved Dallas Cowboys helmet, Emmitt Smith retired Thursday after a 15-year career in which he became the NFL's career rushing leader and played a key role on three Super Bowl champions.

The decision had been expected for several days, but the finality of it all was still poignant. Flanked by his wife, Pat, and Cowboys owner Jerry Jones, Smith thanked a list of people several pages long - everyone from his Pee Wee football coaches to long-time Dallas fullback Daryl "Moose" Johnston, the fierce blocker who cleared so many holes

for No. 22.

"It's been a tremendous ride," said Smith, who spent his final two years with the Arizona Cardinals after 13 seasons in Big D. "My 15 years, my 15 minutes of fame, is up."

The 35-year-old Smith ran for 18,355 yards and 164 touchdowns in his career, both NFL records.

He won the NFL MVP in 1993 and the Super Bowl MVP that same season, when he rushed for 130 yards and two touchdowns in the Cowboys' 30-13 win over Buffalo. He also had perhaps his greatest game with a separated shoulder, rushing for 229 yards in a crucial victory over the New York Giants.

## Living Black History Success



Sam Brooks (center with hat) with Trail Blazer Darius Miles and members of the Portland Bridge Builders.

The Portland Trail Blazers in partnership with the Portland Bridge Builders, a community group of young achieving African-Americans, continue a month-long celebration of Black History by honoring local African American leaders.

Sam Brooks and Paul Knauls are the first of 10 honorees selected for outstanding achievements and contributions to his community.

Brooks' passion for inclusion

and success for all people led him to create the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs, a not-for-profit organization and business center formed to promote entrepreneurship and economic development for ethnic minori-



Paul Knauls (center with hat) with Trail Blazer Shareef Abdur-Rahim and members of the Portland Bridge Builders.

ties in Oregon.

Brooks has served on more than 140 boards and committees during his career including a stint on the National Board of Directors for the Small Business Administration. He has also played a role in putting

together mentor/protégé programs that have gone on to serve arts national models for helping emerging businesses succeed.

Knauls, known to many as The Mayor of Northeast Portland, is a respected member of the commu-

nity. He has spent countless hours with the Junior Achievement programs at Humboldt and Jefferson Schools, has tutored in the Host Program at King School and served for six years on the board of the Urban League of Portland.

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