

Upton homers as Rays blast Red Sox. **BASEBALL 4D**



Defense, Afflalo have been impressive. **PISTONS 6D**

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Kitna mystery continues

Lions remain mum on whether injured QB will be released, placed on injured reserve list or traded.

By JOHN NIYO
The Detroit News

ALLEN PARK — The week-long uncertainty surrounding Jon Kitna's injury status continues, a day after the Lions' quarterback — out because of a back injury — missed his first start in two-plus seasons in Detroit.

And with the NFL trade deadline looming at 4 p.m. today, that

only adds to the confusion about the veteran quarterback's future with the team.

Will Kitna be traded, released or possibly placed on injured reserve? There were no concrete answers from anyone in Allen Park on Monday, though general manager Martin Mayhew did say early in the afternoon that the 36-year-old Kitna, who didn't make the

trip to Minnesota with the team for Sunday's 12-10 loss to the Vikings, had not asked to be traded.

As for Kitna's injury, though, it was anybody's guess where things really stand.

"The situation with Jon is still up in the air," said Mayhew, who has taken control of the Lions' football operations since Matt Millen was fired as team president Sept. 24. "We don't know all the details and all the information about his injury. We're still investigating that."

NO CRYING

Marinelli will ask NFL for clarification on calls but won't dwell on them. **5D**

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Listen to Rob Parker's latest podcast on the Lions at detnews.com/sports



has declined to discuss the results of either visit. When asked if Kitna planned to visit another specialist, Mayhew said, "I can't speak on that right now."

"Well have more information over the next couple days for you,"

Please see Lions, Page 5D



Lions QB Jon Kitna hasn't played or practiced since being pulled on Oct. 5 because of back spasms.

"They're tired of that 'Same Old Spartans' stuff..."

TREVOR BARNES, founder of Spartantailgate.com.



Garrett Celek celebrates his first-quarter touchdown catch with B.J. Cunningham at Northwestern, where Michigan State passed another test Saturday.

Photos by Dale G. Young/The Detroit News

BELIEVERS BACK FOR SPARTANS

Some still have doubts with the Buckeyes looming

By ERIC LACY
The Detroit News

EAST LANSING — It didn't take long for college football analyst Gerry DiNardo to decide Michigan State would be successful.

Seeing Mark Dantonio direct a positive, unified and intense fall camp last year prompted DiNardo, a former head coach at three colleges, to declare, "The Spartans are back."

"I was literally on the field for 10 minutes," DiNardo said. "It was very obvious to me. I believed it then and I believe it now."

It's easy for fans to feel good about Michigan State this season. The team is 6-1 (which means bowl eligible), undefeated in conference play and ranked 20th by the Associated Press.

Ohio State at Michigan State

Kickoff: 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Spartan Stadium, East Lansing



TV/radio: ABC/WJR 760
Records: OSU 6-1 (3-0 Big

Ten); MSU 6-1 (3-0)

Series: Ohio State leads 26-12

Last meeting: Ohio State 24-17 (Oct. 20, 2007)

Line: Ohio State by 3

But with six games left, the ranked Spartans still have plenty of heavy lifting to do, starting Saturday when the No. 12 Ohio State Buckeyes come to East Lansing.

Please see MSU, Page 6D



Jesse Miller (79) and the rest of the Spartans team sing the fight song after a 37-20 win over Northwestern.



Dantonio

Crunching numbers

Michigan State under Mark Dantonio can stand on his record at MSU:

12-0 when leading after three quarters

12-3 when scoring first

11-1 when leading at halftime

10-2 when leading after first quarter

10-4 when gaining more total yards than opponent

9-3 when leading in time of possession

9-3 when gaining more first downs than opponent

9-2 when playing at home

8-4 when outrushing opponent

7-2 when gaining 200-plus yards rushing

Stretch run

The Spartans are trying to avoid another second-half flop.

2003 7-1 1-4

2004 4-3 1-4

2005 4-0 1-6

2006 3-0 1-8

2007 4-0 3-6

Agent: Rodriguez has no interest in vacancy at Clemson



Rodriguez

By ANGELIQUE S. CHENGELIS
The Detroit News

Michigan coach Rich Rodriguez isn't going anywhere.

Rodriguez's name popped up in at least one national report Monday as a potential candidate for the Clemson job after Tommy Bowden resigned.

Rodriguez, in his first year at Michigan, was offensive coordinator/associate head coach for Bowden at Clemson in 1999 and 2000.

Mike Brown, Rodriguez's agent, dismissed such a scenario Monday.

"Coach Rodriguez has the best job in college football," Brown said. "He is a very fo-

cused 'Michigan Man.'

"I know 100 percent Clemson University has no intention of contacting coach Rodriguez."

Brown emphasized Rodriguez is a Clemson graduate and said he has insight into what's going on there, but declined to be specific.

STAY THE COURSE

Toledo loss won't cause Rodriguez to deviate from plan. **6D**



Ty Conklin blocks a Hurricanes shot during the third period of the Red Wings' 3-1 victory.

Red Wings 3, Hurricanes 1

Conklin solid in season debut

Backup goalie makes 27 saves as Red Wings use strong power play to win another road game.

By DAVE DYE
The Detroit News

RALEIGH, N.C. — Backup goalie Ty Conklin wasn't overworked by any means, but he was severely tested at times.

And he passed the test in his Red Wings debut.

Conklin made 27 saves Monday night to lead the Wings to a 3-1 victory over the Carolina Hurricanes at the RBC Center.

"There's always more nerves than usual that first game with a new team," said Conklin, who was signed as a free agent after playing last season with the Pittsburgh Penguins. "You always want to impress, too."

"It's nice to contribute. And it's nice to play two or three games into the season as opposed to seven or eight or 10 games into the season."

Nicklas Lidstrom and Tomas Holmstrom scored power-play goals for the Wings. Henrik Zetterberg added an empty-net goal. Defenseman Joseph Corvo (Western Michigan) scored for the Hurricanes.

Since losing their opener at home, the Wings are 2-0 on the road, including a 3-2 victory Saturday at Ottawa. They're also 9-2 on the road going back to the final game against the Nashville Predators in the first round of last season's playoffs.

The Wings flew to Washington D.C. after the game and are scheduled to visit with President Bush this afternoon at the White House. Their next game is

Please see Wings, Page 3D

NHL FORUM

Capitals, Ovechkin won't succeed if they don't fix goalie situation. **2D**