

Beacon Hill Byline by Mary Rogeness

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Win some, Lose some

What an election campaign the country endured this year! And “endured” seems like an appropriate word to describe the campaign. Just think of all that has occurred in a few short months.

The year began on a positive note when the Patriots won the Super Bowl, thrilling all of New England again. On the down side, Senator Kerry was trailing behind much of the Democratic field of presidential candidates. Then came Iowa, Governor Dean’s infamous scream, and the quick emergence of our senator as the party’s choice to oppose President Bush.

The Red Sox had a great April before settling in as a bunch of guys who missed lots of opportunities to win lots of games. But Senator Kerry sealed the deal as the party nominee, taking advantage of the strategy that scheduled many early primaries in order to select a candidate quickly. The intent was to give the Democratic candidate extra time to campaign. And as time went by, that strategy appeared to be working.

Senator Kerry kept us in suspense about his choice for a running mate. Iowa was flattered when their governor was mentioned; Florida pulled for their senator; Missouri wanted Congressman Gephardt. And the pundits were pleased when the charismatic John Edwards made the final cut.

Boston had earlier won the right to host the Democratic National Convention, and the coincidence of his home city hosting the candidate’s nomination appeared as a good omen for the candidate and the party. The convention went mostly as planned. It featured Senator Kerry as a Navy veteran “reporting for duty” and was gentle toward Republicans in general and President Bush in particular.

The Red Sox continued to slog through the season, trailing the Yankees but keeping alive the prospect of earning a wild card position in the American League playoffs. The Kerry campaign heard a faint whisper of opposition from a new group of Swift Boat veterans that seemed like it would soon fade away. Some pundits started saying the race was Kerry’s to lose.

Then came September, and my candidate had his chance. The Republican National Convention energized President Bush’s backers and turned polls immediately in his favor. The month ended with the first presidential debate that caused polls to swerve back to Senator Kerry. Daily polls purported to tell us precisely what the nation wanted, often ignoring that the results were so close that their margins of error turned most of their findings into a statistical tie.

Then the Sox lost three straight games to the Yankees – before they won four straight to send them to the World Series. Who cared about the election?

Well, of course we cared about the election. And our state voted heavily for our senator, who in the end lost to President Bush. Kerry supporters around the country, according to press reports, are having a hard time coping with his loss. New Englanders will get over it. It’s the New Yorkers I feel sorry for because they lost at both baseball and politics and after all –

The Red Sox are World Champions.