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## Zoo gorilla Kimani predicts Patriots to win Super Bowl after Little Joe balks

Posted by [Matt Rocheleau](#) February 3, 2012 11:56 AM

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(Zoo New England)

Seven-year-old gorilla Kimani took charge this morning and selected the New England Patriots to win this Sunday's Super Bowl after her fellow primate friend, 19-year-old Little Joe, hesitated when he was called upon to choose at Franklin Park Zoo in Boston. Kimani is pictured holding a box with the Patriots' team name on it, while Little Joe and Kimani's older sister, Kira, watch.

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Even Little Joe, a gorilla who is considered to be one of the most intelligent animals at the Franklin Park Zoo, was unable to choose who he thinks will win Sunday's Super Bowl, which has the narrowest point spread in decades.

With close ties to both New York and New England, [Little Joe was called upon](#) this morning to predict whether he thinks the Patriots or Giants will take home the Vince Lombardi Trophy.

Zoo staff set up boxes with the two team's names on them this morning, and Little Joe was supposed to pick one. But he declined to show favor to either contender, likely, according to zoo officials, because his ties to the two team's cities made the choice "a tough pick for him to make."

Instead, he will let Kimani pick the winner for the Patriots.

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Instead, 7-year-old gorilla Kimani stepped into the role of soothsaying primate and selected the Patriots to win.

Kimani, who likes to play with Little Joe, is a Boston native and lifelong resident. Little Joe was born at the Bronx Zoo in 1993, but has lived at Franklin Park in Boston for the past 15 years.

One of eight gorillas at the zoo, Kimani is the daughter of Kit and Kiki and the middle-offspring between her older sister Kira and younger sister Kambiri.

“Kimani likes to get the attention of the other gorillas and tries to entice them to chase her throughout the exhibit,” the zoo says on its website. “She always wants someone to chase and play with her. Kimani likes grapes and cantaloupe.”

Globe columnist Tony Massarotti, citing Las Vegas odds makers, wrote today that “the Patriots essentially have been a three-point favorite from the start - the smallest Super Bowl point spread in roughly 30 years.”

Little Joe was asked to make his public prediction at the gorilla exhibit in the Tropical Forest section of the zoo this morning, two days before he plans to host a football-themed party to celebrate both his 19th birthday and the NFL title game.

On Super Bowl Sunday, the gorilla exhibit in the Tropical Forest where Little Joe lives will be festively decorated for a “Big Game Birthday Party” starting at 10:30 a.m.

Little Joe and all of his gorilla friends will enjoy birthday treats made for them. And, visitors will be able to sign a giant birthday card for Little Joe and eat cake made by White’s Fine Cakes & Pastry, which will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Zookeepers call Joe “The Scientist” as well as “Don Juan,” and he is considered among the most intelligent of the animals at Franklin Park.

Little Joe, a particularly social, 5-foot tall, 300-pound gorilla, lives among the other gorillas at Franklin Park Zoo in a multi-million dollar habitat built after he escaped in 2003 on two occasions.

During his second, [high-profile escape](#), the western lowland gorilla attacked and injured a 2-year-old girl and an 18-year-old woman, who was an off-duty zoo employee. The incident alarmed the neighborhood, sparked criticism of the zoo.

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