

CAN YOUNG DOLPHINS GET 1ST WIN/KEYS TO GAME by Tony Simmons

Contributed by Rich Rodriguez
Sunday, 14 September 2008

Miami goes into the 4:00 game with Arizona at 0-1 and there is a sense of urgency that has been put on this game by Coach Sparano, who has stated that this is a must win game. Sparano realizes that this is a young team that needs something good to happen to them to build on, and nothing is better for a young team than a win.

Will we see improvement in this team from game 1 to game 2? That is a big key in this game and if we see that improvement along with cutting down on some of the costly mistakes that can be made by a young team, a win is not out of the question. If not, then our Dolphins will come home 0-2 and will be in a precarious position with a road game at New England next on the schedule.

One big key to this game will be the offensive line. Once again you have an OL that is looking to gel and become a unit and that has been hindered with the season ending injury to Donald Thomas. That being said, they will face a Cardinal defensive front that is not the caliber of the Jets and I believe this is a favorable matchup for Miami. Miami needs to establish the running game and pound Ronnie and Ricky in this game. If they can, this opens up play action for Chad Pennington and the passing game. If the Dolphins once again have trouble establishing the run game, this means trouble for the offense.

Another key to this game and probably just as big is the front seven defensively for Miami. They must be able to keep constant pressure on Kurt Warner and I believe they can. Once again, I do not believe the Cardinals OL is at the level of the Jets, and Miami had consistent pressure on Brett Farve and sacked him 3 times. The difference is Farve has far more mobility than Warner and Warner has also been fumble prone. Miami being on the plus side in the turnover factor will be a big plus. Not knocking Edgerrian James and the run game for the Cardinals, but I believe Miami will do a better job against the run and will take that away from Arizona. Pressure on Warner is the key, as Miami matchup up with there secondary against Arizona tandem of Anquan Boldin and Larry Fitzgerald is a big mismatch.

Finally, Miami needs to get better play from the WR position and Ted Ginn in particular. We all went into this season very concerned about the TE position and who would step up. Well, after game 1 Anthony Fasano and David Martin had a combined double digit catches and both of the TD catches from game 1. Miami needs the WR position to step up and be able to stretch the field, they need the WR to be a factor in the game.

Will these things happen, we will find out this afternoon. Go Dolphins.