

Has Coach Sparano Lost The Team?

Contributed by Dave Blake
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That is the knee-jerk reaction among some of the fans. Really, it is hard to backhand the fans for that attitude as they have had to endure an inferior passion on the field this decade. Still, when Sparano issues a "must win" game after just one game, you would expect the team to jump out of their jock straps and put on a gutsy performance.

That gutsy performance never materialized as most of the members of the team came out with no urgency whatsoever. Their flat performance contributed to a loss that was very reminiscent of the loss that Dan the Man had to endure to the Jaguars for his last memory in the NFL. Do not let the 31-10 score give you the illusion that this was not a severe blow out. If not for the class of Cardinals head coach, Ken Whisenhunt, it could have been an easy 50 point game for the Cardinals.

Does the "must win" command from Sparano mean that the season is lost? Between you and I, I believe that Sparano was not expecting a playoff appearance from this team. They are young and are rebuilding. If you did not notice a lot of middle tier free agents were added. That is a band aid folks. This team will have to be rebuilt through the draft and hopefully some of these band aids will develop into the players that Parcells hopes will rebuild this team back into a team worthy of being a part of the Shula Dynasty.

I believe this team was tested by Sparano and they failed the test. It is on them. Sparano may bark a lot in practice but he is Parcells' choice to lead this team. Parcells did not make Sparano our head coach on a "knee jerk" decision but on his observance over many years of loyal coaching. Sparano was doing what Coach Saban did a few years ago and telling the team that if they want to be a part of the Dolphins future success then they'd better put it out on the field. The players are not only playing for the 2008 season, but for the future success of this franchise. Whoever does not get aboard the Parcells/Sparano bus will be left behind. If Parcells cannot use a player on possibly another 1-15 team, what good will he be to another team next year once he is let go?

That is something to think about. Keep in mind that Sparano will be the head coach next year. He will make mistakes this year, but he has Big Brother watching over him at every practice and game. Parcells is still coaching, but his largest focus is his friend Tony Sparano. So, that being said, Sparano has not lost the team. If anything, some of the players have lost the support of Sparano on Judgement Day.

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Is Chad Henne Ready To Start?

If you watched Henne in the 4th quarter of last week's game you had to walk away from it impressed. In fact, the Dolphins coaches came away impressed as well, because Henne made the throws that Pennington has been unable to make. Let's not forget that Henne's receivers were more open, because of the nearly 30 point lead the Cardinals had. Still, you came away knowing that Parcells has done something that no other coach has been able to do since Don Shula: found his starting quarterback in the draft. And Parcells did it in his first year.

Yes, I believe he is ready to start, but I also do not believe his offensive line is not ready for him to start. Right now the Dolphins offensive line has been very poor at run blocking. Most teams would love to have a Ricky and Ronnie running back duo, but they are getting mugged in the backfield. Ricky is just grabbing the ball and plowing forward not even worrying about a hole. That is the mentality he needs to have if he is going to gain any yardage.

The offensive line has done a better job at pass blocking than run blocking, and that is strange considering run blocking comes easier to an offensive line. Unfortunately, the offensive line has a way to go before they are efficient at pass blocking.

I think it would be a mistake to start Chad Henne right now. Let Pennington break in this offensive line. Penny has the smarts to find the open receiver. It will most likely take a month before this offensive line starts to show good chemistry between them. Remember that only our center is playing the same position as last year. This is going to take some time.

One thing to think about is that the Dolphins have a bye week following tomorrow's Patriots game. Sparano may seriously consider switching his quarterback during this time. Pro Football Weekly is reporting that the Dolphins are kicking that idea around. With Pennington due to make the bulk of the money in the second year of his recently signed contract, it would be a surprise at this point to see him in a Dolphins uniform next year.

Kiss Joey Porter Good-bye

I was as excited as the next man when we signed Joey Porter. Not only can he make an impact at the linebacker position, but he also can fire up his teammates. Many Steeler fans were disappointed when they parted with him due to salary cap reasons and changing to the 4-3 defense.

After going 1-15 last year, starting 0-2 this year, and getting blown out less than a week ago, Joey has opened his mouth and has pretty much called out Patriots QB Matt Cassell. What this now does is create bulletin board material for the Patriots ... and you can believe the offensive line, wide receivers, and running backs have stood behind Cassell since Porter opened his big mouth and told him they've got his back on Sunday.

While Parcells is not the coach it is still his team. He does not allow players to talk to the press and I can bet you that he's all ready determined that this is Porter's last year in a Dolphins uniform. "I just know [Cassel] is not a QB Tom Brady. If it's not Tom Brady, it shouldn't be that hard... They won last week, but it's not like they were putting up the crazy 40 points they were when they had Tom. "So, it's a different offense, it's a different team without Tom there. I don't care what anybody says. It's not the same team without Brady. He's not going to see what Tom sees. He'll probably look over here and throw it to somebody else to where Tom probably would look somewhere else and did his best to try to get to Randy. He's not [Brady]. That's all I know. I'm looking forward to going up and playing this guy and hopefully we can do whatever it takes to get our first victory. We're going to try to attack them the best way we know how to try to get after him. We're going to come after the guy. I don't want to say something that'll come back to bite me. It'll be good to go out and get our first victory."

OT: Cats?

If you know cats, you will get a good laugh at this cartoon. I am a dog person myself, but this cartoon really nails my wife's cats.

{youtube}w0ffwDY00Q{/youtube}

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