Dominating or Dominated

Contributed by Christopher WIlliams
Thursday, 16 October 2008

One thing that was obvious to us Dolphins fans whom are unaccustomed to seeing such things from our beloved Miami Dolphins is that during the NE and SD games, we dominated. We didn't simply play well, we controlled nearly every facet of those games from beginning to end.

The following game saw just the opposite; or did it. I've seen many responses to last week's game against the Texans on the forums which gave the impression that we were dominated. "We didn't run the ball more because we couldn't run" or "both of our lines were outplayed by the Texans." It seems that many fans have come to the conclusion that if we don't dominate means that were were dominated.

But were we? Our running game amassed a solid 4 YPC during the game, a number, by many accounts, which represents the very meaning of running the ball well in the NFL. We weren't ripping off a 5+ YPC average that we had been in the previous two games, but not playing as well hardly means playing poorly. Now I'm not arguing that we played well against the Texans, but I am saying that we ran the ball effectively enough to use it as a weapon, and we didn't because it seemed as if we weren't running the ball well (and believe me, it did seem it).

One thing I learned in this most excruciating loss to the Texans, is that it is not enough for our Dolphins to score enough points to win a game in order to win a game: we must also control the clock to give our defense a chance. 28 points should be more than enough to win any game we play, but because we failed to control the clock, in fact it seemed that we didn't even try to control the clock, we left too much time for our defense to be on the field. We're not yet at the point as a team where we can win without also controlling the clock.

This week, we may also see what seems to be our Dolphins front line getting dominated in the trenches by a very skilled and tough Ravens front 7. But we must not let a scarce running game take away the fact that we must control the clock to win. Even if all we're mustering is a scant 2 YPC, we must stay the course if we want to win the game.

Fortunately, the Ravens offense isn't much to fear. If we can muster more than 10 points against a very stout defense, we should win. But despite a rookie QB prone to making some big mistakes (1 TD/ 7 INTs this season) if they control the clock, we will likely be 2-4 by the end.