Will Tannehill Start for the Dolphins This Year?

Contributed by Dave Blake
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Since season ticket sales spiked after the draft, it would be easy to say that I was not going out on a limb to assume that most Miami Dolphins fans expect 1st round selection QB Ryan Tannehill to start sometime this year. I mean, why not? The fans did not buy tickets to watch "the franchise" sit on the bench all season. And there were four first round pick quarterbacks selected last year in the first 12 picks of the 2011 draft that looked pretty darn good, and the Dolphins did select Tannehill with the overall #8 selection this year.

Since I do not believe in crystal balls, I cannot look into a ball of glass to see how the 2012 season will unfold for the Dolphins. Also, psychics are definitely out of the question because 911 exposed them all as bogus. And I guess horoscopes are nothing but good advice as it is ridiculous to predict that 1/12th of society will react the same way. Ah, I know what you are thinking ... you are thinking, "Dave, you pose another blog question that you aren't really going to answer completely, aren't you?"

I think what I want you to do is to dig down deep through all the frustration of going through losing season after losing season, and understand that even the top 2 quarterbacks in the league right now took time to develop. Yep, I am talking about Drew Brees and Aaron Rodgers. You can even lump Phillip Rivers into that group as well.

Drew Brees didn't start his first season (just 1 game) and did not throw beyond the .500 TD:INT ratio until his FOURTH season. No kidding, and he's a touchdown machine now. Aaron Rodgers started 7 games his first 3 seasons as he backed up the great Brett Favre, and he did not throw above a 50 quarterback rating until his 3rd season. In fact, I remember watching him throw his first two seasons and I was thinking that the Dolphins made a wise choice in not drafting him then. He came out on fire his 3rd season, and he looked so good that the Packers were willing to pass the baton to him making local hero Brett Favre so irate that he has made a real jerk of himself to Packers fans tarnishing the legacy of the greatest Green Bay Packers player to ever wear the uniform.

Now, myself, I would be willing to just let him start this year and let him take his growing pains as he is behind a pretty decent offensive line. BUT that does not change the fact that he was a quarterback that played the wide receiver his first two years as they all ready had a starting quarterback at A&M. He does not have the full mental experience of being ready to start in the NFL even though he is very familiar with Mike Sherman's offense as he played in it for 4 years, starting two years at QB. He's a "green-horn".

Ahead of Tannehill are two decent quarterbacks in David Garrard and Matt Moore. In fact, with either of those quarterbacks there is a chance the Dolphins could sniff at a playoff spot this year. I would think the only way that we would see Tannehill would be if both Garrard and Moore go down with injuries, or the Dolphins start the season as they did last year.

So, my advice to you all is that if you are not on your death bed or are 90 years old .... just be patient. Tannehill is not going to come out of the gate looking like Dan Marino or Cam Newton, but if we develop him correctly he has the potential to be another Aaron Rodgers or Drew Brees ... maybe. The key word right now is "develop".

WHY IS HE NOT SIGNED YET?

With the 7th and 9th selections all ready signed to contracts, and the rookie scale making things pretty much spelled out, we are still waiting on Tannehill to sign his contract. I'll tell you what is going on : the Dolphins want "offset" language put into the contract in case he is cut within the life of his contract. That way the Dolphins are protected a little financially in year 4. Since he is #3 on the depth chart, the Dolphins have the time to haggle out the contract.

Personally, I don't like it as it shows a lack of confidence in Tannehill. He's the franchise quarterback and the Dolphins have all ready invested their first round pick in him this year. Just drop the "offset" language and show the fans that you believe in him. Just my 2¢ of course.

WHO IS GOING TO START FOR THE DOLPHINS AT QB?

A lot of fans feel that Matt Moore has earned the position, but it is a new coach and a new philosophy. He has to beat out David Garrard. Right now he hasn't done that, but the pads have not come on yet. How is that back going to handle the pounding? I still think the job is Garrard's to lose.

Pro Football Focus ' verdict is ...

Long-term this position belongs to Ryan Tannehill, so right now all the Dolphins need is someone to keep things steady and avoid putting them in a position where their rookie quarterback has to take the field too early. History has taught us to trust Garrard with the ball, whereas it’s taught us to be a little more cautious when it comes to Moore. We’d take Garrard as management rebuilds the roster to their liking.

GET READY FOR HARD KNOCKS, BABY!

Ok, initially I wasn't too thrilled about the Dolphins being on Hard Knocks, because I felt this team was not ready for Prime Time bringing in a new offense and a new philosophy. How would it affect the players' attitudes? Would it slow down the team's development leaving us with another typical slow start.

With the August 7th showtime date coming up I have to say that I am getting really psyched to see my Dolphins learning new offensive and defensive schemes. So, who cares about my thoughts or feelings about how Hard Knocks is going to affect the Dolphins. What's done is done and I am ready to get a good look at them. Are you ready for some football???

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