

Cuts, Atlanta and the QB buzz

Contributed by Gary Ramey
Thursday, 23 August 2012

First, the cut down date to 75 players happens on August 27. This will likely mean folks at the very bottom of the barrel with no hope of making the team barring an injury.

VS

Friday 7:30PM EST

When Miami has the ball, all eyes will be on rookie QB Ryan Tannehill. The 3rd preseason game is usually the most telling but still not real. The fact that the starters will play well into the 3rd quarter usually means people use this game as a meter on how well, or poorly, their team is doing. Unfortunately for Miami, they just did get the entire playbook inserted into practice. Additionally, they just officially named RT they're starter. So while many teams are working on perfecting their craft, the Dolphins are still learning theirs. With that said, RT did some good things and bad things in the last game. After 4 bad 3 and outs he came out and lead a 15 play drive for a TD. That shows some heart and it is something he can build on this week.

Last week RT held the ball too long when the initial guy was covered he didn't get to his dump off valve quick enough. He also got so lasered into his target, that the DL could tell exactly where he was throwing the ball. He needs to know where that guy is, trust he's going to be there and look at the last second before releasing. That will come with time. He has yet to throw a pick in a game so it'll be interesting to see how he responds when he does.

On defense, the Falcons have a solid offense. It is built around a very good set of WR's in Roddy White and 2nd year guy Julio Jones. Jones is an up and coming star. He will give the secondary fits because hes big, fast and has great hands. Matt Ryan has looked very comfortable in the pocket. Miami will seek to hurry him into releasing the ball early and hoping Miami's Secondary is up to the challenge. The LB's have TE Tony Gonzales to deal with. He's not going to run away from anyone but he's a seasoned pro who gets away with a lot of contact. The LB's will be front and center as their play has been nothing short of abysmal over the last two weeks.

Atlanta has faced two pretty good defenses the last two weeks and put up points so Miami's Defense will be showcased tomorrow night.

I'll go officially on record and say that I don't agree with starting RT right off the bat. Miami has two veteran QBs who have both won in this league. I'll have to hand it to Philbin though, it is a gutsy move. He's tied to RT's success, or failure, and there will be growing pains. Anyone that thinks RT is going to just come out and light up the NFL, is living in some sort of fantasy world. He does appear to have everything he needs to be a successful QB in this league, but the NFL's trail of QB bodies is long and storied. Great college QBs from great systems, drafted high who came with the same hopes as RT, ended up on the litter pile. Some guys, a select few, rise to the challenge. The adversity makes them better. Most simply never truly meet their potential. Tomorrow night is an important game from progress perspective, but even so, it still isn't a real game. Miami truly won't know what it has in RT until he takes the field in Houston.

I'm not sure what to predict about tomorrows game, I'm an optimist by nature so I'll say Miami will win. I just hope the first team wins their match as well.

Go Tanny!

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