

## The past, present and future

Contributed by Gary Ramey  
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As I watched last weeks game on Monday using NFL Replay, I was able to freeze, go back and re-watch certain plays. First, hats off to the Colts, they played a heck of a game. The refs also piled on a little but this happens to teams like Miami. I've been a fan since 1971. I know that dates me a little but ever since I lost my allowance to my dad in a bet on that 1972 superbowl which Dallas won, I've been a steady follower of the Dolphins. The Don Shula Era was remarkable. There was hardly ever a losing season and every year you hoped it was another year of getting to and winning a superbowl. Other teams fans complained all the time that Shula had the refs in his back pocket. Honestly, home field advantage was huge back then. No one came into the orange bowl and won. It just didn't happen. When I fast forward to today, HFA doesn't exist. Moreover, the advantage lies with the teams. Take New England for example. They were 1-2 under the replacement refs. NE teaches their linemen to hold and with the replacement refs it was called all the time. BB's face on the sideline, even running along side a replacement official and poking him was priceless to watch. Imagine the horror of being treated like a normal NFL team. In any case, Indy got help last week from the refs and it started with the very first play. Not only was Cameron Wake held...the TE grabbed and spun him around after he had beaten him around the edge. Luck goes on to complete an 18yd throw. The rest, as we say, is history. It didn't get much better the rest of the game as I counted at least 5 very evident holding penalties that were ignored. With all that said, the same thing happened to the 2008 team. I remember getting upset at the calls. The difference is the 2008 team made plays to overcome those calls on many occasions. If this team is going to finish with a winning record, they'll need to step it up even when the referees are playing favorites. Ryan Tannehill - One thing you can't do is blame the loss on RT. He played well. He's young, has a strong arm and accurate as can be. If there is a flaw in RT's game it is his play it safe mentality (say what?) For the last 14 years we've watched QBs come in here and play give away. Some played great only to have that one critical INT to seal the fate of the Dolphins. So I say this with some trepidation. RT has to start taking a few more chances with the ball. His TD count is low because he doesn't want to throw an INT. I think coaches have so drilled that into him, he is over cautious about throwing into coverage. In order for him to officially put his stamp on the team and claim the job of heir apparent, he's going to have to lead this team from behind to win a game. Moreover, he needs to have a few 4th quarter comebacks under his belt. To do that, he'll need to start taking risks when the team is down. Finally, on the rest of the season I'm back to square 1. I don't know what to think. In order for the team to be successful the above piece about RT needs to happen. The question of whether it will happen or not is up in the air. Miami has lost some very winnable games. They have 3 more before playing two heavyweights. There's no question they'll need to win all 3. The question is can they? I'm not sure. The offensive line which started the season great, has had two back to back terrible games. They seem to be getting a lot worse. It could be the defensive coordinators have picked up on something they're doing and exploiting it. If that doesn't get fixed, they won't even beat the Titans this weekend. In any case, the season is only half over, they are 4-4 and have a shot...what more can a fan ask..right?