Patriots 23, Dolphins 16 - The Good, The Bad & The Ugly

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The Good

The Dolphins gave the Patriots a run for their money. The Dolphins defense was able to slow down the Patriots, holding them to 6 points in the 2nd half and sacking Brady numerous times.

Reshad Jones had his 3rd interception of the season and it would have been a pick 6 if not for penalties. Jones also had a sack and 10 tackles.

Brian Hartline had 5 catches for 84 yards. In reality, he should have had much more as he got behind the New England secondary at least two times and with better deep throws would have had some big plays and potentially two touchdowns.

As mentioned before, the Dolphins sacked Brady four times. One of the biggest sacks came from Cameron Wake, who now has 10.5 sacks on the season.

The Bad

The offense missed several opportunities to score, including two deep passes to Brian Hartline, who was wide open and Tannehill missed him. The Dolphins also had one opportunity to tie the game starting from the 50 yard line and accomplished nothing. The Dolphins were 3 of 13 on third down and really lost this game due to offensive inconsistency.

That first punt by the Dolphins was disastrous.

The Ugly

Ryan Tannehill had an ugly game, going 13 of 29 for 186 yards, no TDs, no picks. Probably the ugliest part of his day was one overthrow and one underthrow of Brian Hartline, who had gotten wide open behind the New England secondary twice.

That long last drive allowed by the Dolphins really sunk them. They allowed the Patriots to chew up clock and the Patriots sent a message, doing it by running the ball right at the Dolphins. But it is hard to pin this loss on a defense that sacked Brady four times, picked him off once and held the Patriots offense to 23 points.

Overall

The Dolphins are now 5-7 and while still mathetically alive for the playoffs, are definitely on the outside looking in. This game sealed the AFC East for the Patriots so the Dolphins need a lot of things to go right for them to make the playoffs.

That being said, this was a definite moral victory, for what its worth, as the Patriots were expected to thrash the Dolphins, but instead escaped Miami with a close, tougher than expected win.