

Dolphins 13, 49ers 27 - The Good, The Bad & The Ugly

Contributed by Rich Rodriguez
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The Good

Cameron Wake had a monster game with 3 sacks, 1 forced fumble and 6 total tackles. He now has 14 sacks on the season. We need more players like him.

The Bad

Jonathan Martin had a terrible debut at left tackle. He was bullrushed several times by Aldon Smith and clearly could not hold up. He just didn't seem to have the upper body strength to handle Smith, who is significantly lighter than Martin. To be fair to Martin, he did have a touch opening act against the NFL's leading rusher, but when you play at left tackle, you're usually facing the other team's best pass rusher. Not a good sign for the "replace Long with Martin" crowd.

The Dolphins run defense had a solid start but started bending as the game went on. The 49ers finished the day with 155 yards rushing and 5.5 ypc, but 50 of that did come on a Colin Kaepernick TD run. That being said, Frank Gore had 63 yards on 5.3 ypc and a touchdown.

Marcus Thigpen's dropped catch on a punt was a critical turning point and the type of mistake a team like the Dolphins cannot make. It gave the 49ers the ball in excellent field position and they scored the first TD of the game a couple of minutes later.

The Ugly

It is clear that this offense is simply not effective enough to compliment the defense. Whether it is protection issues, of which there were many in this game, a lack of homerun hitters on offense, playcalling or decision-making at quarterback, this offense is a perfect storm of ineptitude. From Jonathan Martin's struggles to receivers not getting open downfield, to the questionable decisions to go deep to Bess and then Matthews at the end of the game when the Dolphins were close to getting into red zone, the offensive performance left a lot to be desired. There definitely needs to be an upgrade of talent on offense to help be more effective on that side of the ball.

Overall

The Dolphins played hard and kept it close, but mistakes and a lack of offensive effectiveness led to a double-digit loss. Same story all season. We know where the problems are, we know what positions need to be addressed. The Dolphins have the ammunition to address many of those needs. The question is, can they do it effectively?

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