

## 8 Thoughts on the Dolphins During Bills Week.

Contributed by Dave Blake  
Friday, 21 December 2012

### 1. What must the Dolphins do to make the playoffs?

The Dolphins do have a slim chance of making the playoffs, but it depends on the Dolphins winning 3 games in a row, and plenty of teams ahead of them losing. So far the Dolphins won their first of 3, but when was the last time they won 3 in a row? Well, surprise-surprise, they actually won all 3 of their games this past October by beating the Bengals, Rams, and Jets. Since then they've won 2 of 7 game. Keep in mind that except for the Titans and Texans game, this team has been in every game this year. They've kept elite teams such as Seattle, New England, and San Francisco in check during the past 7 games, so, this team has done a lot of things to make us proud of this year except for actually winning those close games.

All right, here it is right here. For the Dolphins to make the playoffs, these things have got to happen:

No. 1: Miami must win its final two games against Buffalo and New England

No. 2: Jets (6-8) must lose to the Chargers or Bills.

No. 3: Bengals (8-6) must lose to both Pittsburgh and Baltimore.

No. 4: Pittsburgh (7-7) must beat the Bengals and then lose to Cleveland in Week 17. (ESPN )

#1: The Dolphins are hurting offensively. Our two best receivers, Davone Bess and Brian Harline, have been held out of practice some this week with injuries, our only physical and short yardage running back Daniel Thomas has been put on IR, and FB/TE Charles Clay has been put on IR. It doesn't look too promising for us to beat the Patriots on the road in the cold to finish out the season, but if there is a team that gives the Patriots fits every time they play it is the Dolphins. I do not see us beating both the Bills and Patriots, but I am hopeful.

#2. Yes, the Jets could lose both games as both the Chargers and Bills coaching staffs are fighting for their careers there. But this Jets team is so inept it may accidentally win one of those games. They remind me of the Wannstedt years here as that team is terribly mismanaged and probably couldn't beat their ways out of a wet paper bag. Still, the Jets hold the tie-breaker over us, so, what does that say about us? It is a good thing that these two teams are headed in different directions. I think this could happen.

#3. The Bengals seem to be a hot team right now, but I can see the Steelers and Ravens beating them. All 3 of these teams are loaded with talent, but the Steelers and Ravens have not put great effort into each game. The Ravens should be dominating teams, yet they fired one of the best offensive minds in Cam Cameron. Ridiculous. I do see see this as a possibility, but I would definitely not put money on it.

#4. Unfortunately, both the Bengals and Browns are playing pretty well right now. I do think the Steelers can win them both. They are a veteran team and have all the pieces back. Also it is crunch time, so, they have to win them both. I think this can happen.

### 2. Surprise, the Dolphins/Bills game is not nationally televised.

By the way, you can't blame CBS that the Dolphins/Bills game is not the prime time game of the week. If the Dolphins want to be in the national spotlight, then I suggest they show the NFL and NFL fans that they are worth 3 hours of their weekend.

### 3. Are the Dolphins on the Right Track?

So, are the Dolphins on the right track, or are they treading water and going nowhere? Let's be serious: we have no way of knowing as they've played competitively the past couple of years and always came up short. Our defense is always good enough to keep us in games, but the offense is a real snoozer.

The encouraging thing is that the Dolphins do appear to have their quarterback of the future, although the rest of the offense seems to remind us of a leaking ship in the middle of a storm. We patch one hole and then another appears. I think our next draft and free agent period will tell us whether this team is on the right path or is getting ready to sink.

### 4. Gary Ramey erred in his blog?

I enjoy reading Gary's blogs here at Phinfever as he posts his thoughts even when the main stream of Dolphins thought doesn't quite jive with his. I admire people who stand their ground when they think they are right. BUT, I have to point out

a brain-fart by Gary in yesterday's blog: "The not-so Marks Brothers. That would be Hartline and Bess. My prediction is both will not eclipse 1000yds. "

Since Brian Hartline has quietly caught 67 passes for 1002 yards, I would say that he is wrong ... or is he? Maybe he has a little Mayan prophecy for us in that Hartline will actually lose 3 yards in the next two games and finish with less than 1000 yards. Stick around, my friends, and we will see if Gary gets to be called a prophet. If not, I have a bag full of stones that we can throw at him. Who's with me?

#### 5. Will Jeff Ireland get the axe?

There has been some noise that Ireland is safe for another year, and I would agree with this. The defense has a lot of young players in it and that is probably more to Parcells credit than Ireland's as Parcells orchestrated our first few drafts. However, Dansby, Burnett, and Cam Wake were Ireland's free agent additions and they've been a real key to this defense.

Offensively, as we said, there are some huge holes to fill. He has not been successful in this area, but he does seem to have his quarterback of the future, and made a good hire in hiring Philben as our head coach. Both are 'green' and have made mistakes, but they seem to be positive moves. Jonathan Martin is playing well at LT after two games facing elite pass rushers, so, he may be someone we can build on. I have my questions on this, but he seems to be a key player for us. Mike Pouncey has been his offensive gem as he has played better than everyone expected. To me, the center is just as important as your LT, and I happy that we finally addressed this need.

And let's not forget that Jeff Ireland has a good grasp on a player's value. I've been very impressed with this about him. He will not overpay often and does seem to do some decent things on draft day. I like that he is trying to fill this team with speedy playmakers the past couple of years.

I say he gets another year, but I've never seen a 5 year rebuilding program before. If the Dolphins do not show double-digit wins next year I think he may be gone. It would probably be better for him for the Dolphins to lose their next two games in close games so that even a 9 win season next year looks like a nice improvement for him. To me, 9-7 sucks and is only 1 game above .500.

#### 6. Phiben, the home game coach.

I don't know what Philben has done, but he put the "W" in win-at-home. If the Dolphins beat the Bills on Sunday, the Dolphins will be 5-3 at home this year. If you have to lose, do it on the road. Philben gets a Big Dave "attaboy" for that. If you want to disrespect the fans, then embarrass them at home.

By the way, if you all will remember back when the Dolphins played in the Orange Bowl, teams hated to play the Dolphins in Miami. The fans were loud and Shula had them delirious with brilliance. Now, at Joe Robbie Stadium and our constant losing, especially previously at home under Sparano, it is said that the Dolphins have the worst home field advantage.

Chris Fiegler (Latham,NY)

What is the Worst AFC East Stadium that you have Been to?

ESPN's James Walker

In terms of what? I think Miami has the worst "home-field advantage." Fans don't show up and the good teams bring their fans to dominate the stadium. [link](#)

When this was brought up to Don Shula this month, he said that he had this problem, too, when he first came to Miami, but he said that winning changes everything. It is a shame that everything he worked hard to change in Miami has been flushed away with poor coaching and poor team management.

#### 7. Dolphins claimed CB Dimitri Patterson this week.

The Dolphins made a low risk, high reward move this week in signing CB Dimitri Patterson off of waivers this week. Patterson has had a diminished role this year due to injury and they are trying to clean house and save some money for the ne regime that is getting ready to take over the Browns who were recently sold.

I figured we'd pick him up, but I always felt he was average. He seems to play decently at multiple positions in the secondary. The Dolphins are hurting in the secondary, but please do not think that Patterson is the answer.

Patterson, who has a guaranteed base salary of \$2.95 million in 2013, will receive \$340,000 over the final two weeks of

the season from the Dolphins, letting the Browns off the hook.

Patterson is under contract through 2014. Absent a no-trade clause in his contract, Patterson can declare himself a free agent after 2013, a season in which he's due to earn a base salary of \$4.5 million. [link](#)

#### 8. Merry Christmas from Big Dave!

Merry Christmas to you all! Enjoy this precious time celebrating the real reason for the season (the birth of our saviour, Jesus) and spending time with our families and friends. God bless you all!

{youtube}30o\_QZnVBjA{/youtube}

Be sure to download our browser toolbar for Firefox or Internet Explorer. I keep it updated with all the current links that keeps me informed.

[Download the Free Phinfever Browser Toolbar](#)