

PEYTON & MARVIN: WHAT A COMBO!

Indiana’s state motto may be “The Crossroads of America,” but for downtown Indianapolis, “Aerial Route to End Zones” is a more fitting reference.

Indianapolis Colts quarterback **PEYTON MANNING** and wide receiver **MARVIN HARRISON** have connected for a touchdown 68 times – the third most by any quarterback-wide receiver combination in NFL history, trailing only San Francisco’s **STEVE YOUNG-JERRY RICE** duo (85) and Miami’s **DAN MARINO-MARK CLAYTON** tandem (79).

“We both see the same thing,” says Harrison when explaining the singular thought process he shares with his quarterback. “I think that’s what makes Peyton and me that much better together – we both see the same thing before it happens.”

On occasion, Manning may only have to look at his reserved six-foot-tall pass catcher when breaking the huddle and say “Philadelphia 99” or “Miami 2000” and Harrison instantly registers the route wrinkle that will rankle his defender.

“With all the different defenses teams put in, you might call a play that’s a great man-to-man play, but if they’re playing a zone, it’s horrible,” says Manning. “You have to adjust.

“Sometimes, when you change plays and you see what’s going to happen, you have to control your excitement.”

“They work together so well – you can’t teach that,” says Seattle safety and eight-year NFL veteran **DAMIEN ROBINSON**. “It’s like they’ve been playing with each other since they were five years old.”

Manning, 28, and Harrison, who will be 32 by Kickoff Weekend, enter their seventh season as teammates and are expected to continue turning numbers on scoreboards if the Colts are to reach their first Super Bowl since 1971.

Last season, the Manning-Harrison TD machine surpassed a Pro Football Hall of Fame pair of Colts in **JOHNNY UNITAS** and **RAYMOND BERRY** (63) and four-time AFC Champion teammates **JIM KELLY** and **ANDRE REED** (65) of Buffalo.

Manning is known league-wide for his late-night film study and being a student of the game. The 2003 NFL Co-MVP with Tennessee quarterback **STEVE MC NAIR** reports that Harrison, a high school quarterback, also mines knowledge needed for Sunday success.

“As talented and as good a route-runner as he is, he’s that smart,” says Manning. “He understands defenses. Marvin has a real understanding for coverages. As a quarterback, you love that. Instead of having to tell him, ‘Hey, this is what you have to do against this coverage,’ he knows where the holes are.” And both Colts know where the end zone is.

The all-time leading quarterback-to-receiver touchdown duos:

DYNAMIC DUOS

TEAM	QUARTERBACK-RECEIVER	TOUCHDOWNS
San Francisco 49ers	Steve Young-to-Jerry Rice	85
Miami Dolphins	Dan Marino-to-Mark Clayton	79
Indianapolis Colts	Peyton Manning-to-Marvin Harrison	68
Buffalo Bills	Jim Kelly-to-Andre Reed	65
Baltimore Colts	Johnny Unitas-to-Raymond Berry	63

COMEBACK KINGS

If one thing is certain in the NFL, it’s that you just never know.

Sure things looked bleak for the Indianapolis Colts on October 6 when they trailed the Tampa Bay Buccaneers 35-14 late in the fourth quarter. But then quarterback **PEYTON MANNING** heated up, and in what seemed like the blink of an eye, the Colts stunned the *Monday Night Football* audience, rallying for a thrilling 38-35 overtime victory.

“Some guys tighten up, but I’ve been around the block long enough,” says Manning. “I know when we fall behind, I have to be patient.”

Manning, who has started all 96 games of his NFL career, has been especially proficient at rallying the Colts to victory. The four-time All-Star has led Indianapolis on 19 game-winning drives in the fourth quarter or overtime in the past five seasons, the most in the NFL over that span. A closer look at the quarterbacks who shine when times are tough:

Quarterback	Most Game-Winning Drives 4th Qtr or OT (1999-03)		Quarterback	Most Game-Winning Drives 4th Qtr or OT (1999-03)
Petyon Manning, Ind	19		Steve McNair, Ten	13
Kerry Collins, Oak	17		Rich Gannon, Oak	12
Brett Favre, GB	15		Donovan McNabb, Phi	12
Brad Johnson, TB	15		Jake Plummer, Den	12
Jon Kitna, Cin	13			

But Manning was hardly alone last year in leading teams on the comeback trail. New York Jets quarterback **CHAD PENNINGTON** took his club to a 27-24 win at Oakland on November 9, guiding the Jets back from a 21-10 fourth-quarter deficit. Then two weeks later, he spearheaded an 11-play, 94-yard drive culminating in a three-yard touchdown pass to **SANTANA MOSS** in a 13-10 win over Jacksonville.

“Chad has a little bit of that aura,” says his coach, **HERMAN EDWARDS**. “Everyone thinks he’s going to do it.”

New Pro Football Hall of Fame member **JOHN ELWAY** certainly had that aura, and to many, the former Denver Broncos great is the master of the fourth quarter comeback. Elway’s late-game, come-from-behind antics endeared him to fans nationwide, and the ability to shine when things looked bleak is something No. 7 is very proud of.

“I think it was installed in me and our team to never stop fighting,” says Elway. “Games were always close and we had the mindset that once we started coming back, we weren’t going to stop. Until the clock said 0:00, we always felt we had a chance to win. Then the more we had success in coming back to win, the more confident we became that we were going to do it again.”