

**July 21, 2005**

## **NFL MEDIA CONFERENCE**

An Interview With:

### **DAN MARINO**

THE MODERATOR: Do you have an opening statement regarding your enshrinement into the Pro Football Hall of Fame on Aug. 7?

DAN MARINO: Well, I'm excited about this week, or two weeks I guess it is. It's a great time in your life when you think about all the things that you were able to accomplish and that your family -- my mother and dad will be there, my wife and friends and teammates -- will be present to share my induction into this special place in NFL history where the great people that have made the game what it is today are honored. This is a game that I have loved. It's going to be a very special day, and I know that there will be a lot of Dolphin fans there. The Dolphins are playing in the game, and it should be a lot of fun. It's something that I'm looking forward to.

It's hard to get a feel for what it's going to be like because it only happens once in your life and there's no past experiences for this one to rely on, so I'm sure it'll be a very emotional thing and a fun weekend.

**Q. Does being inducted into the Hall of Fame take away from the frustration of not having won a Super Bowl?**

DAN MARINO: The only frustrating about not winning that, the person that's got to deal with that, is me. I'd be lying to you if I didn't say I think about it sometimes, probably more while I was playing than I do now, but that's part of life.

There's a lot of people -- I'm sure there's things in your life that you've wanted to accomplish that you haven't, and you have to deal with things like that, and that's part of it. I don't think it's taken away from my career at all, and I'm -- I've always been a positive person. That's something that is in the past now, and we enjoy the whole thing where there's very few quarterbacks and few people who get an opportunity to be in the Hall of Fame.

**Q. Has Don Shula said anything to you about the Hall of Fame induction, and will he be there with you?**

DAN MARINO: He'll be there. He's in the Hall of Fame, and I'm real excited about Coach Shula being there, and he said he would be there

and be a part of the whole weekend. He's such a big part of my career and so many things that have happened to me and experiences, and when you play 13 years for a coach and you spend -- it's not just Sundays at one o'clock for four hours playing a game; you're in meetings together and you're spending time off the field and on the field and in different situations, so he's been a big part of my life, a big part of my career, and he's been a close friend. I'm going to be happy that he's there.

**Q. How do you think you'll be remembered with the other Miami Dolphins who are already in the Hall of Fame?**

DAN MARINO: Well, I just want to be remembered as a Miami Dolphin in the Hall of Fame just like the other *Miami Dolphins* that are in the Hall of Fame.

**Q. How did life on Parkview Avenue (Pittsburgh) help shape you into the quarterback you were, and in particular what's the story behind that quick release that you have? There's a lot of guys who want to take credit for helping mold that.**

DAN MARINO: The only one that gets credit is my dad. Growing up in that area of *Oakland* and in *Pittsburgh*, you know, I as a young kid, just our street alone, the field of people that were there, it was very competitive, a very sports-oriented neighborhood, a very ethnic neighborhood, and it was fun. You played and competed almost every day.

When I was a freshman and sophomore, the junior and senior quarterback that had started at Central was living right across the street, so the two quarterbacks from our high school in the whole area were living right across the street from each other, so you know it was a pretty competitive area.

**Q. I had spoken to one of your buddies Larry LaMonte.**

DAN MARINO: He grew up on Parkview, too.

**Q. And he has said that besides your dad, one thing that helped you throw the way you did was the fact that you guys sometimes would get out there with a Nerf football and were diving over hedges and you couldn't throw it that far and in the winter you had**

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heavy jackets on.

DAN MARINO: Yeah, I mean, there was a lot of things you could say, but I would say that Larry has been a good friend all through my -- as we were growing up, and yeah, we did some of that. I remember we carried a football everywhere we went. Sometimes we'd do things, at night we'd take a football with us. It was snowing, raining, whatever it may be, and it was kind of part of our life.

**Q. How does it feel going into the NFL Hall of Fame with Steve Young?**

DAN MARINO: Well, I'm happy for Steve. It's an incredible honor. It's an incredible honor for anybody who gets inducted. I look at Steve's career, and I'm proud to be able to go in the Class of 2005 with him. I mean, he's a guy that's won a **Super Bowl**. You look at Steve and he had a little bit of adversity early in his career, and to be able to come back and work the way he's worked and won as many games, you know, he's been an incredible player for a long time.

Hey, you know, it's an honor just being inducted with whoever may be in there, and especially Steve since I know him.

**Q. Can you talk about the contrasting styles of you and Steve? You both made it but you got there in different fashions, the way you guys played quarterback?**

DAN MARINO: Well, I don't know that there's that much difference in playing the quarterback position other than the fact Steve was probably a little more mobile and ran a little bit more than I did, probably a little more a guy that would go downfield. The styles of playing quarterback, you've got to get your ball to the receiver, not throw interceptions, and that's something that he did well throughout his career.

**Q. What do you remember about the night of December 2, 1985, the Monday-nighter against the Bears?**

DAN MARINO: It was a great night for us. We won. I know that I was excited about that game because the **Bears** had an opportunity to break the **Dolphins'** undefeated record. It was probably the loudest stadium I've ever played in during my career, the **Orange Bowl**, no matter where, **Buffalo, Chicago**. That night the fans were incredible.

And just to play against the **Bears**, the great team that they had. They probably were considered one of the best defenses ever. I remember we matched up really well against them,

and it was a great night for us. Unfortunately I would have loved to get an opportunity to play them again. We didn't get there. That would have been a fun **Super Bowl**.

**Q. Still being young and active, do you ever watch a game and feel like you could still be out there playing or say, "I wish I was still out there playing"?**

DAN MARINO: Wish, yes; play, no. The body, it's funny how it goes. It would be awfully dangerous for me to go out and try to play right now because I couldn't get out of the way, first of all. Taking hits gets tough as you get older. The hits at the end of my career, they took a lot longer to recover from. Do I wish I could still play, yeah, because it's something you can never do again the rest of your life and it was such a big part of your life, and I enjoyed it so much and the competition. I don't think that will ever leave you as a player. If any player ever tells you different, then they're lying to you.

**Q. How do you think the Dolphins are going to do this year under Nick Saban?**

DAN MARINO: I think they'll do pretty well. He's a new coach and everybody is excited about him. I don't even know if **Ricky Williams** is coming back.

**Q. He'll be on camp on Sunday.**

DAN MARINO: Well, that's good information. I think they have a chance to do a lot better than they did last year. It's going to be an exciting time for the new coach. You know, I'm a fan so I want them to do well.

**Q. Do you envision an opportunity down the road where the game might bring you back maybe in a coaching capacity?**

DAN MARINO: You never know what life brings, but I doubt that. I doubt it very much. Things happen, and you change your mind. I love what I'm doing now. I'm doing television. I love playing some golf and enjoying some of the other things that go on in my life, so I would doubt that, but you never know.

**Q. How did you feel that day when all those other quarterbacks were drafted ahead of you?**

DAN MARINO: That's a good question. It's weird. Any kid coming out of college that's getting drafted or expects to be drafted, there's no other situation like that in sports. It's a little weird.

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I thought I was going to go earlier at times and you never know where you're going to be.

I would tell you that I was extremely lucky getting drafted by the **Dolphins**, the team that went to the **Super Bowl** the year before, playing under a great coach like **Don Shula**. When you look at that draft, you had some incredible players in that first round, not only quarterbacks, but **Eric Dickerson, Curt Warner, Darrell Green, Don Mosebar, Bruce Matthews**. I mean, you look at that draft, you had some great players, Hall of Famers. There's probably few first round drafts that compare to the '83 draft.

**Q. If I can just follow up, when these other teams did pass on you and you fell to Miami, did you think, hey, I'm better than these other quarterbacks that they drafted ahead of me?**

DAN MARINO: You know, I thought I was as good as anybody anyway. If you don't have that kind of confidence as a quarterback, especially playing the position that's so difficult, you've got to believe in yourself, then you're going to have a problem. I was excited about coming to the NFL, being in the NFL, wanting to be successful. At the time I was wondering where I would be drafted, sure, and it turned out to be a great situation for me.

If you had asked me if I thought that any of those guys were better than me at the time when I got picked, I would have told you that, that I was the best player there. If you didn't feel that way, then shame on you.

**Q. Can we expect anything else from you in the future football-wise?**

DAN MARINO: Right now, that's all, doing HBO and CBS, enjoying the job, but like I said, you never know what life brings. Right now I'm kind of having fun doing what we're doing.

**Q. Can you reflect a little bit about how you persevered during your junior and senior seasons at Pittsburgh through your knee injuries and whatnot?**

DAN MARINO: Well, you know, I did have a knee injury in college and I think that it teaches you a lot about life and the goals you have and makes you appreciate what your goals are and what you want to do, and I think that in some ways that helped me a lot later on in life, especially when I was in the NFL. And there are times when you have a lot of adversity through injuries and whatever it may be, difficulty winning games or whatever it is, and you have to deal with that.

But I think going to **Pittsburgh** and growing up there and going to the University of **Pittsburgh** was a great learning situation for me coming into the NFL.

**Q. Can you talk about how your pride in your Hall of Fame induction matches up against your pride in your charitable contributions in South Florida such as the Dan Marino Children's Hospital?**

DAN MARINO: You always take pride in the things that you're doing in your life. The **Hall of Fame** is an incredible thing and it's a team sport, and to be recognized that way is great. For me the whole foundation of being able to help in the community and raise money all kind of stems from playing the game of football and the relationships that you make and you're able to get an opportunity to give back and help others, and it's all related in some way or another.

I'm pretty fortunate where I was able to play in the same community, city, for 17 years, build a relationship with the people, the businesses and able to help them give back in some way.

**Q. Of all the people you could have chosen to give a speech on your behalf, your dad, Coach Shula, why your son?**

DAN MARINO: Well, my dad was my first choice, and he didn't want to do it because he felt like he wanted to sit back and enjoy the day instead of worrying about giving a speech, and I thought that my next choice after that was my son. **Elway** or **Payton** had his kid, and I thought it's something that's a family thing, and **Coach Shula** would have been great, he would do a great job, I love **Coach Shula**, but I just thought I wanted to keep it in the family.

**Q. It's a brutal sport that you played, but at times you made it look very easy. In your prime did the game feel and seem easy to you?**

DAN MARINO: I don't think you could say it's ever easy, but I think you get a feel for where you know you're going to be successful because it comes with experience. You know the personnel, you know the people you're playing against, and it definitely helps in your success and over time. Does it ever seem easy? You know, I would say that there's always a struggle on anything you do when you have to continue to learn, no matter what the situation is in your career, but when you get familiar and you get confidence and you have good people around you, you can make it look

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pretty easy, I guess.

**Q. When you started playing in the NFL, did you have in your mind the number of years that you would want to play or that you thought you could play and did you even think about the Hall of Fame?**

DAN MARINO: There is no way if you had asked anybody that ever came into the NFL that they would ever -- thought about being considered for the NFL when they first got in or how many years they're going to play or what's going to happen to them, I think when you first come in the league, all you want to do is do well, be successful, win a championship. That's what you're thinking. Then as time goes on, obviously at the end of my career, because of some of the things I was able to accomplish, I knew I would have a pretty good chance of getting into **Hall of Fame**. But they're things you don't really think about while you're playing.

Yeah, when you get in the league you don't think that way.

**Q. It's been publicized how Don Shula always built his offenses around quarterbacks, with Griese. Do you feel you could have been as successful with any other head coach in the system or were that coach and that system tailor-made for you?**

DAN MARINO: I would probably be lying to tell you I couldn't have been successful somewhere else. I know I probably could have. I think that all offenses in the league are pretty similar, no matter who you talk to. It's different language, different approaches that you have. Was our playbook any different than the Denver Broncos? Probably not that much different, or the New York Jets, no, but it's the approach that you have and the personnel that you have. That's what made **Coach Shula** such a great coach. He adapted to those situations.

I would say that I was extremely lucky to come here from the standpoint of the other personnel around me. At a young age I had two guys that could flat-out go get the football, receivers, pretty solid offensive line, a Hall of Famer at center in Dwight Stevenson, so from that standpoint, yes. But do I think I'd be successful somewhere else, yeah.

**Q. What was the greatest game that you ever played throughout your career?**

DAN MARINO: You know, it's hard to pick one. I would tell you that I wish it was that **Super Bowl** against **San Francisco**. I played a great

game the week before against **Pittsburgh** in the AFC Championship game. Chicago, beating them on Monday night, that was something that I'm not sure a lot of teams could have done. We matched up pretty well against them personnel-wise. But the greatest game of my career, you know, I guess if I had played in and won a **Super Bowl**, that would have been it, but I didn't do that.

**Q. A year from now, how do you want to be remembered from the standpoint of the fans as far as what attributes most do you want them to think about when they think about you?**

DAN MARINO: I want the fans who really appreciate football and understand the game and players that played the game, to remember that I went and played hard and played every week and was a guy that loved and respected the quarterback position, respected his opponent, the people that he played against, and for me, I put pride in lining up every week and playing. If you look at my 17 years, I didn't miss many games. To me, that in some ways is more important than throwing for yards or touchdowns, that your teammates can count on you week to week.

**Q. What do you remember the most about that game in Mexico City in '97?**

DAN MARINO: Well, we played Denver, I remember that. The thing I remember the most is that there seemed to be about 120,000 people in the stands. To play a football game in another country, a big city like Mexico City, and to have that many fans show up trying to watch a **Dolphins** and Denver Broncos game -- that's what I remember most about that night. I didn't play much, but it was incredible that that many people showed up to watch us.

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