



**BOB SANDERS – Safety  
Indianapolis Colts  
Q&A – January 17, 2007**

Q. Bob, what's been the difference with the defense in these last couple of games, especially against the run?

BOB SANDERS: I think it's attitude, everyone being passionate about it, wanting to go out and win and wanting to be the team where we don't have to really rely on our offense.

And I think everyone has done a great job. We know what type of defense we are. We know we can play well. It's just when it was going to be the week we'll step it up and actually just do the things we need to do.

And I think we just kind of picked it up postseason.

Q. Did you guys ever get tired of hearing about how bad you were against the run and did it motivate you at all?

BOB SANDERS: We didn't really get tired of it. You just don't listen to it. You're going to get criticized if you are the last team in the league rush defense wise. And we didn't really worry about it.

We knew that we just had to focus on getting better every week and practicing well and keep on preparing like we have been all year and things will turn around for us.

Q. Bob, after the Baltimore game, you mentioned that after the Baltimore game, last week, you said that maybe last year was set up too

perfectly. Everybody thought you were going to win the conference and go on to the Super Bowl. What's your feeling now that things sort of fell into place to give you this home game? Is it too perfect now or are you still think it's a big battle?

BOB SANDERS: I think it's a battle. We definitely have some tough opponents, definitely a tough opponent this week and we've just got to keep working and get better. As long as we're in the details, everyone is doing their job.

I definitely think we'll be fine.

Q. What adjustments do you think you've made on defense in the playoffs compared to what happened during the regular season?

BOB SANDERS: Like I said, one guy can't really come in and change things around. We have the same personnel that we had all season. A couple guys here and there changed up. But other than that, like I said, I just think it's all about attitude and everyone being passionate about it and wanting to win.

Q. Bob, how did you guys get that attitude back? How did you revise it?

BOB SANDERS: I mean just knowing in the playoffs it's do or die. If you lose you go home. You win, you keep going. And we know that. We came from last year like I said everything was set up perfectly for us. Everyone was saying and you know it just didn't work out. We know if we had ever gotten an opportunity again to say we have to make sure we do everything we can to keep on winning, and we needed our defense to step up and guys to make plays and I think we've been able to do that.

Q. You weren't there for the '03 playoff but you were there for the '04 one with New England and two regular season games. Is this a special rivalry for the Colts and if so why do you think it is?

BOB SANDERS: It is. I think it's big for both sides. We're two competitive teams coming in. We're back and forth on a win-lose streak. And it's exciting knowing that they're going to come here, they're going to play tough. They're going to give us their A game and it will be a challenge for us. And we're looking forward to it. We're excited about it and I'm pretty sure they are as well.

Q. Bob, on facing Brady, can you tell a little bit how do you prepare for a quarterback like him?

BOB SANDERS: He's a great quarterback. Real poised. He doesn't panic at all. He makes a lot of plays down the field. He has good receivers to get the ball to him. He spreads the ball around. So he's not a selfish guy. They're not a selfish team. They all play together, and I think he's a great, great leader, and he takes his team and they follow behind him and he keeps it moving.

Q. Do you feel because you have faced these guys many times in the past, in big playoff games, that you know what they're going to bring and you know what to expect and you know what you have to do to stop them?

BOB SANDERS: It's just like any other week. You can't really pinpoint anything to say you know they're going to do this. You just have to game plan as much as you can. Watch as much film as you can to get a good look at them. But you never know. They could come in with a totally different game plan.

So you just have to prepare for the worst and you know hope for the best that things turn out the way you planned it in the game plan is on point.

Q. Bob, do you guys feel you're a little bit different defense playing in the dome?

BOB SANDERS: Playing at home is, I mean you couldn't ask for a better opportunity to come back in and play at home with your fans, your crowd. That also helps. I think everything plays a big part into it.

I think we are a little bit better in our record at home this year shows that we do play a little bit faster. We play better and we play well together.

It's just something that we won't worry about it. We're at home. We won't take them lightly. We've just got to make sure we continue to do the things we need to do.

Q. Bob, you're known as a player that's pretty quick to fill the hole at the line of scrimmage, can you talk about facing two different running backs in style like Corey Dillon and Laurence Maroney this Sunday?

BOB SANDERS: They're both good runners. Maroney is a fast guy. Dillon has very deceptive speed. They're very strong, they both have great balance.

So you just have to -- they can run downhill, sometimes when they get outside they can run to the corner and get around you and break your leverage. We've just got to attack. We have to make sure we swarm the ball, you know, just try to get them down when we can. If we have opportunities to make great plays we've got to make those plays when they give us the opportunity.

Q. Bob, what's it like to have Adam Vinatieri on your side. I saw Tony Dungy's lips on his last field goal saying "money, money, money," what does it mean to you as a team to have their kicker on your side?

BOB SANDERS: It's great. He's a guy who has been in this situation many times and has won games for his team. It's nothing new to him. He's just a veteran. He's a leader. He's just a great guy to be around in the locker room and it's just good that we have him on our team now. And he's reliable. You can rely on him at any time.

Q. Bob, has gap discipline been a big thing? I know with Rob Morris being in there it's a little different and you being in and out of the lineup. On stopping the run like you guys had trouble earlier in the year has it been a big thing for you guys to play more disciplined in playing gap?

BOB SANDERS: You know, it's just everybody doing their job. I mean that's pretty much what it boils down to. It's simple. You know as long as you do what you have to do and coaches have us ready, have a great game plan for us this week. We just have to be what we need to be.

Q. Bob, do you sense that Peyton is due for a big game and that he hasn't played as well as he normally does in the playoffs thus far?

BOB SANDERS: They'll be ready. I'm not sure exactly what the game plan will be. But they're going to be ready. We have to. It's a must this week. And we are just going to keep working. I'm pretty sure that they're excited about it on the other side.

And we're excited as well.

Q. Bob, you've missed quite a lot of games this year due to injuries. Can you talk about being injured and still stay focused and maintain your composure being on the side lines, wanting to get in there and do some hitting?

BOB SANDERS: Just never giving up, never losing faith. Knowing that things will get better. It's kind of hard to start off. But after a few weeks I

kind of realize that it was going to be a thing that I was going to deal with all season.

And I just had to be patient. Patience is the main thing. And I think I was able to be patient and now that I've worked myself back in, I'm comfortable. And I feel good.

Q. Late in the season was the main focus to get you back on the field for the playoffs?

BOB SANDERS: Yes, I mean that was the main thing. It got sort of away with the Week 13, 14, 15. Got kind of around there and it was like, well, okay, do we continue to go this, up and down this roller coaster? Do we continue to do that or do we just say, okay, now we're in the playoffs and should we get him ready. And that was pretty much the plan and it worked so far.

Q. Bob, Daniel Graham talked about the fact that you're a free safety everybody has to be aware, where you are at all times is that something you try to do is be at different places where they don't know where you're going to be at all times?

BOB SANDERS: We just put our game plan in. We'll be working on it today. It's just doing, doing like you said, just doing what you have to do, just being where you need to be. It's not a mystery to us. It's just going out and making plays.

Q. There was a comparison made today about you and Rodney Harrison. Very similar within this league, the two guys that at that position that kind of sets a tone for the defense.

Is that a compliment to you and is that what you hope to do for your ball club?

BOB SANDERS: Definitely, man. He's definitely a great player and has made a lot of plays in this league and helped his team in many ways. So you know that's definitely a compliment for people to compare us and say we play alike, that's a good thing. He's a good player.

Q. Bob, how satisfying is it as a defensive player to win these games like 15 to 6 and 23 to 8 as opposed to maybe to a shoot-out like you might have had to do in the past?

BOB SANDERS: I mean, just knowing that your defense has stepped up and is really, if you can keep a team under, keep a team within 14 points, you got a great chance of winning every week.

I mean that's our thing is to not rely on our offense to score 40, 30, 40 points a game. And we give up a lot. Just to try to focus on the things we need to focus on and that's keeping them out of the end zone and stopping the run.

Q. Patriots are known for mixing up their game plans on a weekly basis. How do you prepare for this game not knowing that they will definitely run the ball, definitely pass the ball?

BOB SANDERS: You watch as much as film as you can. You hope your game plan works the way you planned it out. But sometimes it's not that way. Sometimes they'll come up with a totally different scheme and you gotta adjust.

But I'm pretty sure we'll have a great game plan. And the coaches have done a great job this year making sure that we're ready and we know everything that's going on.

Q. Bob, you played your college ball under Kirk (Ferentz) in Iowa. Bill (Belichick) and Kirk are good friends, former assistant to Bill. Did he give you any insight into Belichick? Do you feel you know his styles playing under Kirk?

BOB SANDERS: No he has not, not really.

Q. Bob, LaDainian Tomlinson last week kind of accused the Patriots of being classless in their game last week. What are your thoughts on that and what do you think of when you play a Patriots team?

BOB SANDERS: I think they're all well coached. They're not selfish. They play hard. They know how to win. They have a lot of veteran guys who have been around a while. And it's up to a team to win a lot of games and a lot of championships.

So I don't really have much to say about that. I think they are a good team and they're well coached.

Q. Bob, what's it going to take for the Colts to get over that hump and make it into the Super Bowl?

BOB SANDERS: Just doing what we do. Playing hard. Playing fast. Playing smart. And playing aggressive with a lot of passion.

Q. A lot of people have been talking about that. Is that in the back of your minds at all?

BOB SANDERS: We are taking it one game at a time, one week at a time, one day at a time. We have to take care of today first before we start looking to tomorrow. So we just keep working, practicing hard, studying hard and just keep moving forward.

Q. Bob, personal self-preservation seems to have gone out the window for you. You've had an injury and surgery, had to spend a lot of time out.



What kind of personal sacrifice are you making this year with your health and your future. Do you ever think about that?

BOB SANDERS: It's nothing bad. I'm not sacrificing anything. I'm just doing -- I'm playing according to the way I feel and I feel great. I don't have any problems. There's nothing that's going to affect me future-wise or anything with this injury that I have.

So I'm not really worried or focused about that at all.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about what Williams your defensive back coach have been, how he's influenced you and developed you as a player?

BOB SANDERS: I mean he's just a smart guy. He knows exactly where I'm supposed to be, where everyone is supposed to be on the field. He's a great coach. He's detail-oriented and he makes sure you're doing everything that you need to do.

And he goes way out of his way to really put in a lot of time, a lot of effort and a lot of work to make sure we know as much as we need to know about our opponent every week.

Q. Bob, what's your perception of the two franchises going, you've got Belichick and Brady who has won all the Super Bowls, and Coach Dungy and Peyton Manning, you've all been fighting and scraping to get there. That's the perception you have and what can you all do to correct that?

BOB SANDERS: You know, just stay focused in on the task at hand. Not really worry about what everyone says outside of our complex, just we're a team and we're going to play as a team and that's the only thing that we'll focus on and we'll worry about is ourselves and what we can control and that's the way we prepare and the way we play on Sunday.

Q. Bob, even though you guys have beaten them in the regular season, do you need to really beat them in the postseason to kind of get that monkey off your back? Is it appropriate that it's the Patriots that you're playing and you have to beat to get to the Super Bowl?

BOB SANDERS: Monkey on our back, we don't even worry about that. That's a lot of talk from everyone else saying it's a monkey on your back, because you need to beat them in the postseason, whatever.

I mean it doesn't really matter. We don't worry about that. This is a great opportunity for us and we're just going to keep moving forward trying to get better and hopefully play well enough to win. But we're not really worried about getting a monkey off our back.

I mean every week is a tough week. So we just need to keep doing the things that we do.

Q. Bob, what are you seeing from Peyton this week, how is he handling himself and what do you expecting in terms of how he'll go into this game?

BOB SANDERS: I expect a lot of leadership. I know he's excited about it and he's been in this situation before. So it's nothing new. You know it's making sure everyone stays on the details. Everyone is doing their job and the leadership that we have around here is excellent. I mean we've got a lot of guys here who has been in the situation and know what it's like. So they're going to be, you know, the energy is going to come from them. Those guys are going to be moving around and making plays in practice and making sure everyone is doing what they're supposed to do.

So the younger guys just have to follow their lead and keep moving forward.

Q. Do you sense a lot of pressure on him just because he's in the high profile position he's the quarterback and when you think how the defense has played the last couple of games, how have you guys done to kind of ease some pressure on him, from him?

BOB SANDERS: He might be getting pressure. I'm pretty sure he is. But I don't think it will bother him at all one bit. This is another game. This is another opportunity. This is a great opportunity.

So I'm not sure the pressure will bother him at all. It's just, you know, how well you're play and it starts with practice and preparation.

Q. What do you see as the key to stopping the New England Patriots offense?

BOB SANDERS: Just being on the details. You know, they do a lot of things as far as if -- you know, if you give them opportunities or if you're not where you're supposed to be, if one guy is not here and one guy is not doing their job, I mean Brady is the type of guy where he can -- he can hurt you and he'll exposure weaknesses. So we just got to make sure we're on the details and we focus in on what we need to get done.

Q. How do you prepare yourself from stopping a player like Ben Watson?

BOB SANDERS: It also depends on what you're in, what coverages you're in and how you need to handle it. So I'm pretty sure our coaches will have a great game plan as far as that. And we'll look into it and get things done this week to make sure we know where we need to be.

Q. Bob, how impressed are you with Antoine Bethea for a rookie to come in and start as the playoffs have gotten underway really making some big

plays, from one safety to another, what is it about his game that you like and have been impressed with this year?

BOB SANDERS: I mean all around he's just done a great job. He's handled the pressure well. I know coming in as a rookie is tough going out there and playing like right away and he came and ended up playing right away right after camp.

So I'm pretty sure it's been tough for him. But he's handled it as well as anybody that I know who has done it.

So he's done a great job, made a lot of plays. Helped us out, made it a lot better this year.

Q. What's the toughest thing for him to have to deal with coming in and playing that position?

BOB SANDERS: I mean just listening to the things from the past, the past years, it's been they talked about, you know, our safeties and our corners and just bad talked us. Him stepping in there, taking the role after Mike (Doss) ended up going down, he's done a great job so far. And I'm pretty sure he'll continue to work and he'll be a great player in the near future.

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