



MONDAY NIGHT NOTES

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION,
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COLTS AIM TO REMAIN UNDEFEATED AS RAMS COME CALLING ON MONDAY NIGHT

Two offenses with the potential to light up the scoreboard -- one team trying to remain undefeated, the other attempting to ensure that it doesn't happen -- should make for yet another memorable Monday night this week.

That's the backdrop as the 2-3 St. Louis Rams travel to the RCA Dome in Indianapolis for a matchup with the undefeated 5-0 Colts. Indianapolis is attempting to improve to 6-0 for the first time in 47 years, since the famed '58 Colts squad that finished 9-3 and capped the season with a championship by defeating the New York Giants 23-17 in overtime in "The Greatest Game Ever Played."

"5-0 is nice and a fast start is great," says Colts head coach **TONY DUNGY**. "But you can't win a championship in September and October. We need to continue to get better and improve. We are facing a team that can be explosive and can move the ball and also come up with turnovers on defense, so we have a challenge ahead of us."

Both teams have the potential to set the scoreboard spinning. In fact, in the last five-plus seasons, no teams have scored more points than the Colts (2,266) and Rams (2,253).

A look at the most prolific scoring teams in the NFL since 2000:

Team	Points Scored	Playoff Appearances Since 2000
Indianapolis	2,266	4
St. Louis	2,253	4
Kansas City	2,200	1
Green Bay	2,131	4
Denver	2,080	3

The Colts' dynamic duo of quarterback **PEYTON MANNING** and wide receiver **MARVIN HARRISON** are also aiming for a combined milestone that will distinguish them from any QB-WR tandem in NFL history. The pair have linked up for 85 touchdowns, tied with **STEVE YOUNG** and **JERRY RICE** for the most all time.

A look at the top quarterback-to-wide receiver touchdown combinations:

Quarterback	Wide Receiver	Years	Team	Touchdowns
Peyton Manning	Marvin Harrison	1998-present	Indianapolis Colts	85
Steve Young	Jerry Rice	1987-99	San Francisco 49ers	85
Dan Marino	Mark Clayton	1983-92	Miami Dolphins	79
Jim Kelly	Andre Reed	1986-96	Buffalo Bills	65
Johnny Unitas	Raymond Berry	1956-67	Baltimore Colts	63

Monday nights have been kind to the Rams in recent years. After not appearing on ABC's *NFL Monday Night Football* from 1992-99, St. Louis has been a staple on Monday nights, making at least two *MNF* appearances in each season since 2000, and often earning a "W" before the nationwide primetime audience.

The Rams have posted a 9-5 (.643) mark in those games, with wins in eight of their past 11 contests. Monday also marks the debut of **JOE VITT** as the club's interim head coach.

"I love Monday night, it's the greatest stage," says Rams wide receiver **TORRY HOLT**. "It is like the Super Bowl during the regular season. Everybody in the country is watching the game, so you have a great opportunity to showcase your talents."

MONDAY NIGHT MUSINGS – ST. LOUIS RAMS AT INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

CALIFORNIA DREAMIN'

- St. Louis Rams head coach **MIKE MARTZ** has taken an indefinite leave of absence to fight a bacterial infection in his heart. In his absence, Martz has appointed his longtime friend and Rams assistant head coach/linebackers coach **JOE VITT** as the team's interim head coach.

A decade ago, Martz and Vitt spent Sunday afternoons together in the coaches' booth for the Los Angeles Rams as young assistants. From 1992-93, Martz served as the Rams' offensive assistant and became the club's quarterbacks coach in 1994. During that span, Vitt served as the club's assistant head coach and defensive backs coach.

"Mike was sleeping on somebody's sofa, because the first year he worked for nothing," recalls Vitt. "He was like me -- like everyone else -- just trying to learn the business."

Eventually, Martz took over play-calling duties for Rams head coach **CHUCK KNOX**.

"You could tell back then that Mike knew exactly what he wanted to call and when he wanted to call it," says Vitt. "He got the personnel into the game, spit the call out, and was moving on to the next play before the ball was ever snapped. You saw his genius even back then."

After learning that Martz would be taking a leave of absence, Vitt offered his friend some advice.

"This is about you," he said. "You get the rest you need and the proper antibiotics. We'll do our best to make sure this is a clean plate when you come back."

HOLT HAS BEEN THERE

- St. Louis Rams wide receiver **TORRY HOLT** leads the NFL in receptions (38) and receiving yards (568) but that does not mean he has forgotten what is important in life.

After losing his mother **OJETTA HOLT-SHOFFNER** to cancer in 1996, Holt began working with "Bear Essentials," a program in St. Louis that works with cancer patients and their families. He recently expanded these efforts and started the Holt Foundation, which emphasizes education and support for these families.

Holt frequently gets letters from kids thanking him for his dedication. He says it is the most rewarding part of what he does. His role in the program is to visit with kids and set a positive example for them.

"I am sort of a spokesperson for Bear Essentials," says Holt. "I tell them I went through the same things when I was a kid and here I am doing what I always dreamed of doing."

POLIAN'S PRIDE

- Indianapolis Colts President **BILL POLIAN** isn't the only member of his family with a big game this weekend. His son **BRIAN** is the head special teams coach and defensive backs assistant for Notre Dame.

This Saturday the 4-1 Irish host the undefeated USC Trojans (5-0) in one of the biggest games in recent NCAA history. Brian Polian will be charged with helping to stop running back **REGGIE BUSH**, who also serves as the team's kick and punt returner. Bush is currently averaging 194.0 all-purpose yards per game.

The men at the helms of this keynote game are no strangers to the NFL. Notre Dame's head coach **CHARLIE WEIS** was the offensive coordinator for the Super Bowl champion New England Patriots from 2000-04. USC's **PETE CARROLL** made stops at five NFL teams, including the New York Jets ('90-94) and Patriots ('97-99), where he served as head coach.

Weis hired Polian less than two weeks before the Patriots and Colts faced off in last year's AFC Divisional Playoff on January 13.

"He's not allowed to speak to Charlie this week," quipped Bill at the time.

Thankfully Weis has installed NFL Sunday Ticket in Notre Dame's football offices, so Brian can watch the Colts each week.

