



Left: Colts players, including Gary Brackett, center, react to the crowd during Monday's rally at the RCA Dome. Right: Marvin Harrison shows a rare smile during Monday's Super Bowl championship rally.



AP PHOTOS

Colts' win watched by 93 million TV viewers

By DAVID BAUDER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK

Peyton Manning had a lot of witnesses to his soggy super win, with the estimated 93.2 million viewers representing the second most-watched Super Bowl broadcast ever.

Only the 1996 Super Bowl between Dallas and Pittsburgh, which had 94.1 million viewers, had a bigger audience, according to Nielsen Media Research on Monday. Behind that 1996 game and the M-A-S-H series finale, Sunday's game was the third most-watched program in television history.

The presence of the Colts quarterback, one of the game's most popular players, and a major-market team from Chicago undoubtedly juiced the ratings.

"The story line was about as good as you could have hoped for," said CBS Sports President Sean McManus. The game was shown on CBS, a division of CBS Corp.

It was the highest-rated Super Bowl game since St. Louis-Tennessee in 2000. The ratings were lower this year than in 2000, but, because there are more homes with television sets than seven years ago, there were more people watching. Last year's Super Bowl between Pittsburgh and Seattle drew 90.7 million viewers.

CBS was also lucky, in a sense, that the Colts' 29-17 victory against the Bears was closer on the scoreboard than it appeared on the screen. Although Indianapolis was dominating the game, Chicago was close enough until the end to have a chance to win, which kept viewers interested.

CBS wasn't so lucky that the game was played in a driving rain.

A camera suspended over the field on cables had to come down, and one sideline camera was knocked out of commission because it overheated when covered in canvas, he said. Camera operators were constantly wiping raindrops from lenses.

Despite the huge audience, the Super Bowl didn't provide much of a jolt to the CBS drama "Criminal Minds," which was given the time slot following the game. "Criminal Minds" was seen by 26.2 million viewers. While that's the biggest audience the second-year show has ever delivered, it dwarfs the 38.1 million people who saw "Grey's Anatomy" after ABC's telecast of the game last year.

According to another measuring service, the most-watched moment was the Bud Light ad featuring Carlos Mencia and a language class, according to TiVo.

• Watching

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because he said he still couldn't believe the Colts had won.

"I remember watching this at home and going absolutely crazy," he said. "I certainly don't mind watching it again."

The loudest ovation during the replay rang out when Colts players doused coach Tony Dungy with water and Gatorade.

Fans screamed in approval as team owner Jim Irsay received the championship trophy from NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell.

"I thought last night was fun," Jessica McElverly said. "But it doesn't get much better than watching it again with a packed RCA Dome. Plus, I already know what happens."

Peyton says best is yet to come

By RICK MORWICK
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MIAMI

If you think Peyton Manning saved his best performance for the Super Bowl, think again.

He's just warming up.

After nine NFL seasons, multiple passing records and seven-time Pro Bowl recognition, the MVP of Super Bowl XLI insists the best is yet to come.

He plans to prove it next season.

"For me as a player, I want to be a better player next year than I was this year," Manning said Monday morning, less than 12 hours after leading the Indianapolis Colts to a 29-17 Super Bowl win against the Chicago Bears in Miami.

By 9 a.m., Manning had already celebrated all night with family and teammates, watched highlights of the game on

the NFL Network, fielded a congratulatory call from President Bush, been presented the Pete Rozelle Trophy and a new Cadillac for being named Super Bowl MVP and was already thinking about next year.

The latter was first and foremost on his mind.

He didn't name names, but Manning alluded to quarterbacks whose careers, but not necessarily their reputations, took downward spirals after they won a Super Bowl.

Manning doesn't want to be part of that club.

Whether the Colts win another championship or not, Manning says it won't be because he stopped growing as a quarterback.

"In some cases, I've seen past quarterbacks that have won a Super Bowl. I kind of call 'Getting the pass,'" Manning said, referring to the media's reluctance to

criticize a quarterback's legacy after his team has won a championship.

"They kind of get 'The pass,' other years," Manning said. "They had a bad year, they say, 'He won a Super Bowl, we'll give him a pass.'"

"I guess what I'm saying is, I don't want the pass. I want to be held accountable every year."

The fact Manning was thinking about next season before fully savoring this one didn't surprise coach Tony Dungy, who has long regarded Manning one of the game's all-time great players, with or without a Super Bowl ring.

"Peyton is a guy that always looks forward, and he is always looking at the next challenge, and I think that's what makes him great," said Dungy, who completed his fifth season with the Colts. "I said it (Sunday night), and I'll say it again, personal vindication or validation, whatever you want to say ... but Peyton

Manning is the best leader, the best locker-room guy, the best-prepared player that I've ever been around.

"He's a great player, and anybody who felt like he needed to have a Super Bowl win to know that, it just didn't make a lot of sense to me."

For Manning, the Super Bowl doesn't validate anything. It's simply a goal he wants to achieve as many times as possible.

And it's why he's not setting himself up for a pass next year or any other year.

"For me, this was not a personal mission," Manning said. "I was proud to be a part of this team, and it feels good when you work hard, not only this season, but really your whole career, to be the best player you can be."

"My goal next year is to be a better quarterback, and I feel like I should be because of the experience that I gained this year. And I think you've got to go out there and earn it each and every year."

Fair-weather fan says he's on Colts' side

By MATTHEW GLENESK
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During Sunday night's Super Bowl, Jason Stamm was torn.

The Anderson resident wore a Chicago Bears Brian Urlacher jersey but donned an Indianapolis Colts hat.

Stamm, 33, grew up a Bears fan but moved to Indiana 10 years ago and adopted the Colts as his AFC team.

Watching the game at a friend's house proved an interesting affair for Stamm.

"I thought I was going to be happy either way, but once it started I didn't know who to root for," Stamm said. "I didn't know whether to cheer or not."

As the Colts built a 16-14 lead, Stamm found himself slowly shifting his allegiances to the blue and white.

On Monday, Stamm sat in the first row of section 114 inside the RCA Dome waiting for the Colts to showcase the Vince Lombardi Trophy at the team's pep rally.

And this time, he was decked out in Colts gear from head to toe.

"My friends call me a fair-weather fan, but I always wanted the Colts to win," he said. "I wanted them to win for the state and the city of Indianapolis."

"I spent \$300 on Colts clothes (Monday). I probably shouldn't have, but I got a little carried away."

Scott Flynn
Indianapolis Colts fan

Size doesn't matter

When Scott Wootton and David Cleveland woke up Monday morning, they headed straight for Dick's Sporting Goods.

The Bloomington residents didn't even wait to wash their face paint off.

When they arrived at the store around 9:30 a.m., they were greeted by four tables of Colts T-shirts, but found most of them to be extra large.

Normally, Wootton, 27, wears a large and Cleveland, 23, wears a medium.

"We decided we weren't going to leave the store empty-handed," Cleveland said. "So, we bought shirts that are way too big for us. But the size doesn't matter. All that does is what it says on the front, Super Bowl champs."

The two took off work on Monday and made the drive to Indianapolis from Bloomington.

Unlike their trip to Dick's earlier in the morning, the two managed to wash off their blue and white face paint. But "Go Colts," was still inscribed on Wootton's fingers.

When the two arrived at the RCA Dome for the Colts pep rally, they became men on a mission. They sought out the closest souvenir stand.

"Finally, a medium," Cleveland said as he slid his newest acquisition over his oversized T-shirt.

"Another \$25 well spent."

Spending on the Colts

Scott Flynn admits he doesn't make a lot of money.

But following the Colts Super Bowl victory Sunday, the Indianapolis resident couldn't help but go on a shopping spree.

"I spent \$300 on Colts clothes (Monday)," he said. "I probably shouldn't

have, but I got a little carried away."

Flynn proudly adorned his brand new Colts wardrobe at Monday's pep rally inside the RCA Dome.

He would've been outside watching the parade, but he wasn't able to find a Super Bowl Champion sweatshirt or fleece that would've kept him warm enough to withstand the freezing temperatures.

"It's a good thing because I might have bought two of them," he joked.

Planning ahead

After the Colts defeated the New England Patriots in the AFC Championship Game, Jason Patterson approached his boss about an unscheduled one-day vacation.

He asked if he could take off the Monday following the Super Bowl.

"I wanted to be the first to ask him," Patterson said. "I didn't want to be stuck at work while the rest of the city was celebrating."

His boss obliged.

Patterson, a Pendleton resident, works as an electrician and began to wait outside of the RCA Dome at 2 p.m. for the team's pep rally. The stadium's gates didn't open until 3 p.m.

Even without game on tap, fans show support at dome

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Fans packed the nose-bleed section of the RCA Dome.

They painted their faces. They waited in lines for \$4 soda. They did the wave.

No football teams were scheduled to square off in downtown Indianapolis on Monday, but about 40,000 people gathered to say "Job well done" to the Super Bowl champion Indianapolis Colts.

They waited hours for Peyton, Cato, Marvin, Bob and Dwight to arrive.

"I can't believe they are going to tear this place down," said Indianapolis resident Renee Sweeny as she stood outside of the RCA Dome, which will be



From left, Colts fans Sonja Rose of Carmel, Gloria Robbins of Butlerville and Krissy Robbins of Indianapolis cheer during Monday's rally.

replaced by Lucas Oil Stadium.

She took a quick picture of her friends with a disposable camera before the four of them ran

into the RCA Dome.

The buddies hadn't been able to attend any games this season. But they considered themselves

true Colts fans nonetheless, she said.

Endangered Species Chocolate, where they work, let them off early so they could cheer for the Colts.

For Indianapolis resident Kevin Allison, the day was a lot like being at a game.

He brought his wife, daughter and two of his daughter's friends.

One southside resident said her family respects Tony Dungy and the leadership style of all of the Indianapolis Colts, and she wanted her children to be a part of the memories of the team's victory.

She came with her daughter and a niece who wore jerseys and Colts T-shirts along with blue wigs and makeup.

She wanted them to remember

Dungy and the way he led the team, she said.

The same was true for Trudi Fenzel, who brought her four children, ages 2, 5, 10 and 12.

Her children were out of school for the day, so she came downtown at 2:45 p.m. so she would get to the dome in time for the rally.

"There were already lots of excited people in blue and white," she said.

The family watched the game together on TV, and she wanted to experience the excitement of the rally as a way to really remember the Super Bowl victory, she said.

Her family really respects Dungy's leadership, and she wanted her children to remember that, she said.

• Dungy

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it. We can't come in here and think that we can just do what we did this year.

"We've got to improve if we want to stay where are."

Players agree, and they want Dungy to lead the way. He, above Manning and all others, is the individual they credit most for their success.

"I just have to give it up to the way we were led by coach Dungy," linebacker Cato June said. "He was the one that kept everyone together when everyone was saying that we couldn't get it done. We

just stayed together and played together.

"He stays consistent. He is not up and down with emotions. He just wanted us to go out there and play our best game of the year."

Manning attributes Dungy's calm demeanor for his personal success as well as the team's.

"I think that makes me comfortable, just seeing him with that comfortable look," Manning said. "I've never seen a guy with as calm a face in fourth-and-1 in a Super Bowl or first quarter of a preseason game against Cincinnati. He has the same face."

"It can't help but have an impact on you to say, 'If this guy is calm, maybe I should be calm.' Of all the characteristics I have to say about him, that's the one thing that's helped me in my career and

my play is his calming presence; it really spreads throughout the team."

Dungy is confident the Colts can replicate the success next year, but the roster might be noticeably different.

Eight players, including seven starters, can become free agents. They are defensive end Dwight Freeney, cornerbacks Nick Harper and Jason David, linebackers June and Rob Morris, guards Ryan Lilja and Jake Scott and running back Dominic Rhodes, who's Super Bowl performance rivaled that of MVP Manning's.

Of the aforementioned, Freeney appears the least likely to depart. Colts general manager Bill Polian has indicated that the pass-rush specialist will be receive the team's franchise player designation.

For his part, Dungy isn't sure who will or

won't be back. But he has faith in Polian's ability to make the right personnel calls in a restrictive salary-cap environment.

"Bill Polian does a tremendous job mapping those things out," Dungy said. "Bill has a lot of those things under control, and we have planned for some of those things."

If Dungy's words indeed foreshadow his intent, Polian won't have to plan on finding a new head coach. The one he has doesn't appear to be going anywhere.

At least not yet.

"We will be the hunted next year, and we understand that," said Dungy, who wants to work in Christian ministry after football. "It will be a challenge, and a challenge I look forward to helping the guys through."