



Colts coach Tony Dungy, 51, has said he doesn't intend to coach for many more years, sparking debate that if Indianapolis wins Sunday's Super Bowl, he will retire.

The content of his character

STORY BY RICK MORWICK,
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PHOTO BY
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DID YOU KNOW?

Tony Dungy was born Oct. 6, 1955, in Jackson, Mich.

He attended the University of Minnesota

At Jackson's Parkside High School, Dungy played guard on the basketball team and quarterback on the football team.

Colts players say Dungy's personality is reflected in team

MIAMI

Teams, the saying goes, are a reflection of their coach. Perhaps none personifies the adage more than the Indianapolis Colts.

Players not only win for Tony Dungy, they respond to him in a collective way that reflects his values, his character, his humility and his drive to be the best.

"We have a lot of good character guys. It comes down from the coach," said defensive end Dwight Freeney, echoing a sentiment common among Colts players. "Tony's a great guy. You can't find one man to say anything bad about him.

"We like to take after him and the things that he stands for."

Those items include honesty, integrity, dedication to family and deep devotion to his Christian faith.

But they are not topics Dungy just talks about. They're standards he lives by. Players see him exemplify them every day.

And the effects are profound. They've seen their coach handle disappointment, setbacks and personal tragedy with strength and courage.

They've also seen him enjoy prosperity and triumph with humbleness and class.

The Colts conduct themselves publicly, and probably in many cases privately, by Dungy's example.

"Words don't even describe how good the guy is. You have to be there," running back Dominic Rhodes said.

"(Reporters) just see him on the field, the sidelines and in the media, but you have to be around him for, like I have, for five years to really understand the kind of man he is.

"They don't get very much better."

Pro Bowl wide receiver Marvin Harrison agrees.

"Coach has influenced me a great deal. I just want to go out there and work hard for him,"

Harrison said. "He's a great coach, a great person, and he doesn't have to scream and holler to get what he wants to get across.

"You want to go out there and work hard for him."

Dungy's calm demeanor and even-keeled temperament are rare qualities for a head coach, especially in the NFL. But he's never felt that screaming and being animated during meetings or games are the best ways to command respect.

Even if he did, it's doubtful he could conduct himself any other way.

Open about his religious values, Dungy attributes his gentle spirit to his faith, which governs every aspect of his life.

His faith guides him through good times and bad. It sustained and comforted him when his son, James Dungy, took his own life just more than a year ago.

And it's the reason he's not in coaching for the long haul.

This season could possibly be his last, especially if the Colts beat the Chicago Bears in Sunday's Super Bowl.

Still young at 51, Dungy wants to spend more time with his wife, Lauren, and the couple's five surviving children.

He also wants to pursue faith-based opportunities.

"I still have a great passion for the game. I love it," Dungy said. "I love the coaching. I love the preparation. I love our guys, but my family is getting older. They are growing up.

"I have some other things that I really want to do, some things in the ministry work that I want to do. When that will come? We will see."

Players and the Colts' organization hope it's not anytime soon.

Dungy is not only the most successful coach in the history of the Indianapolis franchise,

(SEE CHARACTER, PAGE E7)

THE ASSISTANT COACHES



Jim Caldwell
Assistant head coach/
quarterbacks



Clyde Christensen
Wide receivers



Leslie Frazier
Special assistant/
defensive backs



Richard Howell
Assistant strength and conditioning



Gene Huey
Running backs



Ron Meeks
Defensive coordinator



Pete Metzelaars
Offensive quality control



Tom Moore
Offensive coordinator



Howard Mudd
Offensive line



Mike Murphy
Linebackers



Russ Purnell
Special teams



Diron Reynolds
Defensive quality control



John Teerlinck
Defensive line



Ricky Thomas
Tight ends



John Torine
Strength and conditioning



Alan Williams
Defensive backs

Coaching stability helps Colts

STORY BY JASON MARTIN, DAILY JOURNAL SPORTS CORRESPONDENT ■ PHOTO BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS

One quarterback plus one offensive coordinator equals success.

That simple formula has been a large part of the Colts' stability during the past nine seasons.

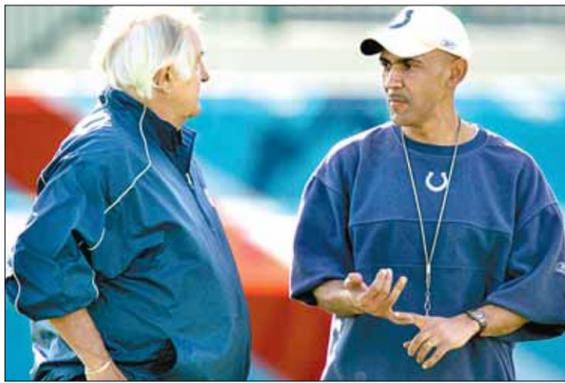
Peyton Manning has worked only with Tom Moore, a 29-year NFL coaching veteran, throughout his decorated NFL career.

During the same time, Indianapolis' Super Bowl opponent, Chicago, has cycled through 15 starting quarterbacks and five offensive coordinators. Until Ron Turner returned to the Bears as offensive coordinator last year after an eight-year hiatus coaching at the University of Illinois, Chicago had hired six consecutive offensive coordinators who had never called a play in the NFL (including Turner the first time around).

The Colts have benefited from uncommon coaching continuity that has provided the foundation for four consecutive 12-win regular seasons.

Indianapolis has had only one assistant coach leave the staff in the past five years since Tony Dungy was hired as head coach.

Tight ends coach Chris Foerster departed in 2004 to become Miami's offensive coordinator and



Colts offensive coordinator Tom Moore, left, talks with head coach Tony Dungy during a practice Wednesday for Sunday's Super Bowl.

has been assistant head coach/offensive line coach in Baltimore the past two seasons.

"(Continuity) is a tremendous benefit," Dungy said. "Usually when you're successful, you do start to lose guys. Guys get promotions, and we have had several guys who have turned down promotions to stay."

Dungy had little explanation for why his assistants stay other than the winning atmosphere that team ownership and management have created.

"I think that's a tribute to Jim

including the past nine with the Colts coaching the offensive line, ranks second in league history behind Pittsburgh's Dick Hoak, who retired this month after 35 years.

And running backs coach Gene Huey is in his 15th season as a Colts assistant, the longest service of any position coach in franchise history.

The Colts' assistants frequently are overshadowed by their better-known head coach and star players such as Manning.

Another reason they get overlooked is Indianapolis' policy of not making assistant coaches regularly available to the media, which drastically cuts down on the number of times they are quoted in print stories or heard or seen on broadcast reports.

Colts players, however, are eager to praise the assistants for their work.

Even recent acquisitions such as linebacker Rocky Boiman, who signed as a free agent this season, appreciate the benefit of the cohesion the coaching staff has developed.

"It's good to stay with the people that got you here," Boiman said. "Continuity creates a strong bond and helps out in games like (the AFC Championship)."

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Rocky Boiman,

Colts linebacker on the coaching staff