

Notes from (mostly) sunny south Florida

Monday, Jan. 29

Oh, the miracle of modern travel. One minute you're freezing, the next you're cranking up the AC. When I got up this morning at the cruel hour of 4:30 a.m. to get ready for my 7:20 a.m. flight, central Indiana was like central Antarctica. It was dark, windy and intolerably cold. For that reason, I didn't want to forego a coat; then again, I didn't want to lug it around when I got off the plane. So I compromised with a light denim jacket. It was a wise choice. When I boarded the plane bound for south Florida around 7 a.m., it was still dark and bitter cold.



Rick Morwick

Daily Journal sports editor Rick Morwick kept a daily blog of events in Miami during Super Bowl week. Here's a look at some of what he sent.

Stadium to the media center.

That's a lot of press. And no doubt the Colts and Bears were relieved to see it split so they could tend to a tiny detail: practice for Sunday's game.

Be patient. It's only five days away.

Five more days to read, watch and hear everything about the Super Bowl you ever wanted to know about the Super Bowl but were afraid to ask.

That's what we, the media horde, are here for.

We're not afraid of anything, except missing a deadline or an angle.

The locals call it a "cold front."

I call it a heat wave.

Temperatures peaked in the mid-60s on Monday afternoon, which compelled area residents to break out winter coats, hooded sweat shirts, gloves and long sleeves.

Though sunny and largely cloudless, temperatures are expected to reach no higher than 70 in the next few days.

A shuttle driver explained it this way: "A cold front moved in this week, and it's supposed stay like this all week."

Driving by palm trees and massive cruise ships lined up in a harbor, my internal reply was, "Bring it on!"

If this constitutes a cold front, who needs the tropics?

It's all what you're used to, I know.

Temperatures dip into the 50s at night

and hover in the mid- to upper 60s during the day. I'm sure your heart bleeds.

This morning, when I went through security about 8:30 a.m. at the media center, the young woman who searched my computer bag was bundled in a coat and hooded sweat shirt and wore knit gloves.

She shivered and complained about the temperature through the entire process. "I want this cold to go away," she said, echoing a sentiment her co-workers muttered as they worked the security line. "I can't stand this cold."

I can, but I didn't have the heart to say.

Speaking of temperatures, they're not bad at the moment.

Here in Fort Lauderdale, where the Colts are roughing it at a beachside resort with a spectacular view of the Atlantic, it's about 70 degrees at 11 a.m.

I haven't been outside much, but today is the warmest day of the week so far.

But enough about the weather. Back to the Colts.

To put in perspective how tough they have it, consider this: Not only are they living in the lap of luxury (spas, pools, salons, saloons, beaches, etc.), they will be considerably wealthier when they head home, win or lose, from Sunday's Super Bowl.

Each player on the winning team pockets \$73,000 whether he takes the field or not. A \$5,000 ring is included in the prize package. The NFL buys 150 for the winning team.

The losing payout's not bad, either.

Those guys get \$38,000 per player and a piece of jewelry worth roughly half of what the winning rings cost. That should soothe the agony of defeat somewhat.

Thursday, Feb. 1

Today, I'll spare you the weather update (even though it's sunny, cloudless and about 80 degrees in Miami Beach as noon approaches) and get to the point.

Folks are gearing up for a pretty big event down here, and it's only three days away.

It seems like a month.

The hype machine has been in over-drive since the Colts and Bears made the big show, and it's not slowing down a bit.

Today's routine is much the same: Player interviews, player interviews, and more player interviews.

Tomorrow's routine?

Player interviews, player interviews and more player interviews.

Had enough?

Didn't think so.

Once the obvious story lines have been visited (and revisited and revisited and revisited), the best thing about the Super Bowl buildup is the revelation of interesting detail that otherwise might not surface during the course of the regular season.

For example, it's no secret Tony Dungy is a man of deep Christian faith. But so are many of his players, and several have spoken openly about that this week.

Here's what offensive tackle Tarik Glenn said: "(I want to) give Jesus all

the credit of why I'm here. It is so important to me, because I feel that all of this is a platform to get out testimony to all of those who wonder what makes us tick and what makes us go.

"I thank the good Lord for giving me the talent and the ability to be able to do this, and more importantly, just to know that he's blessed me with the stewardship of all of these accolades.

"When you look at it, this is the 41st Super Bowl, and not too many people get to this point. We have to do something with it now that we're here, and that's just a blessing in itself."

Friday, Feb. 2

The moment we've been waiting for is getting closer. Here's how I know.

The crowded, congested downtown is exponentially more crowded and congested today than it was during any other day of the week.

You've probably heard how horrific Miami traffic is. It's that and much, much worse.

The Super Bowl isn't helping.

When I arrived to catch this morning's media shuttle in front of the downtown Hyatt, the first thing I saw was a long line of cars packed with people arriving at the hotel (I'm guessing) for the game.

What I didn't see in the sea of confusion was my shuttle, which arrives and departs promptly every half hour, all day every day, from 7 a.m. to 1 a.m.

It was late. The traffic caused it to be.

That was my first clue that the kickoff is indeed rapidly approaching.

My second occurred at the media center, where the 3,500-odd (you can take that anyway you want) journalists covering the game began picking up game-day credentials.

Today was the first day to do so. It was obvious by the line of humanity outside the credential center that resembled a Saturday afternoon queue to ride The Beast at Kings Island (OK, it wasn't that bad, but it wasn't that good).

My third and final clue that the game is at hand occurred when I had my game-day credential in hand.

Critical mass is on the horizon.

Well, sort of.

Today is still pretty much the same as the day before and the day before and the day before: News conferences, news conferences, news conferences, news conferences — and more news conferences.

Will the game ever get here?

No doubt players are thinking the same thing. If they weren't sick of answering the same questions over and over by Wednesday, you can bet your cold-weather gear hat they are now.

If you don't believe me, take it from Colts offensive tackle Ryan Diem.

"I didn't know we were going to do this every day," Diem said. "I knew we had media day on Tuesday. I didn't know we had to do it every day. It's been interesting. I've got a lot of the same questions over and over, but that's part of the job."

Hang in there, Ryan. Only two more days to go, and then the real circus begins.

Sunday, Feb. 4

Super Bowl Sunday is finally here, and wouldn't you know it? It's the worst day of the week, by far.

South Beach party revelers (which didn't include yours truly) awoke to fog, rain, mist, high humidity and no breeze.

That can't be good for a hangover.

If TV pundits are to be believed, the gloomy weather isn't good for the Colts, either.

By 9 a.m., assorted talking heads on local Miami newstations were already proclaiming what might be a wet, sloppy grass field at Dolphin Stadium a distinct advantage for the Bears.

Hmm.

After a week of dry, sunny, cloudless days throughout south Florida, is the morning gray really a bad omen for the Colts? Is it a ray of hope for the under-dog Bears?

What will Peyton & Co. do if it's raining at game time, which this morning's forecast indicates is a distinct possibility?

Should they concede defeat now and acknowledge it was simply nice to be here? No so fast.

Rumor has it that Dolphin Stadium's high-tech drainage system can absorb 3 inches of rain like a drop on a sponge.

Experts down here (the folks on TV) say the field would literally be dry in minutes following a 3-inch deluge.

So things probably aren't as bad as they seem.

Moreover, the Colts have overcome worse adversity than the weather to get to this point.

Rain won't beat them. The Bears might, but the weather won't.

Monday, Feb. 5

Forgive Peyton Manning for staying up all night.

After leading the Indianapolis Colts to the Super Bowl championship, then celebrating with family, friends and teammates until the wee hours of Monday morning, he earned the right to unwind by watching a little TV.

OK, a lot of TV.

"Going on zero sleep right now. We gave it a good run last night and this morning until about 4:30," the Colts quarterback said barely four hours later during a news conference at the Miami Beach Convention Center. "(I) got back to the room and then, of course, I had to pop on the highlights and pop on the NFL Network and see all what happened during the game.

"Kind of reliving that game, watching the highlights was pretty special this morning."

Not just for him.

Coach Tony Dungy was still savoring the moment, too, less than 12 hours after the conclusion of Super Bowl XLI.

"I, like Peyton, am operating on zero sleep as well," Dungy said.

"We had a great party last night, and just to be around our families and supporters and staff, it was just awesome to be able to share that moment with them."

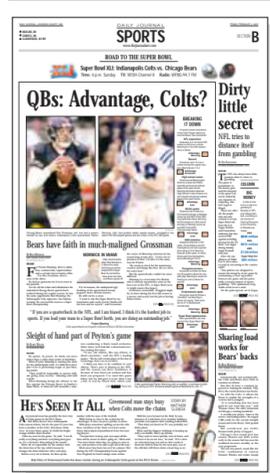
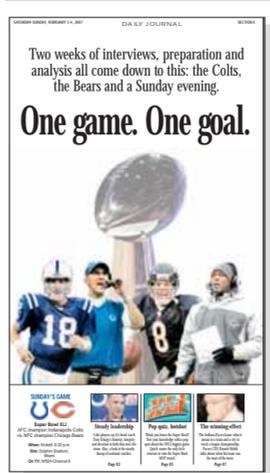
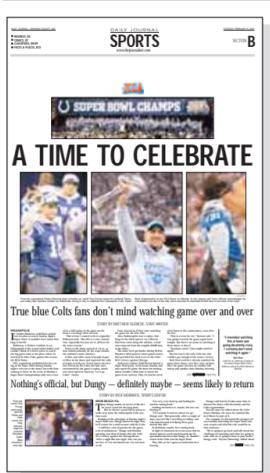
Feb. 6

Feb. 5

Feb. 3

Feb. 3

Feb. 2



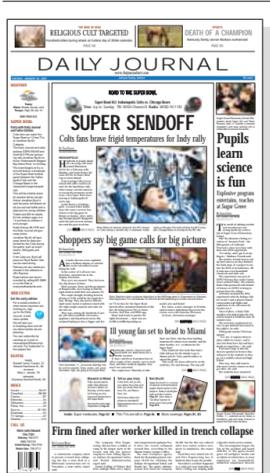
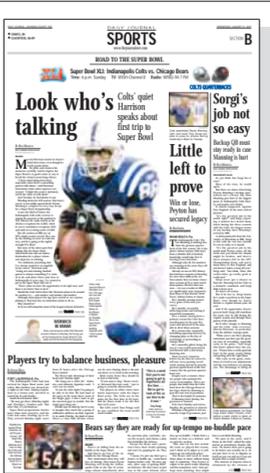
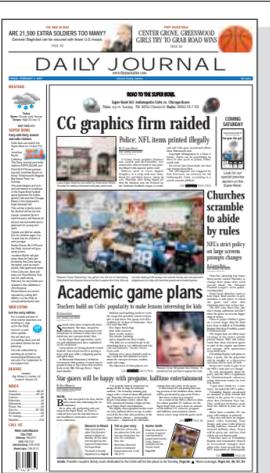
Feb. 2

Feb. 1

Feb. 1

Jan. 31

Jan. 30



Want to see more? Back issues of the Daily Journal can be purchased by calling 736-7101.