

## • Talking

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

backs. On any given play, he can outsmart all of them.

His hands as sure as any in the game, he's never suffered a serious injury, and his consecutive Pro Bowl streak (which ties Johnny Unitas for the longest in franchise history) proves he's still one of the NFL's best.

But the most compelling reason Harrison plans to hang around is because his body isn't breaking down, which he attributes, at least in part, to his diligent conditioning.

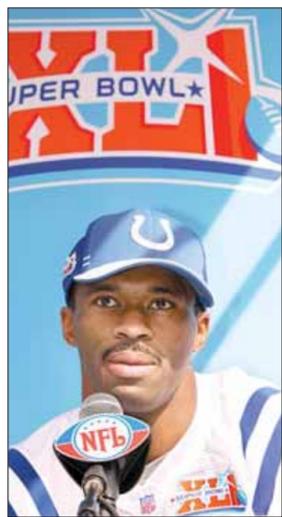
"I don't know how I've lasted so long," said Harrison, who has started all but two games of his entire career. "I guess I've done a great job with my training throughout the course of my career."

So good, in fact, that Harrison expects to, in a figurative sense, turn back the clock.

He had 95 catches for 1,366 yards and 12 touchdowns during the regular season. He predicts he can top it all next year.

"I look forward to playing a lot younger than I currently have," Harrison said. "I've never had a thought that crossed my mind about when I am going to finish playing."

"But I definitely have a lot of years left in me to play, and hopefully I can get what I came to play for."



Indianapolis Colts wide receiver Marvin Harrison listens to a question on Super Bowl media day at Dolphin Stadium in Miami on Tuesday.

Which is, of course, the Super Bowl. And when the day arrives when he finally does decide to call it a career, he wants to be remembered one way: as a winner.

"I don't need to be more famous," Harrison said. "At the end of the day, I just want my teammates to know that I was a great player that did a lot to help us win football games."

"Hopefully, I'll have the opportunity to do what a lot of other receivers haven't, which is winning the Super Bowl."

## • Balance

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

"I have a lot of faith in our guys," he said. "I think they're going to come down here and focus in and dial in on winning the game."

"This is a week that you're not going to get to experience all the time. We can't look at it as something we'll probably get to do next year or the year after. We've got to look at this as our time to do it now."

To be safe, Dungy set a curfew beginning Tuesday night.

Excellent idea, Sanders said. "We've got a lot of young guys on this team who may not understand how important this is," Sanders said. "It's a good thing we have a curfew."

It may also help that the Colts are staying in Fort Lauderdale, a 30-minute drive from the club scene on Miami Beach. The Bears' hotel near the Miami airport is even more isolated.

That left some players unsure where to find fun.

"Some people are from around this area, so they'll have a little more acquaintance about where to go and what to do," Indy tight end Dallas Clark said. "Me, being from Iowa and only having been down here a couple of times, I'll just follow other people to see what's going on."

"We really understand we're down here for business and don't want to get too out of sync about what a normal week will be."

With that goal in mind, the Colts practiced indoors at home before flying to Florida and arriving after dark. There was little sense of heading to the Super Bowl, center Jeff Saturday said.

"It was the normal routine: guys watch movies, load up the computer, listen to music, nothing different on the plane," Saturday said. "It was the same old same old."

With media day Tuesday, the AFC champions will wait until today to practice in Florida for the first time. But they arrived with their game plan in place and said the travel schedule gave them a chance to recharge last weekend after three consecutive weeks of playoff games.

The weekend off was their first since their bye Oct. 15.

The NFC champion Bears liked their itinerary, too.

"I'm going to enjoy every moment of this," linebacker Lance Briggs said. "I look out my hotel room and I see a guy on a jet ski. I'm coming from Chicago, where it's below 20."

Warm weather was one reason to arrive early.

Nightlife was another.

"You get partying and stuff out of the way," Berrian said. "Pretty soon everyone gets tired of doing everything. That gets out of your system, and you try to concentrate and go play."

## • Pace

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

speed. If the Colts can operate on a quick pace, it complicates an already complex challenge for Chicago.

Slowing the Indy offense is difficult enough with Manning, Pro Bowl receivers Marvin Harrison and Reggie Wayne, tight end Dallas Clark, running backs Joseph Addai and Dominic Rhodes and a strong offensive line. Thwarting it at warp speed with the same 11 players for an entire series could be too much to ask.

Forget all of Manning's histrionics at the line: the pointing, the backing off, turning around to instruct teammates, slapping his helmet, calling out signals false and real.

The true beauty of the no-huddle is how it can force defenses to be imbalanced against one of the NFL's most dangerous offenses.

"Tom Moore has given me more freedom and trust and more responsibility," Manning said, referring to the Colts' long-time offensive coordinator, the only one Manning has played for in nine seasons. "Meanwhile, I can call some of my plays, and I have the ability to change plays. That's more responsibility."

"Of course, if you change to one that does not work, you feel so much more responsible for

## BY THE NUMBERS

A look at some of the Colts' key offensive statistics this season:

**23.5**

First downs per game, ranking the Colts first in the NFL

**29:32**

Time of possession in minutes per game, 22nd in the NFL

**56.1**

Third-down conversion percentage, first in the NFL

**379.4**

Yards per game, third in the NFL

**1,011**

Total offensive plays, 14th in the NFL

that. So maybe you try harder to make it work."

The no-huddle has worked well since Manning came into the league as the No. 1 overall pick in 1998. He likes it, the coaches like it, even the linemen like it.

"We like the tempo it gives us," Pro Bowl center Jeff Saturday said. "We feel like we can wear teams down."

"There's just a lot of things about it that really fits our style."

## • Backup

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1)

the sideline is you get to see that stuff."

But he doesn't want to have that view forever. Sorgi wants to start, sometime, somewhere. He knows it won't be with the Colts as long as Manning is present and healthy.

But the fact he's been Manning's chief backup longer than a lengthy roster of predecessors is a strong signal that the team considers him a starting-caliber player.

It gives him hope but not necessarily solace.

"I would love to be a starter," said Sorgi, who has appeared in

only nine regular-season games. "It's hard to gauge how far you are when you're not really playing a lot of football. Mentally, I know a lot more about the game than I did when I was coming out of college."

"I would love to be a starter. I just don't know when that time will come."

If and when it does, he'll finally stop hearing how good he has it, even though his occupation isn't as stress-free as many assume.

Because if the unthinkable happens to Manning, Sorgi will be the one who's asked to go out and win the Super Bowl.

"(Being a backup) is not a lot of pressure all day, every day," Sorgi said. "But when the moment comes, if it comes, it's going to be a lot."

## • Prove

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as failing to win such a game is not an indication of failure or mediocrity.

If winning a Super Bowl were a sign of greatness, Trent Dilfer, Doug Williams and Mark Rypien would be under consideration for the Hall of Fame instead of answers to trivia questions.

Most recently, the Steelers won last season in spite of Ben Roethlisberger. Against Seattle, he completed only 9 of 21 passes. He threw two interceptions, and his passer rating was 22.6.

It's possible greatness remains ahead for Roethlisberger. But it shouldn't be based on what he did in Super Bowl XL.

By contrast, Dan Marino, the quarterback who holds most of the important NFL passing records, never won a Super Bowl. For a time, it diminished his reputation. Over time, though, people realized the stupidity of such a stance and gave Marino the acclaim he deserved.

It's a team game. The quarterback might be the most important player on the field, but he cannot do it alone.

John Elway, for example, was criticized for much of his career for failing to win a Super Bowl. But when he won two at the end of his career, he was widely acclaimed, although he had played better when not winning the Super Bowl. But the time Denver won with Elway, running back Terrell Davis, not the quarterback, was the focal point of the offense.

Any belief that Manning

couldn't win the big one should have been erased Jan. 21, when he rallied the Colts from a 21-3 deficit to a 38-34 win against New England in the AFC title game. He capped that comeback by leading a seven-play, 80-yard scoring drive that began with 2:17 remaining and which was played out under pressure every bit as great as can be found in a Super Bowl.

In fact, since getting to the Super Bowl is almost as big as winning it, it can be argued there's more pressure in a conference title game.

If ever there were a doubt about Manning's legacy, and there should not have been, that ended it. It will not take a repeat or anything close to it to stamp him with greatness and to put him in his proper place among the best quarterbacks in NFL history.

"He's the complete quarterback," Bears coach Lovie Smith said. "He's an excellent leader, and his teammates believe in him."

The lack of respect he receives from some doesn't bother Manning, who said he doesn't get into the perception that he has had a monkey on his back and needed to secure his legacy.

Indianapolis coach Tony Dungy took a shot at the skeptics.

"(The New England win) probably won't shut anybody up until we win (the Super Bowl)," he said. "It'll still be, 'Why can't you win the Super Bowl?'"

"But Peyton Manning is a great player, and anybody who doesn't know that doesn't know football."

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