

Super Bowl XLI

7th Grade Reporter and 5th Grade Reporter

Miami, Florida on February 4, 2007. The city was packed with fans wearing navy and orange, or blue and white. They had traveled thousands of miles just for one game and one night. What game? Super Bowl XLI! These football fans poured into Miami Dolphins Stadium, hoping with all of their hearts for their team to win. However, this record-setting game would only end with one winner... and this year it was the Colts, lead by Peyton Manning, Super Bowl XLI M.V.P. (most valuable player).

According to predictions published in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the Colts were expected to win almost unanimously, and the point spread was seven points. Although Bears fans still went home upset, it seems that most could sense the Colts twelve-point-spread victory, even before it happened! Pennsylvania SportsTicker Staff Writer, Chris Palochko predicted a 24-20 Colts' victory. It was also predicted that Bears Pro Bowl rookie Devin Hester would make a big play as a punt/kick returner. This was, in fact, correct. After the Bears won the coin toss and chose to receive at the very beginning of the game, Hester ran the kick back for a touchdown! It seems as if Super Bowl XLI was the uniform Super Bowl. By just reading the predictions you would know who won the game and who made all of the big plays!!!

The game was actually quite exciting, though. With the first play of the game a Hester touchdown on a kick return, you would think that the Bears would dominate. However, as Super Bowl announcers stated during the game, if a team makes a huge play at the very beginning of a game, they actually tend to lose. Once again, correct! Another highlight was the missed extra point by the Colts after their first touchdown. It had just started to pour rain and the ball just slipped through the hands of the Colts place-kick holder.

Super Bowl XLI M.V.P. was Peyton Manning. He is the quarterback of the Indianapolis Colts, who has been playing in the NFL for nine years, been to seven Pro Bowls, and just walked away with his *first* Super Bowl ring and *first* M.V.P. title. Growing up with quarterback father, Archie Manning, and one older and one younger brother (Eli Manning) Peyton was surrounded by football all of his life. He started playing very young and always idolized his father. As shown in a home video clip during the Super Bowl a three-year-old Peyton stated, "My Dad is my favorite player!" Why didn't Peyton Manning win a Super Bowl until now? Well, the Colts have been becoming better and better for years with an '04 season record of 12-4, '05 season record of 14-2, and '06 season record of 12-4. Peyton Manning has finally gotten what many people believe he has deserved for a long, long time!

Super Bowl XLI made history this year, being the first Super Bowl ever to have two, black head coaches. This history-making event was followed by Tony Dungy becoming the first black head coach to ever win a Super Bowl. Three out of four of the announcers on *ESPN Sport Center* believe that this will change the NFL forever. They believe that black coaches will "catch on" almost like a trend. They think that many teams will begin to hire them more. In any way, February, Black History Month has become enhanced by Dungy and Smith's contributions to the NFL!

Now, for the statistics of the game...

Stat Box

29-17 Colts' victory
Bears = 5 turnovers
Colts = 3 turnovers
Bears = 2 touchdowns
Colts = 3 touchdowns
2 sacks in Game
38:04 = Colt's possession time
21:56 = Bear's possession time
191 = Colt's Rushing Yards
111 = Bear's Rushing Yards
81 = # of Colts plays
48 = # of Bears plays
239 = Colt's passing yards
154 = Bear's passing yards
3 field goals by Colts
1 field goal by Bears
Return Yards for Colts = 225
Return Yards for Bears = 147
24 = Colt's 1st-Downs
11 = Bear's 1st-Downs
Colt's 3rd Down Conversions = 8-18
Bear's 3rd Down Conversions = 3-10
Colt's and Bear's 4th Down Conversions = 0-1