



CALLING THE SHOTS: Tony Romo is good but not great yet. RONALD MARTINEZ/GETTY IMAGES

Romo needs to put Giants loss behind him

By KARL YU
Epoch Times Staff

During last Sunday's Giants-Cowboys game, NBC's Cris Collinsworth wondered if QB Tony Romo would go down in Dallas Cowboys' history as a champ—like Troy Aikman and Roger Staubach—or merely above average—like Danny White.

It was a fitting question considering Romo is entering his fourth year as the Cowboys' No. 1 QB and has yet to win a playoff game.

Romo had a Sunday night to forget, going 13-29 for 127 yards with one TD and three INTs. It was a complete 180 from his Week 1 performance where he went 16-27 for 353 yards with three TDs and no INTs.

His Week 2 performance was a big reason why the much-hyped inaugural regular season game at Dallas's new billion dollar stadium ended as a 33-31 loss to the New York Giants, much to the disappointment of the record-setting

crowd of 105,000-plus people. "Our team played some really good football and I think that obviously my mistakes put us in a hole," Romo said in the post-game press conference.

Of course, this is professional football and the Cowboys' signal-caller has little time to feel sorry for himself, as the team prepares for another prime time game this coming Monday night when it hosts the Carolina Panthers.

Romo was angry at himself for his performance against the Giants and he vowed to learn from his mistakes.

"We can't win games if I [throw three interceptions]," he said. "I'm going to work very hard and diligently from here on out, to make sure that doesn't happen again."

Number 9 has put up some good numbers during his time as the main man for "America's team," with his best season coming in 2007—he completed 64.4 percent of his passes for 4,211 yards and 36 TDs. But he also threw 19 INTs.

He is 0-2 in the playoffs, and entering Week 13 last season with a record of 8-4, Romo and Dallas proceeded to close out the season going 1-3. That cost them a playoff spot, although Terrell Owens's disruptive behaviour was also to blame for Dallas's downfall.

In the one win, ironically against the Giants, Romo was not picked off. And in the three losses—to Pittsburgh, Baltimore, and Philadelphia—he threw a total of six.

Throwing interceptions is the Achilles' heel of the Eastern Illinois University product. He is a gunslinger, as he has thrown a total of 49 interceptions during his time in Dallas.

But he is not against doing what it takes to correct his flaws.

"Tony's very good at evaluating himself and what he does during a game both when we have success and when things don't go well," said offensive coordinator Jason Garrett.

"He's someone who learns and he'll learn from this night and he's

a heck of a good competitor, and for him to battle back and come through some of the adversity he had and give us a chance, those are the kind of traits you want in your players and particularly your quarterback."

No one will doubt that Tony Romo is a talented QB with the skills necessary to succeed in the NFL—he has been named to the Pro Bowl twice in the last three seasons, after all—but he needs to show whether he is an "Aikman" or a "White."

The greats can get it done in both the regular season and the playoffs.

Romo can show his mettle by correcting his mistakes and putting on a good performance when the Cowboys play the Panthers on Monday night.

Cowboys fans were disappointed by the first regular season game at Cowboys Stadium, but a convincing win in the second game will have everyone in good spirits again.

Henin announces tennis comeback

Former world No. 1 hopes to capture elusive Wimbledon title

By DAN POMERLEAU
Epoch Times Staff

Former world No. 1 Justine Henin has decided to return to professional tennis after retiring in May 2008, she announced in a live television broadcast on Belgium's RTL-TVI network on Tuesday.

Henin is the only female player to retire from tennis while holding the No. 1 ranking. She cited a lack passion for the game accompanied by persistent injuries, the stress that came with constant training, and the pursuit of top titles.

She hopes to return to the WTA circuit in January, with her first shot at a major win coming with the 2010 Australian Open. Until then, she will have a lot of training to do to get her game back to the pro level. She plans on playing in exhibition tournaments in Charleroi, Belgium and Dubai in November and December before Melbourne Park.

"The fire within burns again. I want to come back in January," Henin said on Tuesday.

Following Clijsters The timing of Henin's decision is indeed uncanny. Her Belgian compatriot Kim Clijsters returned to tennis this season after 2 1/2 years of retirement to start a family.

Clijsters—not having even played in enough matches this year to hold a ranking going into the U.S. Open—shocked the tennis world with her defeat of world No. 2 and defending champion Serena Williams in the semifinal before beating Denmark's Caroline Wozniacki in the final.

"Returning at that level so fast is something I respect enormously," said Henin of Clijsters.

But she contends that Clijsters's storybook comeback is not the main reason for her return to the pro circuit.

"Subconsciously, [Kim Clijsters winning the US Open] might have had an impact, but it certainly was not the most important reason," she said.

That most important reason is undoubtedly Henin's pursuit of an elusive Wimbledon title. With seven grand slam titles under her belt—the Australian Open (2004), four French Opens (2003, 2005, 2006, 2007), and two U.S. Opens (2003, 2007)—Wimbledon has proved the only nut the 25-year-old



COMEBACK: Justine Henin announced her comeback to pro tennis on Tuesday after 18 months of retirement. DOMINIQUE FAGET/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

didn't crack when she left tennis in May 2008.

Henin's last appearance at Wimbledon was in the 2007 semifinal where she lost to France's Marion Bartoli. It was a loss that remained with her ever since.

"It is a dream of mine," Henin said Tuesday in regards to Wimbledon.

"A flame I thought was extinguished forever suddenly lit up again."

Like most professional athletes, Henin is driven by her love of sport and her desire to compete, even if it means personal sacrifice in other parts of her life.

"Adrenaline is part of my life, my existence. It is in my character," she said.

"Justine is that rare athlete who decided to step away from the game at the height of her powers, and no doubt she will be a force to be reckoned with from the get go," WTA Tour chairman Stacey Allaster said in a statement.

Henin won 41 singles titles after turning pro in 1999 and spent 117 non-consecutive weeks at the No. 1 spot, ranking sixth-all time.

In 2007 she became the first female athlete to pass the \$5 million mark in prize money in a single season.

She said she plans to play until the 2012 Olympic games in London when she will be 30. She won an Olympic gold in Athens in 2004.

Karlovic serves up 78 aces in losing effort

By RAHUL VAIDYANATH
Epoch Times Staff

When it comes to service aces, nobody does it better these days than 6-foot-10-inch Croat Ivo Karlovic.

Last Friday, in the opening match of the Davis Cup semifinal against the Czech Republic's Radek Stepanek, Karlovic absolutely blew away his own record for aces in a match (55) by hammering down a staggering 78 aces.

Despite hitting 78 aces, Karlovic lost 6-7, 7-6, 7-6, 6-7, 16-14. The tennis marathon lasted five hours and 59 minutes. The match was the fourth longest Davis Cup match ever played. Stepanek also saved four match points in the win.

Karlovic hit 55 aces at this year's French Open in a five-set loss to Australia's Lleyton Hewitt. His new ace record is one of those records that you just can see getting broken.

"It was really tough, a long match. It could've gone either way," said Karlovic in an interview with Davis Cup Radio after the match while the crowd in Porec, Croatia was still chanting and cheering.

"The match was going crazy. I stayed mentally strong," said Stepanek after seeing ace after ace zip by him. When asked how it felt to see 78 aces go by



ACE RECORD: Ivo Karlovic hit 78 aces, 23 more than his previous record. HRVOJE POLAN/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

him, Stepanek responded, "It feels great, to be honest. He can serve 90 [aces], if I win the match."

The Davis Cup can bring about some incredible tennis buoyed by fan support not seen at regular tour events.

"The atmosphere was unbelievable, I'm surprised it was like this. It was a great experience for me," said Karlovic.

Karlovic summed up his record-breaking performance. "I'm like Superman. I hit aces. That's what I do."

The Czech Republic, spurred on by Stepanek's performance, went on to defeat Croatia. They will now face Spain in the Davis Cup final in early December.

Remember the Titans?

Team was 13-3 last year but is 0-2 now, faces unbeaten Jets next

By MATT SUGAM

It's amazing what a difference a year can make in the NFL.

The Dolphins shocked the league last year by going 11-5 and making the playoffs as the AFC East champion just a season removed from a 1-15 campaign.

But as quickly as a team's stock can rise in one season, it can also fall.

Just ask the Tennessee Titans. After surprising their league in their own right by opening last season 10-0, the Titans finished the season at 13-3, winner of the AFC South, and the No. 1 seed in the AFC.

Getting bounced in their first playoff game was a tough pill to swallow for a team that had Super Bowl aspirations.

As the team looked to build off last season, they couldn't have chosen a worse way to begin the season.

Tennessee is 0-2 and history says they only have a 13.7 percent chance of making the playoffs.

With the poor start, the blame game has started as players claimed coaches didn't make the proper adjustments. But Head Coach Jeff Fisher did his best to nip it in the bud.

"When you're a good football team and you start off a season 0-2, there's going to be frustration and

the only way you get out of it is avoid pointing fingers at anybody.

Everybody accepts the blame and you move on," Fisher said after Sunday's loss to the Houston Texans.

Fisher went on to say that adjustments were made, and players need to do a better job paying attention to what's said on the sideline.

But Fisher anticipated his team's frustration with the poor start.

"I would expect frustration from them and it's okay to be frustrated. But you have to come to terms with it," Fisher said. "You have to deal with it and move on."

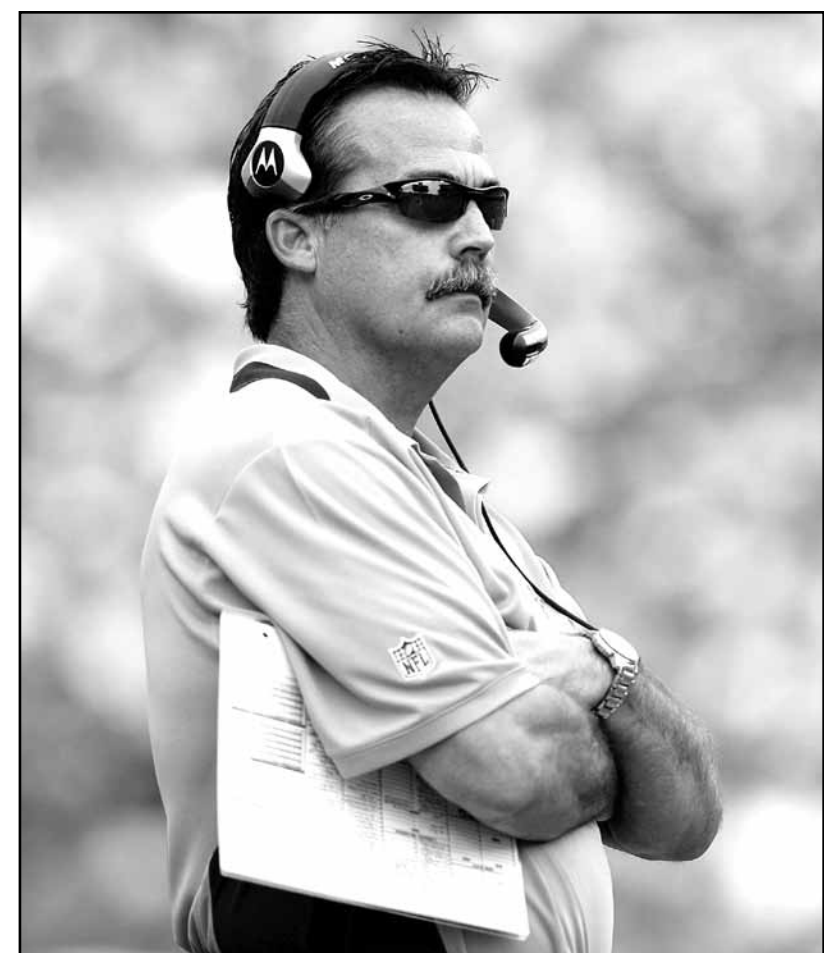
And the Titans will have to move on to the Meadowlands to face a Jets team that feels they can beat anyone in the league.

Tennessee is also playing against the same Rex Ryan defensive scheme that handed them that early exit in the playoffs last season. And the Jets have yet to allow an offensive touchdown this season while playing teams with much more prolific offenses than the one the Titans boast.

Tennessee will have to do a better job of sticking to its mantra of running the football and grinding out football games while playing good defense.

And that's exactly what they plan to do.

"We're an offense built on the running game. Our M.O. is to grind it



BLAME GAME: Titans coach Jeff Fisher now has to deal with the inevitable frustration after an 0-2 start. ANDY LYONS/GETTY IMAGES

out," All-Pro center Kevin Mawae said.

"Take advantage of what they give us up front and push guys around and make yards on the ground. I don't think that's going to change because that has been Jeff's [Fisher] M.O. since he's been a head coach in this league."

Running backs Chris Johnson and LenDale White need to be the architects of a Titans victory, as QB

Kerry Collins works off play-action and manages the game. The defense needs to rattle Jets rookie quarterback Mark Sanchez.

While they face the possibility of going 0-3, the Titans aren't in alarmed just yet.

"Nobody's panicking," Mawae said. "We know we have to go to work."

Matt Sugam also writes for The Daily Targum at Rutgers University.