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Tony Pape's NFL Europe diary

April 21, 2005
 NFL Europe



Tony Pape and the Thunder suffered their first loss of the season.
 (waynepaulo.com)

Berlin Thunder tackle Tony Pape will write a weekly diary through the NFL Europe season to give fans an insight into the life of a player in Europe. This week, the Miami Dolphins allocated player talks about his disappointment at the Thunder's first loss of the season.

So I have figured out where I'm going to retire when I get old: Amsterdam. What an amazing city that is. It is a city rich in culture with lots of great history and sights to see. Every Dutch person I ran into on my trip was very cordial, and I'm not sure whether they were trying to be nice or trying to get a job.

Unfortunately this weekend the Thunder came up with a "L" in the record books, but despite the loss there were many positives that we can take from it. Learning how to bounce back from a loss can be one of the most valuable skills a team can possess. You can tell how tough a team is by the way they prepare after a loss. If you can learn from your mistakes it can be almost more valuable than a win.

Some of the positives that we had were that we came back from an eleven point deficit with seven minutes left. With two minutes left we were up by three and we were in position to win. In this League the difference in talent from team to team is so minute that many of these games are going to have to come down to the last two minutes of the game. It was a tough loss to take, but this team knows that we can come back from down in the fourth quarter, and that's really important.

One of the highlights from the game was Aaron Boone's circus catch in the fourth quarter to put us up by three. It was an unbelievable catch, and I'm lucky to have caught a glimpse of it while I was blocking on the field. Also, both of our running backs ran extremely hard for a total of 140 yards. Our quarterback, Dave Ragone, also rushed for close to 30 yards, including a tough touchdown run.

On another positive note our defense came up big with four turnovers. Cornerback Mike Harden was Defensive Player of the Week with two interceptions and Oliver Flemming, our national player from Berlin, also had an interception. Defensive end Isaac Hilton also had a huge fumble recovery in the fourth quarter to put our team in position to take the lead.

Despite this loss the Thunder has taken this loss and used it to drive us to prepare for the Rhein Fire. This week of practice has been fairly standard, but the intensity was turned up a notch. The defense backfield should be much stronger this week with the addition of two new safeties: fellow Dolphins allocated player Jack Hunt from LSU and, from Russia with love, national safety Sergei Ivanov.

Sorry, I can't be that funny in this weeks diary because we loss this past weekend. If win his coming weekend I will be sure to add some more humor to next weeks diary. By the way, Mom, be sure to watch me this weekend on the NFL Network.