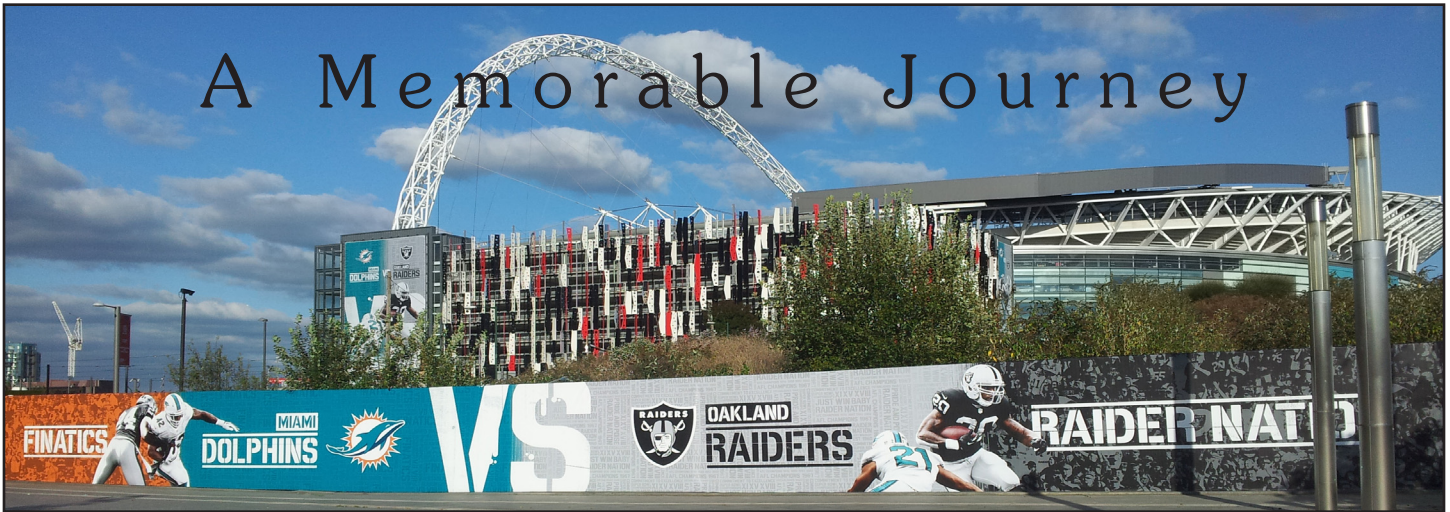


A Memorable Journey



As I began to prepare for my journey to London, I started to feel knots in my stomach thinking about weeks 2 and 3, two weeks in which my beloved Dolphins lost lopsided games to the Bills and Chiefs respectively; however, my optimism for a fun trip made me feel slightly better. I arrived Friday morning at Heathrow at Terminal 2 and worked my way to Terminal 3 to meet up with some friends that were flying in as well. As I waited, I saw an array of Dolphins fans walking through the airport and I thought to myself, "How nice it is to see that true fans still exist." I decided from the time I left home to when I returned home, win or lose, that I was going to wear something Dolphins to show my love and support of the team. Finally, after waiting a while, my friends showed up and we were all excited and pumped for some fun and to watch a great game. All my friends felt the same as me, uneasy and nervous to drop to 1-3 before going into the bye week. As we headed over to our different hotels we discussed what our plans were for the rest of the day and how we were going to meet. We decided that we would contact each other



through a certain app and the plan was set. We separated and I went to my hotel near the stadium.

I finally reached my hotel and was quite exhausted, as one would be from being awake for so long and having taken that trip across the Atlantic. Shockingly, the weather in England was warm and by the time I did get to my hotel, I was sweating and could not take it anymore. The décor all around the stadium was awesome and full of both Dolphins & Raiders quotes and pictures. After taking a short nap and not hearing from my friends, I decided to venture out on my own and see what was around the stadium & to get a feel of what needed to be

done to meet with my family the following day in the city. As I explored the area and took pictures I asked questions about the activities that were going to take place. I arrived to the end of the path and saw the train station and decided that it was time to turn around.

As I was walking back to the hotel and contemplating whether to head into the city later for some eating and drinking, I looked up and saw Dennis Hickey headed towards me with his entourage. I said, "Hello, Mr. Hickey," and he smiled and said hello as he examined my Dolphins attire. It was cool to see him just walking down the street all mellow and smiling, without a worry in the world. As I continued up the path to my hotel, I looked around and noticed more and more Dolphins gear.



Not just any gear, but the kind of gear that trainers would wear. I reached a hotel (that will remain un-named) and I looked to the right and saw three buses just sitting there. I saw a few large men standing around, so I decided to walk towards them. "Is that?? NO, can't be!" is what I said out loud as Branden Albert is standing there. At this point, you can imagine, I felt a sense of excitement as I thought that I had found the hotel where the players were staying. I walked into the lobby and saw another fan with his helmet and hat completely filled with all the

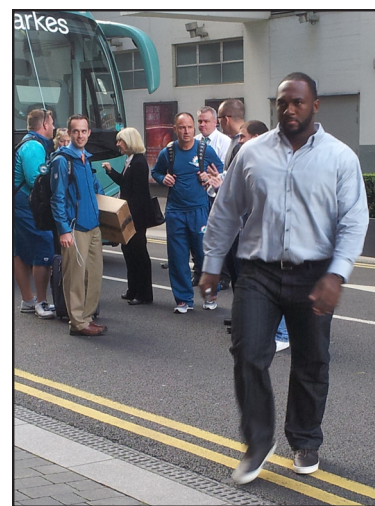
players and coaches signatures. I asked him if he got those all today and he answered quickly "Yeah, they just got here!"



A sense of excitement and disbelief came over me as I walked outside and just stood there with my camera, taking photos and talking to more players. Mind you, I was not prepared for any of this and did not have anything to sign. The list of players that I saw and with whom I conversed were Lamar Miller, Jarvis Landry, Damien Williams, Harold Hoskins, Branden



Albert, Ja'Wuan James, Terrence Fede, Walt Aikens, Anthony Johnson, Brandon Fields, Calib Sturgis and there may have been a couple more, but none the less it made that knot that I was feeling before leaving home, slowly disappear into a none existence. Seeing them smile and interact with a couple of people here and there, was a great feeling. There were maybe 5 or 6 people hanging around with all of them as they decided if they were going to take the buses into the city



or take the trains. As I stood there chatting and taking photos, Harold Hoskins was asking a couple of people if they knew the exchange rate and if anyone has some money to exchange. I had some and said I would do it for him. He handed me a \$50 and asked what that would get him. I told him that it would only get him 30 pounds. We went back and forth with different quantities until he finally decided to just exchange the \$50. Amazing, I was standing there chatting away with a few players as they were just regular buddies and it is the team I love dearly, these are the Miami Dolphins. That knot was completely gone by

that point, and I felt great. As we chatted I pulled out my Black and Mild to smoke and became their best friend. "You got Black and Mild's man?" one of them asked. "Ummm, Yeah! They do not sell them here, so I brought my own." I was the hero for some reason, so I gave them one. As they decided where they were going they asked me if I knew London. I have been there a few times as I used to work for the British government, but I was not the almighty knowledgeable one about the area. I told them I could help out, if they did not mind me tagging along. The response was, "Come on bro, it's all good! We don't mind!"





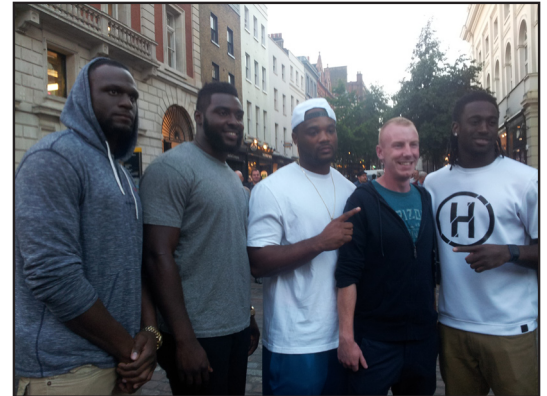
As we ventured into the city on the train I looked to the right and saw nothing but regular people staring at the players. I looked to the left and there were the coaches; the only one I recognized was Darren Rizzi (Special Teams Coach). He was with a couple of other coaches but I did not know who they were. I smiled and waved as he was staring at his players. He smiled back and that was the end of that! We had to change trains to get to our destination and as we are walking through this rush hour filled train station, people were entranced at these huge men walking through their station without a care and talking American. We then got on our new train and reached our stop only to hear that the elevator was running slowly and that we had the option to take the stairs; however, there were 193 stairs to reach the top. I believe it was Damien Williams said "OH HELL NO!" but was met with other comments from

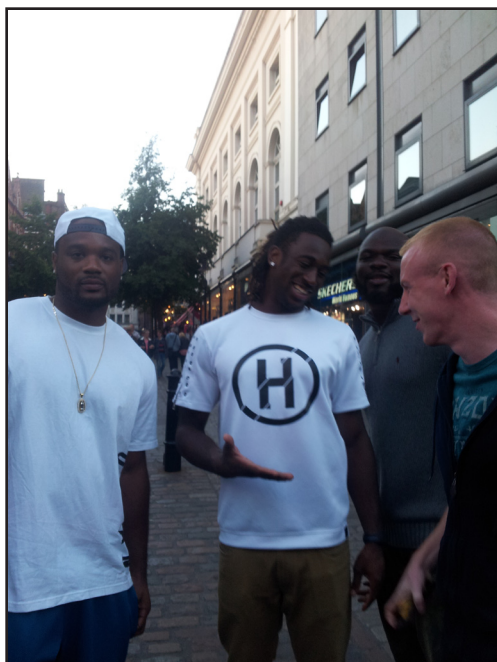
his teammates saying some colorful things and there we were headed up these stairs. WOW, that was tough, even for the players. I think Anthony Johnson and Harold Hoskins stopped half way to catch their breath. I passed them laughing as they told me to shut up!!



Finally we arrived to the street. As we walked towards the bottom of the street we were stopped by a street performer who was going to do some magic. He was just about to start and he says out loud "OY, you guys are huge, you could be them American football players." I smiled and looked at him; he looked at me and said "It is them isn't it?" I did not take it upon myself to answer them but Walt Aikens then said, "Yes!" That sparked a lot of interest and changed the whole evening. This performer asked if they would mind sticking around and they all looked at me like I was the agent in charge. "Don't look at me! I am not in charge here; I am just enjoying my time with my team! I just want to have a drink at this point!" They all laughed and said they wanted to do the same, but wanted to hang and watch this guy. What do I care, I am hanging with the Miami Dolphins! Right? Would you care?

The performance was awesome and this guy had the crowd laughing and Terrence Fede worried as the performer had taken a \$50 off of him earlier. The finale was here and this guy made the \$50 appear in a lemon that was sealed, which was definitely his as he had to sign it before he handed it over. At this point it was time for a drink and I wanted to buy my boys a drink for letting me hang with them, but it was tough getting away as they were getting attacked from all kinds of people from every side. I was even asked if I was part of the team and one of the guys said laughingly, "Yeah, he is our new little running back, just slides between everyone legs." We all started laughing and I answered, "No I am not a player, just a fan." One of them said, "He is not just a fan, he is our super fan, and our guide through this city and flew out here from NY and is a part of Dolfans NYC." I felt special at that point and was never prouder to be a Dolphins fan. We reached a pub and all the boys headed to the bathroom as I ordered drinks for all of them. The drinks arrived, we held them up and I made a toast, "It has been a great day and I never thought I would be hanging with you





guys! Thank you for allowing me to hang with you and all I ask is that you beat the crap out of the Raiders on Sunday! FINS UP!" They all shouted loudly and proudly, "FINS UP!" and we drank. Throughout the evening we struck up conversations and I got to know these guys and acquired a greater understanding that these guys are not only the Miami Dolphins, but they are a great group of guys. Down to earth, great bunch of guys, who just wanted to have some fun. We jumped from pub to pub, ate food, shopped for England products, listen to music, visited the Malaysian Food Festival in Trafalgar Square and finally settled for a little bit in a small pub. I was having so much fun, it did not occur to me to record this and take more photos, but we were sitting down and Fede started breaking out into Rap about his journey and each one took over after the other and it was epic. There was no way that could be re-enacted or replicated. AMAZING! We had two rounds there and we started to head back to the train as it was getting late and there was an 11:30pm curfew for all the players as they had a 9:30 meeting and practice at noon.

As I guided them to where they needed to get back, they said that they were happy I was there because they would have never found their way back. We returned to the square where the magician was and they saw some other people they knew there and introduced me to more players and more HR people. They decided that they were going to take the bus back so that they could stay out and drink longer. What did I care! I was on vacation! "Yo, Little man", Hoskins said to me, "You probably won't be able to ride the bus with us." At this point, I could care not less; as long as I got home before the trains stopped running I did not care. So we hung out for another hour, as they introduced me and I did the same and then came the time when they had to leave. My Friday had come to an end and if the rest of my weekend was going to be anything like this Friday was, then this was going to be the best weekend in the history of weekends.



Saturday morning arrived and I had told my boys that I would swing by in the morning to have some stuff signed, as I was not prepared for it on Friday. I checked out of my hotel, as I was not going to stay there two nights and had other plans, and headed over to the players hotel. I stood up front and waited for them to head to the buses and possibly get my autographs I wanted. I saw Branden Albert come out and some coaches, he said, "What's up man?" and right when I was about to ask him for an autograph a PR guy came over and said, "Coach does not want the players distracted before they head to practice, so no autographs." Damn! But I understood, so I stood aside and just watched. As they all started to



pour out of the hotel, I got to meet them all and talk to them but no autographs and I was too dumbfounded to pull out my phone and take more pics. The list went as follows: Joe Philbin, Kevin Coyle, Bill Lazor, Matt Moore, Ryan Tannehill, Brian Hartline, Mike Wallace, Charles Clay, Samson Satele,





Jason Fox, Olivier Vernon, Cameron Wake, Jared Odrick, Jason Trusnik, Philip Wheeler, Will Davis, Cortland Finnegan, Brent Grimes and of course the guys that I hung out with the night before who fist pumped me on the way out to the practice. They did not get on the buses as they were walking right across the street. As Cameron Wake came out he was being comical and said "MAN, They lied to us, they said, go downstairs and get on the buses and now we got to walk, LIARS!" and walked away laughing. I had to say



something and he just looked at me and said they were liars and laughed. Brilliant! I had interaction with my all time favorite player!! Day complete!! Not really but it was a great start!

Around 12:30pm my friends and family joined me and we were hungry, but I did not want to miss the players coming out of the practice as I wanted to hit them up for some autographs. I was told it would be ok then. We waited until about 2pm and they started to come out. This time I was ready: I had a sharpie; I had gear; and I had people taking photos. I started to get some autographs and the same guy came out and stopped me again...DAMN! "You told me I could get autographs after practice."

I said. He answered with an apology and said that coach did not want them being bothered on the way in from practice, but I could wait for them as they had the rest of the afternoon off. We were starving at this point and decide to take some pictures. We went into an undisclosed location and sat to eat, where we have 4 players sitting right next to us. I did not want to be that crazed fan and just let them be, but once we headed out I said "FINS UP!" and good luck for tomorrow. They all smiled and said thanks and shook our hands.



The rest of the afternoon was sightseeing and visiting the NFL center at Regent Street and it was packed, mostly with Raiders fans as this was their home game, but there was the occasional pack of Fins fans and different apparel appearances. It was a very nice day and we ended up after all the hoop-la was over, in a small pub, off the beaten path drinking all night.

It was then Sunday morning and we were ready to engage in a long day of walking and festivities. We got ready and headed to Wembley Park. As we were on the train there were loads of different jerseys... Patriots, Chiefs, Chargers, Buccs, Packers, Cowboys and there was even a Jets Fan. I said WTF is a Jets fan doing going to a Dolphins game. I know in NY, you would get a beat down for even considering it, but to each their own. As we moved along we got to a stop and some more fans came on that were Dolphins and the man yelled out, with an American Accent, "WTF! A Jets fan going to the game! You



are nuts!" Could not resist and laughed out loud. As it turns out, that man, with his wife, was Jason Trusnik's father. We ended up chatting for a bit as he told me that he went to dinner with a bunch of the players on Friday and I told him that I was out drinking with a bunch of the rookies. Amazing!! What an experience and small world to have all these things happen to me over the weekend of a lifetime. We spent the rest of the day walking around and enjoying the festivities. Great food, great beer, great people and then other great things happened. We all came upon the broadcast booth where Terrell Davis



and Jeff Darlington are about to broadcast live from London. I moved my way to the front and waited until they are done. As they finished up and they were clear, I shouted out to Jeff and he looked back at me. "Hey Jeff, my name is Pascal, and I am with the Dolfans NYC!" His eyes opened up widely and he said, "WOW! You



guys have come all the way out here to watch this game as well?" I told him there were a few of us out there but the whole group was not there, I was just representing our group and wanted to say hello. We ended up chatting for a while and took some pics. Legendary! He was such a nice guy who was overall very down to earth. It is really nice to see people that have that fame but still take the time to say hello and chat. As I left him a guy stopped me (I believe he was German) and asked, "Are you part of Dolfans NYC?" Of course I said yes and he got all excited as he is coming to the MetLife Take Over in December and wanted to meet me. We chatted for a while and then he wanted to take a picture with me as if I was the star of the show. I just smiled

and said sure, why not! I told him I was not in charge and that I was just friends with Michelle and Igor, who are the founders and gods of Dolfans NYC, but he did not care and just wanted a picture. It was getting close to game time and I was getting nervous again; however, I looked back at the last two days of my life and the time I got to spend with the organization & various people and my mind was strangely set at ease again. I thought about the mood of the players, the confidence they exerted, the feeling of ease they made everyone feel and just smiled as I entered the beautiful Wembley Stadium. I wish our Stadium was set up like this, there was not one bad seat in the house and it was gorgeous! Everything was perfect, I do not need to tell you guys how the game went as I am sure you guys caught it all, but I would like to say this. I have been a fan of the Dolphins for 40 years, I have seen some fantastic things out of this organization. From working in the environment, helping people in need, going out of their way to making people and fans happy, I have seen us play outstanding and just flat out lousy, but there is one thing that has never changed. We are all Fins Fans, and no matter how hard it is to be a fan at times, I want you all to remember that they are people too and they work hard like we do. We should put ourselves in their shoes at times and instead of criticizing, abusing, throwing our arms in the air in disgust, embrace the fact that we have a great organization and that we still have one record that no one has yet to take from us!! UNDEAFETED BABY! FINS UP!!

