

Dillon tops 1,000 yards // Accomplishes feat in team-record 10 games

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FOXBORO - Coming into the game, Corey Dillon needed just two yards to break the 1,000-yard mark for the seventh time in his career.

He gained 5 yards on the first play from scrimmage, reaching the plateau in just 10 games - faster than he ever had before.

In 2000 and 2002, Dillon reached the 1,000-yard mark in 12 games.

Dillon became the fastest Patriots running back to reach the 1,000-yard mark, surpassing Curtis Martin (1997) and Jim Nance (1966), both of whom did it in 11 games.

On a sloppy night, Dillon rushed for 123 yards and a touchdown on 30 carries in New England's 24-3 victory. He has a career-high six 100-yard games this season, four here at Gillette, including a 154-yard performance against Buffalo Nov. 17.

"He ran the ball well," Patriots coach Bill Belichick said. "The offensive line blocked well. He ran the ball there in the second half when we were ahead. He was able to grind out some yardage and pick up some first downs. It's great to see that."

Quarterback Tom Brady agreed with Belichick's thoughts on Dillon.

"He ran great," Brady said. "It seems the more you give it to him, the better he seems to do. Corey's so strong, he's our edge. He always seems to gain extra yards with his straight arm."

There's no bigger edge, though, than facing a team twice a year for the past seven years.

"I've been playing (the Ravens) for seven years, twice a year," Dillon said. "I know what they got. That's a hell of a team, a hell of a defense. Them boys come, they play hard, and that's something I knew. I knew I had to go out there and play hard, too."

Dillon is one step closer to reaching another milestone: the Patriots' season mark for rushing yards.

Dillon has 1,121 yards and 7 TDs on 236 carries. Martin holds the all-time rushing record of 1,487 yards, set in 1995.

If Dillon continues on this pace, he's projected to finish the season with 1,663 yards. Not bad for a running back whose career-best was 1,435.

That doesn't stop Dillon from focusing on what's most important - the team.

"The big thing is, everyone is just out there doing their job," Dillon said. "When we take care of our jobs, everything falls into place."

Brady takes over third

Brady surpassed Vito "Babe" Parilli for third on the Patriots all-time in completions list.

Brady completed five passes for 85 yards in the first quarter. His third completion, a 22-yard connection with Daniel Graham, gave him 1,141 completions to surpass Parilli's 1,140.

Brady trails Drew Bledsoe (2,544) and Steve Grogan (1,879) on the all-time list.

Low point for Miller

Punter Josh Miller had a night to forget.

The first-year Patriot generated 32.1 yards per punt, the third-worst of his career. With Pittsburgh, he averaged 31.3 against the Ravens on Nov. 9, 1997, and a career-low 25.1 against Buffalo on Sept. 16,

1996.

Strong D for Pats

Patriots cornerbacks Asante Samuel, Ty Law, Tyrone Poole, and linebacker Roman Phifer were inactive for the game. The defense did survive, though.

Randall Gay intercepted Ravens' quarterback Kyle Boller, and Roosevelt Colvin, Ted Johnson, Tedy Bruschi and Richard Seymour each sacked Boller for a combined loss of 46 yards.

Lewis leads defense

The phrase "Ray Lewis on the tackle," was heard repeatedly last night.

He made three solo tackles and assisted on nine others.

His teammate Ed Reed, who also played college ball at Miami, made three solo tackles and assisted on one other.

Meanwhile, Terrell Suggs, the second year player from Arizona State, made four solo tackles to lead the Ravens' defense. His team-leading 8-1/2 sacks shows he has matured with Lewis as his mentor.

Extra Points

Jarvis Green's fumble recovery in the end zone was his first career touchdown. ... Boller is tied for sixth in the NFL with six fumbles lost. ... This was the 16th consecutive regular-season game in which the Patriots scored first. That breaks the '72 Dolphins record of 15 straight games. ... Adam Vinatieri leads the team with 112 points. Dillon is second with 44, and David Patten and Daniel Graham are tied for third with 30.

NAME: NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

ART: PHOTO

CUTLINE: The Patriots' Jarvis Green, center, is congratulated by teammates Ted Johnson, left, and Tedy Bruschi after recovering a fumble in the end zone for a fourth-quarter touchdown.

PHOTOG: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Caption: FOXBORO - Coming into the game, Corey Dillon needed just two yards to break the 1,000-yard mark for the seventh time in his career.

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