

**NFL PLAYOFFS****Bills top Colts for 1st playoff win in 25 years**

BY JOHN WAWROW

Associated Press

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Quarterback Josh Allen and safety Micah Hyde teamed up to make the Buffalo Bills' losing past history.

Now do you Bill-ieve?

In a season in which the Bills busted numerous slumps, Allen became Buffalo's first starter in a quarter-century to win a playoff game. And Hyde ensured the Bills wouldn't endure another second-half collapse as happened last year in a wild-card loss to Houston, or last-second touchdown.

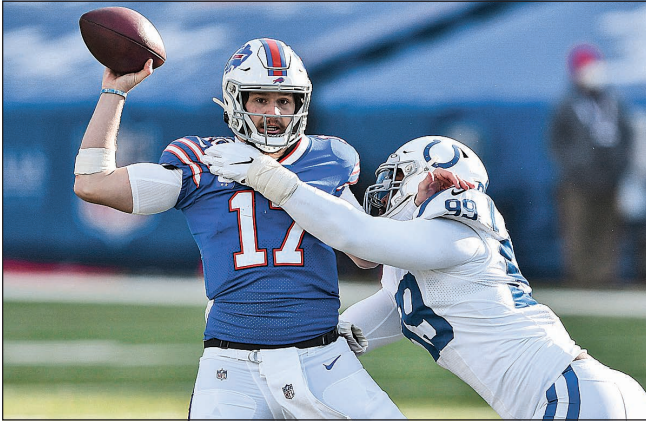
With Buffalo the AFC East champions for the first time since 1995 and hosting their first playoff game since '96, Allen threw two touchdown passes and scored another rushing in leading the Bills to a 27-24 win over the Indianapolis Colts in a wild-card game Saturday.

Hyde batted down Philip Rivers' desperation pass as time ran out in helping Buffalo snap an 0-6 postseason skid by winning its first playoff game since a 37-22 win over Miami on Dec. 30, 1995.

The past was very much present in Allen's mind when reflecting on how Buffalo squandered a 16-0 third-quarter lead in a 22-19 overtime loss to Houston in his first career playoff appearance.

"Obviously we started off a little slow and we were able to get into a rhythm late. Made enough plays to win," Allen said. "It's new territory for myself, but it just gives us a chance to play next week."

The end of the game was so stunning, in which the Bills nearly squandered a 24-10 fourth-quarter lead, safety Jordan Poyer was still having difficulty trying to put the result



Adrian Kraus/AP

**Buffalo Bills quarterback Josh Allen (17) throws a pass as he is hit by Indianapolis Colts' DeForest Buckner (99) in Saturday's wild-card game in Orchard Park, New York.**

in perspective.

"I haven't had time to celebrate and take it in, but this is awesome for the Bills organization, the city, to be able to play a home game and get a victory," said Poyer, in his fourth season in Buffalo.

Hyde's pass defense eased memories of the Bills giving up DeAndre Hopkins' leaping 43-yard touchdown catch in the final seconds of a 32-30 loss at Arizona on Nov. 15. Buffalo has won seven straight since for its longest winning streak since 1990.

And the win came with a limited number of 6,700 fans in attendance for the first time this season.

Allen finished 26 of 35 for 324 yards with a 5-yard touchdown to Dawson Knox and a 35-yarder to Stefan Diggs, which led to the fans chanting "MVP! MVP!" to celebrate the first Buffalo player to lead the NFL in catches and yards receiving.

The Colts (11-6) ended a season in which they won 11 games for the first time since 2014, and reached the playoffs for the second time in three

years under Frank Reich.

Rivers finished 27 of 46 for 309 yards and had his career playoff record drop to 5-7 in completing his first — and potentially last — season with the Colts as he ponders retirement.

The game wasn't decided until the final play, when Rivers faced fourth-and-11 from Buffalo's 47. Rivers heaved a deep pass for T.Y. Hilton, who was surrounded by defenders in the right side of the end zone. Hyde broke through, leaping up and batting the ball to the ground.

Rookie kicker Tyler Bass accounted for the decisive points by hitting a 54-yard field goal to put Buffalo up 27-16 with 8:08 remaining.

The Colts responded with a seven-play, 75-play drive capped by a 9-yard touchdown pass to Pascal. After Bass upped Buffalo's lead to 27-16, the Colts scored less than two-minutes later. Rivers hit a wide-open Jack Doyle for a 27-yard touchdown and Doyle caught a 2-point conversion.

The Bills, however, didn't make it easy, with Allen nearly losing a fumble at midfield

when sacked for a 23-yard loss by Denico Autry on first down from the Indianapolis 37. Offensive lineman Daryl Williams, however, recovered, forcing the Bills to punt with 2:30 remaining.

"It doesn't matter how it looks," Allen said. "It's the playoffs. It's win or go home and we got it done."

The turning point came when the Colts, up 10-7, were unable to score on four snaps inside Buffalo's 4. Rivers' pass for Michael Pittman glanced off the diving receiver's fingertips on fourth down.

Buffalo responded with a 10-play, 96-yard drive capped by Allen's 5-yard keeper with 14 seconds left in the half.

A Colts miscue also helped extend the drive. Facing fourth-and-3 from the Colts 26, Allen drew defensive end Kemoko Turay offside with a second left on the play clock. "All around, it felt like we just kept shooting ourselves in the foot," defensive end DeForest Buckner said. "We just let it slip between our fingers."

**Mr. Everything**

With his 5-yard TD run and TD completion to Knox, Allen became the fifth player since at least 1940 to score a touchdown rushing, passing and receiving in his playoff career. Allen scored on a 16-yard catch from John Brown in a 22-19 OT loss at Houston a year ago.

Allen joined Nick Foles, Kordell Stewart, Freeman McNeil and Julian Edelman.

**Up next**

**Colts:** Season is over after losing in the wild-card round for the first time since 2012.

**Bills:** They advance to the divisional round for the first time since the 1995 playoffs.

**Seahawks**

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Two of the others belonged to Donald. The Rams allowed just 278 total yards and 11 first downs.

The victory sent the Rams into next week's divisional playoff round, likely at top-seeded Green Bay unless Chicago upsets New Orleans.

"We're excited about competing to go see who we play next and see if we can keep this thing rolling," McVay said. "But we'll enjoy this."

Williams' third interception against Wilson after picking him off twice in Los Angeles came as he jumped a wide receiver screen intended for Metcalf and returned it untouched for a 13-3 lead midway through the second quarter.

Akers added a 5-yard TD run just before halftime for a 20-10 lead. It proved enough against a Seattle offense disjointed and confused nearly from the start.

Wilson had one of his worst playoff performances. He was 11 of 27 for 174 yards. Wilson connected with Metcalf on a

pair of TDs: 51 yards in the first half off a broken play, and a 12-yard TD with 2:28 left to make the score more respectable.

Seattle never played with the lead and was 2 of 14 on third downs. Its first home playoff game in four years was a dud without its raucous home crowd, and the Seahawks saw their 10-game home playoff win streak snapped.

Their last home playoff loss came in January 2005 to the St. Louis Rams.

"I told these guys I have no place in my brain for this outcome," Seattle coach Pete Carroll said. "We were planning on winning and moving on."

The Rams pulled off the upset without a healthy quarterback for more than three quarters. John Wolford started for the second straight week but injured his neck when he dove headfirst in the first quarter and was hit in the helmet by Jamal Adams' shoulder. Wolford was taken to a hospital as a precaution, but McVay said he was in the locker room celebrating after the victory.

"I think it was really just a stinger. He definitely seemed good," McVay said.

Goff took over less than two weeks after undergoing surgery on his right thumb; he was injured in the Week 16 loss to Seattle. Goff didn't do anything spectacular but also avoided major mistakes.

Goff was 9 of 19 for 155 yards. He capped the victory with a 15-yard touchdown pass to Robert Woods with 4:46 left after Seattle's D.J. Reed fumbled a punt.

Akers, the Rams' rookie ball carrier, was outstanding after not playing two weeks ago. Akers had the best rushing day by a Rams running back since Marshall Faulk went for 159 against Philadelphia in January 2002.

The Rams finished with 164 yards rushing.

"He's made of the right junk. His heart, his passion for the game is special," Rams left tackle Andrew Whitworth said. "Anytime you see in this league that you can run the football in the playoffs, it's about more than just all the fantasy things you see in the regular season. It's going to be

about imposing your will on another team."

**Injuries**

Donald left in the third quarter with a rib injury. After going in and out of the locker room a couple of times he was a spectator most of the second half. WR Cooper Kupp limped off grabbing at his right knee in the closing minutes.

Wolford was 3 of 6 passing for 29 yards and had one run for 2 yards before getting hurt.

Seattle safety Jamal Adams said he played with a torn labrum in his left shoulder suffered last week against San Francisco.

**Up next**

**Rams:** Will play at Green Bay next week if the New Orleans Saints defeat the Chicago Bears on Sunday. Otherwise they will visit Tampa Bay, which defeated Washington 31-23 just before The Bulletin's deadline.

**Seahawks:** Will head into an offseason filled with questions after winning the division but experiencing another early playoff exit.



Courtesy Amanda Conde

**The Fuentes sisters of Warm Springs, recipients of the Every Kid Sports Pass, both enjoy playing basketball.**

**Kid**

Continued from B1

The nonprofit also was selected by T-Mobile to help administer its Little League Call Up Grant, which will provide funds for 20,000 kids to play baseball and softball. Every Kid Sports was also named as a "Champion" by the Aspen Institute and the National Youth Sports Strategy Council in 2019 for removing cost as a barrier to sports participation and for encouraging kids to play multiple sports.

Every Kids Sports' association with the Little League Call Up Grant stems from discussions the nonprofit had with Major League Baseball about supporting Every Kid Sports, according to Hummel.

"Little League was struggling with how to implement (the Call Up Grant) and reach the kids," Hummel says. "So they reached out to us and this is our second year. Last year we helped about 5,400 kids. And T-Mobile gave \$2 million to help 20,000 kids total."

Hummel says that due to the pandemic, "youth sports are being decimated. Thousands of small youth sports organizations have closed their doors. We just see that without some intervention and without somebody coming to help, those organizations will never be able to open their doors again and youth sports will be forever changed."

Hummel hopes that Every Kid Sports can kickstart the registration process, which could help many of those smaller organizations open their doors.

"We've gotten a lot of response from corporate sponsors and other organizations that our model makes a lot of sense," she says. "That's what's driving the push to take it national. And that's always been our mission when we first started the nonprofit."

While many winter youth sports programs have been canceled or postponed due to the pandemic, many baseball and softball leagues have continued, and some programs have found new ways to get kids outside.

"Obviously a lot of those youth sports programs are not happening right now, so we have slowed down in the number of grants we've been giving

"There's so much more need now. And even families that used to be able to cover their kids playing sports are in trouble now. It's been wide-ranging, the amount of impact COVID has had on families. If you can't get food on the table, you're not going to be registering your child to play sports."

— Natalie Hummel, executive director of Every Kid Sports

out," Hummel says. "But there's a lot of research that there wasn't any outbreaks associated with baseball and softball, that's why we're seeing a lot of people registering with that (Call Up Grant) program."

"And there are a lot of innovative programs where families are getting outside, mountain biking and things like that."

Every Kid Sports offers grants for youth all the way up to age 18. Most sports programs require fees, from recreation programs for elementary school children, to middle school and high school sports. The nonprofit helps with fees for these sports, but not for club sports or travel teams which are often year-round. Hummel says part of the goal is to encourage athletes to play multiple sports and not specialize at too young of an age.

"We believe kids get as much or more benefit from playing recreational sports, and going from sport to sport, versus the year-round sport," she says. "So much of the current thinking of parents is that they need to get their kids into these competitive programs. But the research is overwhelming that those programs are actually more damaging to kids than beneficial. It's not really until they're 16, 17, 18 that they should be specializing in a sport."

The average grant amount from Every Kid Sports is about \$100 for one kid in one sport, Hummel adds.

"Right now we have plenty of funding," she says. "And there's more families than ever that need help."

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**Skiing**

Continued from B1

First-run leader Loic Meillard could not give Switzerland its first win since 2008 in its classic giant slalom. A big error early in his run left him 1.65 back in third place.

Pinturault's third straight giant slalom victory was a 33rd career win in World Cup races, matching American great Bode Miller in ninth place on the men's all-time list.

"I'm pretty proud of it," said Pinturault, whose ski technician, Guntram Mathis, used to work with Miller. "It brings something really special into the story."

The Frenchman seized the lead in the season-long giant slalom standings from home favorite Marco Odermatt, who placed fourth, 1.67 back.

Pinturault also extended his lead in the World Cup overall points race ahead of Aleksander Aamodt Kilde, the defending champion. Kilde's results — fifth place, after fourth on Friday — were impressive for the speed race spe-

cialist.

Pinturault's wire-to-wire win on Friday had also been by more than a second, though he noted the light was more challenging on Saturday. At Adelboden, the slope darkens quickly after the sunshine slips behind the mountains around 2 p.m. when the leaders start their second run.

Earlier Saturday, American racer Tommy Ford, of Bend, was airlifted by helicopter to hospital after crashing hard near the finish line.

The United States team later said Ford's "head and neck injuries are minor and resolving nicely. He has a knee injury that is undergoing further evaluation."

Racing was paused for 30 minutes in the morning while Ford, one of the top-ranked skiers who wore bib No. 4, was treated. Zubcic and Pinturault were the next starters.

"It's really hard when you're on the start and you know that somebody on the field is injured," Pinturault said. "We are all close, all friends."

The Adelboden giant sla-



Marco Tacca/AP

**Alexis Pinturault speeds down the course during a World Cup giant slalom in Adelboden, Switzerland, on Saturday. Pinturault won the event.**

lom typically draws a noisy crowd of 25,000. There were no paying spectators on Saturday during the coronavirus pandemic though racers were cheered on by people watching from neighboring slopes and chalets.

The three-race meeting concludes on Sunday with a slalom where Pinturault and Zubcic will start their fourth race in five days, after competing in Croatia earlier.

Also Saturday:

said Goggia, whose ninth career World Cup win was her sixth in the marquee discipline of downhill.

Breezy Johnson landed her third straight third-place finish in downhills this season, 1.04 back, after the American clocked the fastest speed of more than 122 kph (76 mph).

"I watched Sofia's run and I think that it was incredible," Johnson said. "She skied with a lot of courage."

Goggia has finished ahead of Johnson in each downhill so far, and the Italian now has two wins and a second place to lead the season-long standings.

Switzerland's Corinne Suter, the only downhill racer to beat Goggia this season, tied for sixth Saturday with two-time world champion Ilka Stuhec.

Goggia rose to third in the overall World Cup standings led by Petra Vlhova, whose 12th place was her best downhill result this season.

Johnson's latest third place extended the United States team's standout record at St. Anton.

The two previous World

**Goggia dominant in downhill victory:** ST. ANTON, Austria — Olympic champion Sofia Goggia's high-risk skiing was rewarded with a dominating win in a World Cup downhill.

Goggia was fast and nearly flawless in the sunshine on the rarely raced Karl Schranz course to be 0.96 seconds faster than Tamara Tippler of Austria.

"I didn't expect I could have won here today with this gap,"

Cup downhills raced at the Austrian resort in the past 20 years were won by Lindsey Vonn in 2007 and Alice Mckennis in 2013.

Mikaela Shiffrin did not race Saturday as she focuses on her specialist events of slalom and giant slalom this season. The American, a three-time overall champion, should return Tuesday in the night slalom at Flachau, Austria.

The U.S. team included Lauren Ross in her first race in almost two years. Ross placed 39th, starting soon after boyfriend Tommy Ford was airlifted to a hospital in Switzerland after crashing in the World Cup men's giant slalom at Adelboden.

Juliana Suter of Switzerland was taken away on a stretcher after crashing through the finish line in 31st place.

Though no paying spectators were allowed at the finish during the coronavirus pandemic, there were cheers for the racers from recreational skiers on adjoining slopes.

A super-G race is scheduled Sunday.