

# The Victory of the Colts

Tony Dungy became the first black coach to win the Super Bowl, beating good friend and protégé Lovie Smith in a game that featured the first two black coaches in the sports spectacular. The final score was Indianapolis Colts, coached by Dungy, 29, the Chicago Bears, led by Smith, 17, in a wet and wild football game in Miami.

Dungy was aware of the historical implications of the participation of the two coaches. "I'm proud to be the first African-American coach to win this," Dungy said during the trophy ceremony. "But again, more than anything, Lovie Smith and I are not only African-American but also Christian coaches, showing you can do it the Lord's way. We're more proud of that."

Indeed, Dungy and Smith do not fit the profile of coaches who often are verbally abusive, in-your-face confrontational with players and who use profanity regularly. They approach their players, even when mistakes are made, with reasoned calmness and constructive criticism, teaching all the while. Those associated with the Colts organization, and others who have known Dungy for years, say they have never heard him use curse words. So Dungy has proved that good guys can still finish first, even in a sport as tough and brutal as professional football.

Dungy also won because he had the better quarterback. Peyton Manning, an All-American quarterback from the University of Tennessee playing in his ninth season in the National Football League, showed that he can win the Big One, and dramatically stamped his Hall of Fame credentials. He was named the Super Bowl's Most Valuable Player after throwing for 247 yards, including a 53-yard touchdown pass, and directing the Colts' attack.

Dungy, Manning and the Colts captured the world championship against tremendous odds: Stopping Kansas City's Larry Johnson in his tracks, stuffing Baltimore's Jamal Lewis in the angriest road environment imaginable, coming back from an 18-point deficit against New England to win the American Football Conference title, and proving victorious in a game in which it rained in sheets.

And they did it, as Dungy said, "the Lord's way."

Your victories in life – no matter what challenges you may face – can be won that way, too. No, you may not win a Super Bowl ring or the adoring acclaim of the public for what you do. But a life lived under the leadership of God's Spirit is one of great personal rewards, including the peace, joy and contentment from being in His will.

--Beecher Hunter