

NFL

Lindell marks 100th game in win over Packers

by MATT KRUEGER
Reporter

Buffalo Bills kicker Rian Lindell passed the century mark in his football career Sunday and so few people knew about it, even he didn't realize it until the game was over.

Lindell, as he has been so often for the Bills over the past two seasons, was perfect in Buffalo's 24-10 win over Green Bay. It was his 100th game in the NFL.

But even the sure-footed Lindell didn't know he had hit that milestone until told about it in the locker room after the game.

"I didn't even know that," Lindell said in the locker room as the Bills soaked in a much-needed win. "Yeah, that's pretty cool. I guess I knew it was going to come up this year at the beginning. Certainly if you would have told me that five or six years ago, I might not have believed it. That's pretty cool, not many people get to do that."

And Lindell isn't just hanging around. He's been one of the biggest contributors on the struggling Bills team and has quietly become one of the best kickers in the league.

Since the beginning of the 2005 season, Lindell has been the most accurate field goal kicker from beyond 40 yards. He's nailed 16 of 20 attempts, including a 5 for 5 mark from beyond 50 yards.

Sunday, Lindell drilled a 28-yarder straight down the middle through the

uprights and added three PATs. For the season, Lindell is 11 of 12 in field goals, with a long of 53 yards and 13 for 13 on extra points.

Accuracy wasn't always the case with Lindell, who joined the Bills in 2003 after playing three seasons with the Seattle Seahawks. In the 2003 season, Lindell was 3 for 9 from beyond 40 yards with a long of 44. The following season, he didn't even attempt a kick longer than 50 yards and was 1 for 3 from beyond 40 yards.

"Really, Rian has had a great four years here," said punter Brian Moorman, who holds for Lindell on field goals and extra points. "If you ask him, his first year here wasn't what he would have liked, but a lot of people didn't realize he was kicking the whole season with a hurt shoulder. He had a torn labrum. He didn't get a lot of credit because of that. So I don't think there was much turning around for him to do, it was just getting healthy. He's a great kicker and he's proven that over the past three seasons."

If you ask Lindell, the reason for the turnaround is that he's more comfortable with the surroundings here in Buffalo.

"I think when I first came in, I tried not to miss," Lindell said. "And then, of course, you start missing and you start trying to aim it and miss that. Then you get yourself into a hole and you get to a point where you really can't afford to miss. I kind of pushed reset a little and now I'm kicking better."

For his career, Lindell has made 139 of



Buffalo defensive end Aaron Schobel brings down Green Bay quarterback Brett Favre on a second quarter sack during the

Bills' 24-10 win over the Packers Sunday at Ralph Wilson Stadium.

Photo by Patrick McPartland

177 field goal attempts and his longest was a 54-yarder. He's also connected on all 204 extra point attempts. He has 621 career points.

He is the 18th active kicker in the NFL to play at least 100 games.

Lindell will play his 101st game Sunday when the Bills (3-5) travel to Indianapolis to take on Peyton Manning and the league-leading Colts (8-0).

e-mail: mkrueger@beenews.com

Predictions: Clean sweep for Colts over Bills

The Buffalo Bills picked up a much-needed win over the Green Bay Packers Sunday, but looked bad on both sides of the ball doing it. If not for the Packers' turnovers, the Bills might be nursing another loss.

Inconsistency on defense and a stuttering offense will have to make drastic improvements to beat the undefeated Indianapolis Colts this week. Peyton Manning and the AFC-leading Colts are flying high after Sunday's 27-20 win over the New England Patriots.

All seven Bee staffers are picking the Colts in a runaway win.

• Given the Bills performance on Sunday and the Colts victory on the road against the Patriots I would say this game is going to make the Bills blowout loss to the Bears look like a day in the park. Unless something unworldly happens to Peyton Manning in the next seven days the Bills are doomed. — Indianapolis 49, Buffalo 7. Ken Bartolotta, *Lifestyles Reporter* (5-2)

• There's no way the Bills will pull off what would be their biggest upset



in team history against the Colts this week. Indianapolis has way too many weapons, and Buffalo has a patchwork offensive line, an inexperienced quarterback, and a starting running back who may or may not be too injured to play. And if that's not enough, Peyton Manning is absolutely going to rip the Bills' defense to shreds. — Indianapolis 45, Buffalo 6. Jason Nadolinski, *Sports Reporter* (4-3)

• The Bills were gift-wrapped a win by the Packers, but I don't see Indianapolis making any mistakes

against the Bills. All of Buffalo's confidence received from their recent win will be shattered by the Colts. — Indianapolis 40, Buffalo 10. Patrick Nagy, *Sports Reporter* (4-3)

• The Bills won a pretty boring game this past weekend against the Green Bay Packers. Unfortunately, I don't think a winning streak is in the cards for Buffalo. J.P. Losman's skills are not up to par like veteran quarterback Peyton Manning. The Colts are going to stomp on the Bills. — Indi-

anapolis 35, Buffalo 10. Jill Schmelzer, *Lifestyles Coordinator* (3-4)

• The Bills may catch one break this weekend as the Colts are coming off an emotional win against the Patriots in Foxboro. It may allow the Bills to open the door to a respectable game. The game against the Packers is the Bills blueprint for success against Indianapolis — solid running game, create turnovers, good special teams play. However, if the defense gives up almost 450 yards

and J.P. Losman throws for barely 100 yards in this game, the result will be different. — Indianapolis 31, Buffalo 20. Chris Gordon, *Orchard Park Editor* (3-4)

• Indianapolis is the elite team in the AFC and the Bills are still trying to find their identity. Peyton Manning will have a huge day against the Bills' secondary in a blowout Colts' win. — Indianapolis 42, Buffalo 6. Matt Krueger, *Sports Reporter* (2-5)

• The good thing about having a backup running back like Anthony Thomas is that, in a pinch, you can still go to the ground and squeak out a victory. That is a great thing to have when your starting quarterback has 102 yards passing throughout the entire game. Look for Peyton Manning and Marvin Harrison to hit their famous play-action fake early and strike quickly, as the Colts rout the Bills. — Indianapolis 36, Buffalo 10. Nick Primerano, *Ken-Ton Editor* (2-5)



FIRST PLACE — The Air Force JV cheerleading team from Williamsville Junior Football Cheerleading took first place at the 2006 UB Spirit Challenge held Oct. 29 at UB's Alumni Arena. Members of the team, pictured from left, are: bottom row - Jillian Owens, Jessica Erenstoft, Chelsea Strong, coach Sara Same, Morgan Gallagher; second row - Julie Carlo, Lexi Homberger, Samantha Hendel, Lauren Zaleski, Sabrina Danilovich; third row - Claire McLain, Sally Salzer, Caitlin Grimm; fourth row - Krystina Frangos, Angela Miranda, Julia Tirone, Kimberly Lewandowski, Lauryn Cavaretta, Jennette Kats, Stefany Stempien, and Elizabeth Chivetta.



SECOND PLACE — The Army freshman from Williamsville Junior Football Cheerleading took second in their division at the 2006 UB Spirit Challenge held Oct. 29 at UB's Alumni Arena. Members of the team, pictured from left, are: bottom row - Michelle Miranda, Emily Hayes, Jenna Beck, Alyssa Milone, Katelin McQuaid,

Julia Wojciehowski, Elena Hayes, Annie Francavilla; second row - Caitlyn Tiedemann, Abby Grapes, Cassidy Werick, Alexis Leyh, Melissa Beck, Samantha Davis, Natasha Prasad; third row - coach Lauren Battista, Missy Therrien, Kimberly Piech and Karolyn Frangos.