

# Patriots greatest team ever?

by Michael Spradlin  
Contributor

In 2001 Trent Dilfer led the Baltimore Ravens to victory over the New York Giants in Super Bowl 35. On Sunday the Giants defeated the New England Patriots in one of the greatest upsets in Super Bowl history. Many people after that came started making the claim that this Patriots team which finished the season 18-1, could not be considered one of the greatest teams ever, because they lost the Super Bowl. However, if you asked any of them if Trent Dilfer was a better quarterback than Dan Marino, or if Antoine Smith was a better running back than Barry Sanders, many would simply look at you and laugh. The answer is obvious Marino and Sanders are two of the greatest players ever to play their respective positions, neither of them ever won a Super Bowl though. You cannot have it both ways either the Super Bowl


defines greatness or it doesn't. This Super Bowl was a great disappointment to the Patriots and their fans; however, there is no reason why this team should still not be considered one of the greatest ever. If you look just at the numbers and their personnel this team not only had a season for the ages, but is also one of the greatest collections of talent ever assembled. Tom Brady the League MVP, set the record for most touchdown passes in a season, and when all is said and done he maybe the greatest quarterback to ever play the game. Randy Moss an All Pro receiver who set the single season record for touchdown catches and like Brady could be the greatest receiver when all is said and done. Then there is Wes Welker one of the best slot receivers in the game and one of the league leaders in receptions. Lawrence Maroney and Ben Watson who are considered role players for the Patriots are talented enough to be Pro Bowlers on most other teams. Along the offensive line you

also find several Pro Bowl caliber players. This collection of offensive talent set the single season record for points scored. Then on defensive you have Richard Seymour a consistent Pro Bowl caliber performer. At linebacker you have Junior Seau a former All Pro and maybe the greatest outside linebacker to ever play the game. Then there is Adalius Thomas, Mike Vrabel and Teddy Bruschi all Pro Bowl caliber linebackers. In the secondary you had Rodney Harrison and Asante Samuel two more former Pro Bowlers. All of these players were not elected to the Pro Bowl this year, but the point of all of this is to show that the New England Patriots assembled one of the most talented teams definitely in recent memory and maybe ever. There is an old saying, "the best team does not always win." Even though the Patriots did lose the Super Bowl, in my opinion they should still be considered one of the greatest teams ever. After the game there was some conversations about whether the Patriots would fall into the same trap that recent Super Bowl losers have, and not make the playoffs. Obviously like most people I do not think this will happen, in fact it is my personal opinion that the Patriots who have the seventh pick in the draft and plenty of money to spend will add to this already talented roster. Then with one of the easiest schedules in recent memories they will be the second team in history to have an undefeated season. This team over two years will have a 37-1 record, and there is no question that they should be considered one of the greatest teams ever.

**Lost.**  
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
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