

# Randolph Oilers owner knew Dolphins assistant coach had it in him

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Miami Dolphins photo

*Miami Dolphins offensive line coach Jim Turner, of Braintree, once played for Peter O'Kane's Randolph Oilers of the Eastern Football League.*

Peter O'Kane knew Jim Turner had it in him more than two decades ago. "Really, he was always coaching," the longtime owner and general manager of the Eastern Football League's Randolph Oilers said. "His knowledge and understanding of the game at that age was remarkable."

Turner wasn't long removed from Boston College (Class of 1988), where he had been a three-year letterman following a career as a two-way standout at Braintree High School, when he suited up for the Oilers, who were coached back then by his father, Bob.

"You could see it in Jim even back then," said O'Kane. "The way he'd break down a play, he'd tell all 11 players what they were supposed to do, what each player's role was. I'd never seen that at this level."

Turner has taken the ability O'Kane witnessed in him when he was playing fullback for the Oilers to another level as a coach.

A long and winding football road has taken Turner from the EFL to the NFL.

"Coaching in the NFL rounds me off," said Turner, the first-year offensive line coach of the 5-6 Dolphins, the Patriots' opponent at Sun Life Stadium in Miami on Sunday. "I've coached at every level from non-scholarship football to scholarship football, (Div.) 1-AA to 1-A. I don't think there's an awful lot in football that I could see that I haven't seen or experienced yet."

Through it all, Turner has never forgotten his roots.

“I love Braintree. It’s my home. It’ll always be my home,” Turner said during a telephone interview from the Dolphins’ headquarters in Davie, Fla. “Like this weekend, I’ve got about six or seven people from Braintree coming down.

“My best memories growing up were in the town of Braintree. My dad was a pressman at the Boston Globe and we moved around quite a bit, but I went to Braintree High School and loved playing for the Wamps. Some of the best memories of my life were there.”

Fond memories were also forged during his time with the Oilers.

“That league, to me, was just incredible,” said Turner. “A lot of guys that play in that league are about a sliver away from playing in the NFL. There are some great players in those leagues, and I know my father loved coaching for Peter O’Kane, who’s a standup guy and a gentleman I never heard a bad word about. My father and my brothers (including Bill, who appeared in two games with the Patriots during the NFLPA strike of 1987) were in that league for years. I enjoyed my time with those guys in Randolph.



“I tried to play in the NFL, but it didn’t work out. Right out of college, I went to minicamp with the New York Giants and they obviously knew what they were doing. They cut me. Then I tried to play for the Patriots. I got a phone call to go down to there – somebody got hurt – and I went down, but I’d rolled my ankle in practice with the Oilers, it was black and blue, and I failed their physical. It would have been a stretch for me to play there, anyway.”

Turned away by the Patriots, Turner became a patriot.

Enlisting in the Marine Corps after serving as an assistant coach at Braintree High in 1988 and as the player-offensive coordinator of the Kent Rams in England in 1989, life lessons were learned during deployments in the Middle East and Japan that the former infantry officer has carried over into coaching.

“I think one of the things about the Marine Corps is they teach you organizational skills,” said Turner. “They teach you how to organize and prioritize when you’re going to attack something, and then they teach you how to present an order.”

His career as a college assistant took him from Northeastern University (1994-1998) to Louisiana Tech (1999) to Harvard (2000-2002) to Temple (2003-2004) to Delaware (2005-2006) and back to his alma mater, BC (2007), before he joined Mike Sherman's staff as the offensive line coach at Texas A&M in 2008.

When Sherman was hired as offensive coordinator on rookie head coach Joe Philbin's Dolphins staff, Turner followed.

"Leading in the NFL is different than leading in college," he's learned. "You motivate differently. In college, you have 25 players sitting in front of you when you're coaching the offensive line. Here in the NFL, you've got seven sitting in front of you."

"In the NFL, you can't hold playing time over somebody's head and you really don't need to because these guys are professionals and they do it right every day. In college, guys are younger and they need to be motivated differently. It's different ways of motivating different people. It's definitely rounded me as a coach, no question."

If Turner has his way, the journey hasn't ended.

"My goal has always been to be a college head coach," said Turner. "That would be my ultimate journey. That would be where I'd like to end up."

The journey has taken him miles from New England, yet he still remembers the way things were.

"My dad used to have Patriots season tickets when I was a kid," said Turner. "I remember he showed them to us one morning on Christmas and it was \$70 for seven tickets, \$10 a ticket. That was like 1974 or '75 at Schaefer Stadium."

"Steve Grogan was playing quarterback, 'Mini' Mack Herron was playing running back, and Tim Fox was playing safety. They had Stanley Morgan, Steve Nelson was playing linebacker inside, John Hannah, Bill Lenkaitis, Sam 'Bam' Cunningham, all those guys back in the day. I have great memories of the Patriots. I loved the Patriots, just like any Bostonian."

He'll have no love for the Patriots on Sunday, however.

"Obviously, my loyalty is to (Dolphins offensive linemen) Jake Long and Richie Incognito and Mike Pouncey and these guys," said Turner. "(Playing the Patriots) doesn't mean any more to me, to be honest with you. To me, it's just another game. But obviously, it's a huge game for us as a team because the Patriots are a great team. It's a division rivalry and you'd love to win this game."

Read more: [Randolph Oilers owner knew Dolphins assistant coach had it in him - Randolph, MA - Randolph Herald](http://www.wickedlocal.com/randolph/news/x1978610544/Randolph-Oilers-owner-knew-Dolphins-assistant-coach-had-it-in-him#ixzz2GMMAWNr4)  
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