

Vanderjagt's remarkable field goal streak finally comes to end

Misses 48-yard attempt in Indy's season opener

By JON KUIPERIJ
The Champion

Week 1 of the NFL season often features a few upsets and surprises, such as the Houston Texans' victory in Miami a year ago.

One of the biggest shocks in the opening week of the current NFL campaign, however, was not provided by a double-digit underdog.

Rather, it was the usually reliable right foot of area native Mike Vanderjagt that made headlines Thursday in Foxboro, Mass.

The 34-year-old place-kicker missed a 48-yard field goal in the dying seconds as his Indianapolis Colts dropped a 27-24 decision to the defending Super Bowl champion New England Patriots.

Although the kick was by no means a chip-shot, it was still a surprise to see the attempt sail right of the uprights.

After all, Vanderjagt had successfully booted his NFL record-setting 42nd consecutive field goal earlier in the contest and is the most accurate kicker in the league's history.

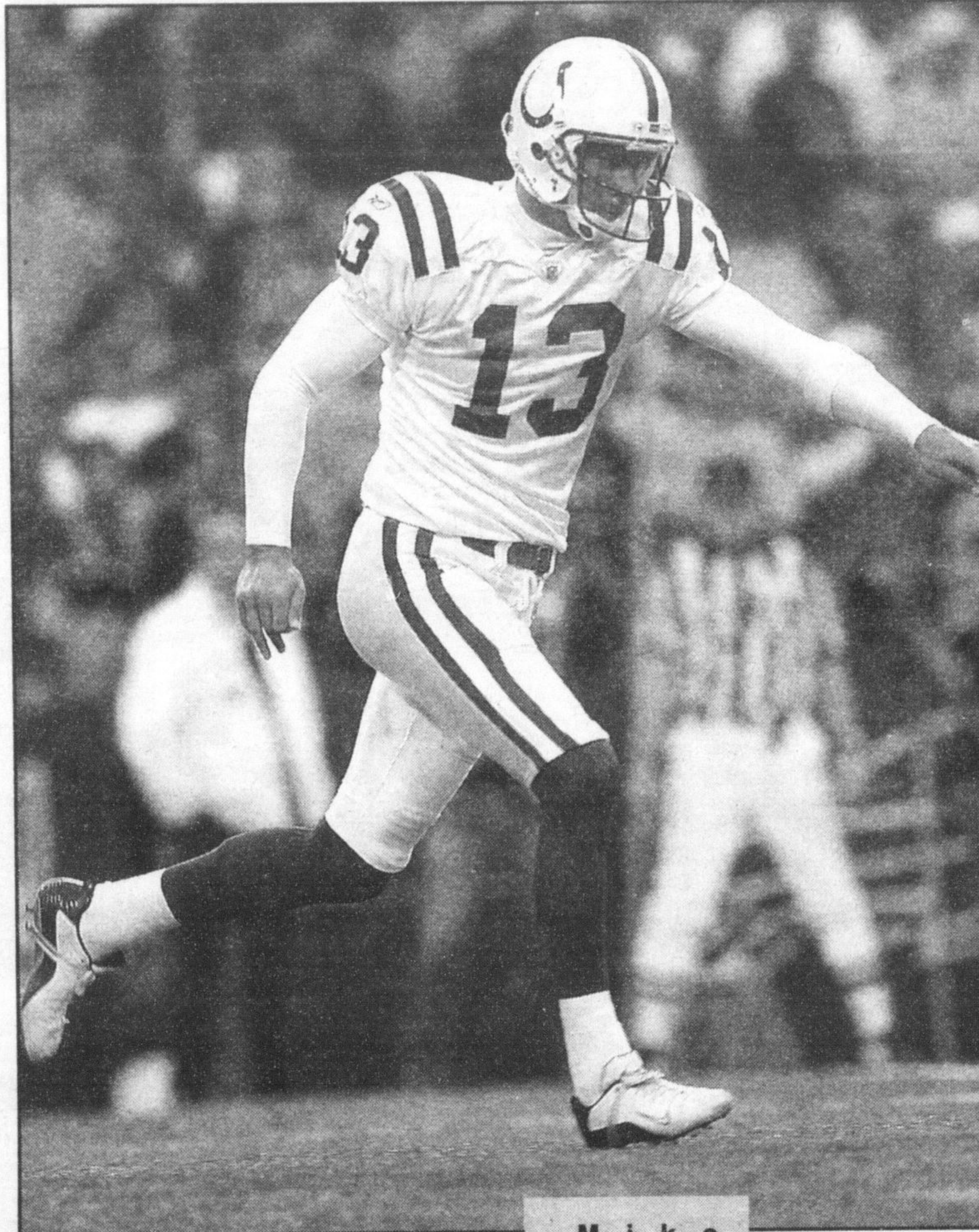
The White Oaks High School graduate, who has resided in nearby Kilbride for the past several years, was typically candid when discussing the kick afterward.

"A guy missed a jump shot, he misses a jump shot," he told reporters. "I missed the kick. There's no rhyme or reason. I didn't choke. I didn't feel the pressure. I just didn't hit it the way I wanted to."

The streak might have lived on, in fact, had Colts quarterback Peyton Manning not been sacked the previous down, adding an extra 12 yards to the field goal attempt.

But the fact that most actually expected Vanderjagt to make such a pressure kick, which came with 19 seconds left on the clock, is a testament to his incredible accomplishments and abilities.

With a career field goal percentage of



Mike Vanderjagt didn't make any excuses for his missed field goal on Thursday.

File photo by RON KUZYK

87.5 per cent (175-for-200), he is still the best in NFL history. His performance last season, when he hit all 37 of his field goal attempts and all 46 extra-point efforts, also ranks atop the league's annals.

Simply put, Vanderjagt was due for a blip on his radar screen. Never lacking in confidence, he'll likely start another streak this weekend when the Colts visit the Tennessee Titans.

Swedish entries deliver Maple Leaf Trot eliminations sweep

Two of Sweden's best trotters made the long trek to Mohawk Racetrack Saturday night and promptly humbled their North American counterparts in capturing both eliminations of the \$861 Maple Leaf Trot.

Tsar D'Inverne — owned by NHL star Peter Forsberg, his father Kent and trainer Robert Bergh — sat sixth until the top of the stretch, then swept the field to take the first elimination in 1:54.2.

H.P. Paque, who cut all of the fractions, settled for second — one length in arrears.

It was the first venture across the Atlantic for Tsar D'Inverne, who arrived in Toronto just 32 hours before the race.

He was driven by Milton's Luc Ouellette to his fifth victory in a dozen starts this year.

"He's a good traveller, though that is his first time on an airplane," said Tsar D'Inverne's caretaker, Katarina Ihrsén. "He's raced in France, Italy and Finland, but he's always travelled by bus or boat."



Hoof Beat

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Tsar D'Inverne, who won the European championship for five-year-olds in Italy in July, was originally scheduled to arrive on Thursday, but was delayed in getting his health certificate processed.

"He seems to be a very intelligent horse," noted Ouellette, who also warmed up Tsar D'Inverne to help get a feel for the horse. "He tries real hard. Going up the backside, they threw in a real fast quarter and I could hardly keep up, but in the stretch when I kicked out the ear plugs he really got into gear. At the head of the stretch I didn't think he could go by them all, but he did."

Rounding out the remaining

qualifiers in the first division were Bon Kens Red Baron, Abbey Road C and JM Vangogh.

Revenue, the other Swedish entrant, made short work of his elimination — going wire-to-wire for catch-driver Jorgen Sjunnesson in 1:55.3.

The eight-year-old veteran, who also romped to victory in the Nat Ray August 7 at New Jersey's Meadowlands, has banked nearly \$2 million in his career for owner Stall Revenue of Malmo, Sweden.

Mr. Muscleman darted through a hole late to finish second, with Mr. Eero coming home hard for third. Also advancing to the final were Elegent Man and Mutineer.

In a new format to make stakes on the Woodbine/Mohawk circuit this year, the elimination winners get to select their post positions for the final. Revenue's name was drawn first and his owner picked post three, while Tsar D'Inverne will go post one.

The Maple Leaf Trot final runs Saturday at Mohawk.

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Visa	5,500.00	165.00
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Total balance & payments	\$236,500.00	\$ 2,434.61

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Line of Credit	Paid off	0.00
Visa	Paid off	0.00
Furniture Store Loan	Paid off	0.00
Total balance & payments	\$236,500.00	\$ 1,355.37

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