Stop with the excuses

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Stop with the excuses

The theme running through the Titans locker room after laying a giant-sized omelet Sunday in Lucas Oil Stadium was all too familiar.

“We just came out flat.’’ No joke.

A lot of athletic teams use that as a flimsy excuse.

Tell me you stunk the joint up like a 24-hour cigar bar. I would buy that.

Tell me the Colts wanted it more than you did. Then explain why your team was playing for a playoff spot while the 0-13 Colts were on the street to nowhere.

Help me, Titans. Because I am about to subscribe to the theory that this franchise that landed in our midst and teased us with a Super Bowl the first year they played on the East Bank is a franchise stuck in an 8-8 type of time machine.

Playoff teams don’t incur 70 yards of penalties in a must-win game. Thirty of those yards were attributed to rookie Tommie Campbell on just two calls. Campbell had two others to give him four of the seven penalties called against the visitors.

Coach Mike Munchak eventually benched Campbell. What took him so long? Was it Campbell's bellyaching with a game official that cost him an unsportsmanlike conduct flag, or was it his improbable journey out of bounds on the Colts sidelines and running behind all the non-playing Colts for some 30 or more yards before deciding he would rejoin his teammates?

Campbell is a great success story. Dropping out of college, working at the Pittsburgh airport cleaning restrooms, going back to college and using his athletic ability to be taken in the seventh round by the Titans. But outlandish moves such as he made Sunday, may land Campbell back at the airport.

He was not the only one making a mess of things.

Some fans want to point fingers at veteran quarterback Matt Hasselbeck, but look at the number of his passes that were spot on and dropped. Look at his interception that Chris Johnson should have turned into an incompletion with a little energy and passion about the game.

But the Titans passion bucket hit empty Sunday. Nice timing.

How can a defense that concentrates on stopping the run allow Donald Brown to get trapped five yards behind the line of scrimmage, only to be seen sprinting 80 yards for a touchdown that put the game out of reach?

They couldn't have tackled Donald Duck on that play.

How to explain the goofy foot fault committed by usually reliable kick returner Marc Mariani? He allowed a kickoff to hit his foot and go out of bounds on the Titans' one-inch line. Was Mariani's foot flat?

So who comes in Saturday but the Jacksonville Jags? They have already fired their coach and sold the team to a new owner. They have nada to play for. It should be one epic NFL game.

This team beat the Titans in Week One. Remember? Sure you do. The Titans came out flat in that one, too. Do you think the Titans will be pumped-up by a capacity crowd for this one? Empty seats have been commonplace at LP Field in recent games.

If they have any self-pride in their profession, they will show up and play solid football the next two weeks. Coming out flat is not a valid excuse.

It’s loser talk.

Contact Sports Columnist Joe Biddle at This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it .

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