



## COLTS-PATRIOTS AFC CHAMPIONSHIP REMATCH KICKS OFF SEASON ON ABC ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

### *New England, Jacksonville & NFL Celebrate Season on “NFL Opening Kickoff” Special Preceding Game*

A rematch will be waged and a tradition begun.

On September 9, for the third year in a row, the NFL will kick off its season on a Thursday night. The game will feature a rematch of the 2003 AFC Championship Game when the **INDIANAPOLIS COLTS** invade Gillette Stadium to face the Super Bowl XXXVIII champion **NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS**. The game will be televised live on ABC at 9:00 PM ET.

The meeting will feature two quarterbacks at the top of their game – the Colts’ **PEYTON MANNING**, who led the AFC in touchdown passes last season (29), and the Patriots’ **TOM BRADY**, who has led his team to two Super Bowl titles in the past three years.

The night also will mark the beginning of an NFL tradition. The league will now hold its season-opening game at the home of the Super Bowl champion while linking it to the site of the next Super Bowl.

The Super Bowl XXXIX theme is “Building Bridges,” which salutes Jacksonville, Florida and the seven bridges which link it across the St. John’s River and plays off the NFL’s ability to unite people and bring communities together.

The theme will be part of “NFL Opening Kickoff,” a one-hour special on ABC from 8:00-9:00 PM ET preceding the game that will link events in New England and Jacksonville.

The show will celebrate the new season in several ways. It will salute the imminent excitement of the NFL season. It will celebrate the Super Bowl champion Patriots. And it will include musical elements from both Gillette Stadium and Jacksonville and feature Jacksonville as the upcoming Super Bowl city.

There will be Kickoff events during the week in the New England area and in Jacksonville.

In Jacksonville, there will be a free concert by a nationally known performer on September 9 at Jacksonville’s Metropolitan Park. The concert, sponsored by Coors and other NFL partners, is being staged by the NFL, the Jacksonville Super Bowl Host Committee and the City of Jacksonville.

Portions of the event will be televised live nationally as part of “NFL Opening Kickoff.”

“We will carry forward the concepts put in place this year for NFL Kickoff and for a Super Bowl theme that links the entire season,” says NFL Commissioner **PAUL TAGLIABUE**. “These traditions provide a rich new opportunity to give each Super Bowl and each season a more distinctive signature while keeping the focus on the game, our top teams, our super players, and the important values that the NFL exemplifies.”

