

ANNIVERSARY ANNALS

A rundown of anniversaries that will be celebrated in the NFL in 2005:

Celebration	Anniversary
85th	The NFL is formed in the Jordan and Hupmobile auto showroom in Canton, Ohio (8/20/20).
80th	All-America halfback Red Grange signs with the Chicago Bears. Team goes on barnstorming tour of eight games in 12 days (1925).
70th	The NFL adopts Bert Bell's proposal to hold an annual draft of college players with teams selecting in inverse order of finish (5/19/35).
70th	New York Giants retire uniform number (No. 1) of wide receiver Ray Flaherty – the first time a professional athlete has had his jersey number retired (1935).
65th	Chicago defeats Washington 73-0 for the NFL championship in the most decisive victory in NFL history. The game popularized the Bears' T-formation with a man-in-motion. Game was the first NFL championship carried on network radio (12/8/40).
55th	Unlimited free substitution is restored, opening the way for the era of two platoons and specialization (1/20/50).
55th	The Los Angeles Rams become the first NFL team to have all of its games televised (1950).
45th	Pete Rozelle is elected NFL Commissioner (1/26/60).
45th	Baltimore Colts quarterback Johnny Unitas sets NFL record with TD pass in 47 consecutive games (1956-60).
45th	American Football League is founded (1960).
45th	Green Bay Packers kicker and running back Paul Hornung scores an NFL-record 176 points (1960).
40th	Commissioner Pete Rozelle negotiates an agreement on behalf of the NFL clubs to purchase Ed Sabol's Blair Motion Pictures, which was renamed NFL Films (April, 1965).
40th	NFL begins tenure as America's No. 1 sport as 41 percent of sports fans surveyed by the Harris Poll name the NFL as their favorite, bypassing baseball (38) for the first time in history (October, 1965).
35th	The AFL and NFL merge into one league (1970).
35th	The Super Bowl trophy is renamed the "Vince Lombardi Trophy" (9/10/70).
15th	The NFL revises its playoff format to include two additional wild card teams (one per conference), raising the total to six (1990).
15th	The Super Bowl MVP Trophy is renamed the "Pete Rozelle Trophy" (10/8/90).
10th	The NFL becomes the first major sports league to establish a site on the Internet (4/10/95).



85TH ANNIVERSARY OF NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

On August 20, 1920, in the Jordan and Hupmobile auto showroom in Canton, Ohio, the National Football League was born.

Four independent professional football teams – the Akron Pros, Canton Bulldogs, Cleveland Indians, and Dayton Triangles – met to discuss the mounting problems facing the pro game, including rising salaries, the signing of college player while still in school, and players moving from team to team. The solution is to form a league. They call it the American Professional Football Conference.

On September 17, another meeting was held with more teams and the league's name was changed again to the American Professional Football Association (it was eventually changed to the **NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE** on June 24, 1922). At the September 17 meeting, teams agreed to pay \$100 each to give the appearance of respectability, but no team ever pays it. Jim Thorpe was elected APFA president.

The first game featuring an APFA team was played on September 26. A crowd of 800 watched the Rock Island Independents defeat the St. Paul Ideals 48-0 at Rock Island's Douglas Park. A week later on October 3, the first game featuring two APFA teams took place between the Dayton Triangles and the Columbus Panhandles at Triangle Park in Dayton. Dayton won 14-0. The same day, Rock Island defeated the Muncie Flyers.

Since these humble beginnings, the NFL has grown into the nation's most popular sport with packed stadiums and a ranking, as the *Indianapolis Star* calls it, as "The Gold Standard of Televised Sports."

Following are all-time NFL totals in some key categories since the league's inauspicious beginning:

Seasons	85	Fewest Franchises In Any One Year	8
Games Played (Regular Season)	11,914	Different Super Bowl Champions	17
Games Played (Postseason)	429	Associated Press NFL MVP Winners	50
Super Bowls	39	Two-time MVP Winners	7
Pro Bowls	68	Three-time MVP Winners	1***
Points	459,793	Hall of Fame Enshrinees	229*
Points, Super Bowls	1,723	NFL Commissioners and Presidents	7#
Stadiums	143	Monday Night Football Games	544
Stadiums, Super Bowls	17	2,000-Yards Rushing Seasons	5
Head Coaches	412*	4,000-Yards Passing Seasons	51
Players	19,500**	100 Receptions Seasons	46
Teams	82	Overtime Games, Regular Season	377
College Players Drafted	21,830*	Overtime Games, Postseason	21
No. 1 Draft Choices	76*	Overtime Games That Ended Tied	16
Paid Attendance	554,759,628	Games Played Outside U.S.	55
Paid Attendance, Super Bowls	3,063,015	Most Franchises In Any One Year	32

*Includes 2005; **Approximation due to unavailability of records of 1920s and early 1930s; ***Brett Favre; #NFL treasurer Austin Gunsel served as president in the office of commissioner following the death of Bert Bell (October 11, 1959) until the election of Pete Rozelle (January 26, 1960);