



2007 KICKOFF WEEKEND NOTES

It's a special time, Kickoff Weekend, which begins on Thursday, September 6 this season in primetime on NBC when the Super Bowl champion Indianapolis Colts host the New Orleans Saints. It's when things start to count.

"You put emphasis on winning the opener," says Saints head coach **SEAN PAYTON**, who was named the Associated Press NFL Coach of the Year last season. "It's a long season and all 16 games are important. But the opener is important because it's the start of the season."

Some clubs have excelled in openers. Some notable active NFL kickoff streaks:

- The Super Bowl champion **INDIANAPOLIS COLTS** have won seven of their past eight openers.
- The **NEW ORLEANS SAINTS**, who travel to face the Colts on Kickoff Weekend, own the NFL's longest current winning streak in road openers with three consecutive victories.
- The defending NFC champion **CHICAGO BEARS** open the season at San Diego and seek to become the first team to record 50 victories on Kickoff Weekend. The Bears return home to Soldier Field in Week 2 to face the Kansas City Chiefs and can become the first club to reach 60 wins in home openers.
- **MIKE SHANAHAN**, head coach of the **DENVER BRONCOS**, is 10-4 (.714) in career openers. The Broncos, who open at the Buffalo Bills, have won 13 of their past 18 openers. Denver is 30-6-1 (.824) in home openers since 1970. The Broncos, who host the Oakland Raiders in Week 2, have won seven home openers in a row, the longest current streak in the NFL.
- The **MIAMI DOLPHINS**, who open the season at Washington, are 23-17-1 (.575) on Kickoff Weekend and have won 12 of their past 15 openers. The Dolphins have an NFL-best 31-9-1 (.775) mark in home openers and host the Dallas Cowboys at Dolphin Stadium in Week 2.
- The **DALLAS COWBOYS** own a 31-15-1 (.674) record in openers, the top mark in the NFC. The Cowboys open the season on Sunday night at home against the New York Giants. In Week 2, Dallas travels to Miami. The Cowboys have the NFL's best record in road openers at 29-18 (.617).
- The **PITTSBURGH STEELERS** have won 36 openers, the most among AFC teams. The Steelers and **ATLANTA FALCONS** have each won their past four openers, the longest current winning streaks in the NFL. Both teams enter Kickoff Weekend led by a rookie head coach – Pittsburgh's **MIKE TOMLIN** and Atlanta's **BOBBY PETRINO**.
- The **GREEN BAY PACKERS** have 47 wins on Kickoff Weekend, the second most in NFL history (Chicago, 49). The Packers host the Philadelphia Eagles to start the season. In Week 2, Green Bay travels to New York to face the Giants. The Packers have 48 wins in road openers, the most in history.
- The **JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS**, who open the season against the Tennessee Titans, are 9-3 (.750) all-time on Kickoff Weekend, the best mark in the NFL. Jacksonville has won three consecutive openers.
- The **OAKLAND RAIDERS**, who open the season at home against the Detroit Lions, are 28-8-1 (.770) in home openers since 1970. The Raiders have won seven of their past nine home openers.
- The **NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS** have won 10 of their past 12 home openers, including a perfect 5-0 record at Gillette Stadium. The Patriots open the season at the New York Jets before coming home in Week 2 to host the San Diego Chargers on Sunday night.
- The **SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS**, who open the season at home in primetime on Monday night against the Arizona Cardinals, have won 11 of their last 14 home openers, outscoring opponents 414-264 in those games.
- The **ARIZONA CARDINALS** open the season at San Francisco, the 18th time in the past 20 years the club has started the year on the road. The **NEW YORK JETS** host New England on Kickoff Weekend, just the 13th time in the team's 48-year history the club has opened at home.
- **HOME SWEET HOME:** The **MINNSOTA VIKINGS** have won 16 of their past 20 openers at home and start the season by hosting the Atlanta Falcons...the **KANSAS CITY CHIEFS**, who host the Vikings in Week 3, have won 13 of their past 18 home openers...the **DETROIT LIONS**, who host Minnesota in Week 2, have won 11 of their past 16 home openers...the **ST. LOUIS RAMS**, who host the Carolina Panthers on Kickoff Weekend, have won 10 of their past 12 openers in St. Louis...and the **SAN DIEGO CHARGERS**, who open the season hosting the Chicago Bears, have won nine of their past 14 at home.