



AFC NEWS 'N' NOTES

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AFC-N-13 11/8/05

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BALTIMORE: The Ravens are allowing the second fewest yards per game in the NFL (262.5) and are poised to be among the league's top three defenses for the fifth time in the past nine seasons.....**WR DERRICK MASON** (49) is on pace to catch 98 passes, which would establish a franchise record for receptions in a season, a mark held by **MICHAEL JACKSON** (76) in 1996.....**RB CHESTER TAYLOR** (5.0) is on track for a club record in average yards per carry in a season, minimum 100 rushes (**JAMAL LEWIS**, 4.74, 2003).

BUFFALO: **RB WILLIS MC GAHEE** (11) has notched four 100-yard rushing games and with three more will surpass **JOE CRIBBS** (13) and **TRAVIS HENRY** (13) for the third most in team history.....The Bills' kickoff-return unit averages 27.4 yards per return. If that figure holds for eight more games, it would best the team record of 24.48 yards established last season.....**KR-CB TERRENCE MC GEE** leads the NFL with a 32.0-yard kick-return average and can become the first player in AFC history to lead the conference in kick-return average in consecutive seasons.

CINCINNATI: **QB CARSON PALMER** is tied for second in the NFL with 2,285 passing yards and is on pace for 4,062. The third-year pro can become the third Bengals QB to earn the NFL's passing crown (**BOOMER ESIASON**, 1988; **KEN ANDERSON**, 1974-75, 1981-82).....**CB DELTHA O'NEAL** leads the NFL with six interceptions and is on pace for 10 on the year. O'Neal can become the first Bengal to top the league in this category for a season. The club's season record of nine has been held by **KEN RILEY** since 1976.

CLEVELAND: The Browns lead the AFC in red-zone defense, allowing only 39.1 percent of their opponents' possessions inside the 20 to result in a TD. Should the Browns top the conference in the category, they will have done so for the second time in four years (2002, 34.5 percent).....**RB REUBEN DROUGHNS** (646) is on pace to reach 1,292 rushing yards and become the team's first 1,000-yard rusher since 1985 (**KEVIN MACK**; 1,104; **EARNEST BYNER**; 1,002). The last Browns player to rush for more than 1,200 yards was **MIKE PRUITT** (1,294) in 1979.

DENVER: **RBs MIKE ANDERSON** (604) and **TATUM BELL** (562) are on target to become the fourth teammate tandem in history with 1,000 rushing yards apiece with 1,208 and 1,125, respectively. The last duo to accomplish the feat was Cleveland's Mack (1,104) and Byner (1,002) in 1985.....**QB JAKE PLUMMER** (91.3) is on pace to join Pro Football Hall of Famer **JOHN ELWAY** as the only Broncos QBs to post a passer rating above 91.0 in two seasons.

HOUSTON: Rookie **KR-WR JEROME MATHIS** stands second in the NFL with a 30.4-yard kick return average and can become only the sixth rookie to lead the league in the category for a season since 1980.....**RB DOMANICK DAVIS** (547) is on pace for 1,094 rushing yards, which would equate to the third 1,000-yard rushing season to begin his career.....**WR JABAR GAFFNEY** (30) is on pace for a career-best 60 receptions, which would top his current career high of 41 (2002 and 2004).

INDIANAPOLIS: **QB PEYTON MANNING** (1,872) is on target for 3,744 passing yards, which would make him the first player in history to throw for more than 3,000 yards in reach of his first eight seasons.....**DE ROBERT MATHIS** (9.0) leads the league in sacks and if he maintains his pace and ranking, he would top the league with 18.0 sacks. Mathis and **DWIGHT FREENEY** also would become the first pair of teammates to each have led the NFL in sacks for consecutive seasons. Freeney led the league with 16.0 sacks in 2004.

JACKSONVILLE: **QB BYRON LEFTWICH** (11) is on pace to record a franchise-best 22 TD passes, which would surpass the 20-TD figure posted of **MARK BRUNELL** in 1998 and 2000.....**WR JIMMY SMITH** is averaging 16.7 yards per catch on 29 receptions and can surpass his own team record of 16.1 yards in 1997.....**DEs REGGIE HAYWARD** (5.5) and **PAUL SPICER** (5.5) are projected to reach 11.0 sacks each, which would mark the second time in team history (1999) that the club has two or more players with 10 or more sacks.

KANSAS CITY: **RBs PRIEST HOLMES** (6) and **LARRY JOHNSON** (6) are on track for 12 rushing TDs apiece. If they reach that amount, they would become the first pair of teammates in club history and only the fourth pair of teammates in NFL history to each post double-digit rushing touchdowns in a season.....**DE JARED ALLEN** (5.0) leads the team in sacks and is on pace for 10.0. Allen can become the club's first player since **DERRICK THOMAS** (1989-90) to be the Chiefs' sack leader in each of his first two NFL seasons.

MIAMI: **RB RONNIE BROWN** (611) is on pace to total 1,222 rushing yards and add his name next to **KARIM ABDUL JABBAR** (1,116 in 1996) as the only other rookie in franchise history to post more than 1,000.....**WR-PR-KR WES WELKER** leads the AFC with an 11.4-yard punt-return average. The last Dolphin to top the AFC in the category was **TONY NATHAN** (10.9) in 1979.....The Dolphins' punt coverage unit is allowing only 4.4 yards per return, which would be the lowest return figure permitted by the team since 1972 (3.9) when the Dolphins were a perfect 17-0 and won Super Bowl VII.

NEW ENGLAND: **WRs DEION BRANCH** (45) and **DAVID GIVENS** (42) are on pace to post 90 and 84 receptions, respectively, and become the first set of Patriots teammates to each record more than 80 catches in the same season.....If **QB TOM BRADY** (2,285) can maintain his present passing-yard pace, he would end the season with 4,570 yards, which would surpass the club season record of 4,555 reached by **DREW BLEDSOE** in 1994.

NEW YORK: **RB CURTIS MARTIN** (533) is on track for 1,066 rushing yards, which would make him the first NFL player to reach 1,000 rush yards in each of his first 11 seasons. In addition, with 1,000 yards, Martin would join **EMMITT SMITH** as the only players in NFL history to post 1,000 in 11 seasons.....**LB-DE JOHN ABRAHAM** has 5.5 sacks and is on pace for 11.0 on the year, which would be the third 10+ sack season of his career. If Abraham (48.5) can equal his first-half sack total, he will surpass **VERLON BIGGS** (49.0) and **MO LEWIS** (52.5) for fourth place on the club's all-time sack list.

OAKLAND: **RB LA MONT JORDAN** leads the team in both rushing yards (592) and receptions (40) and is projected to reach 1,184 rushing yards and 80 catches. Jordan can become only the second player in franchise history to lead the club in both categories for an entire season (HOF **RB MARCUS ALLEN**, 1987).....**QB KERRY COLLINS** (2,057) is on pace for 4,114 passing yards, which would account for the second 4,000-yard passing season by a Raider (**RICH GANNON**; 4,689, 2002).

PITTSBURGH: Rookie **TE HEATH MILLER** has six receiving TDs and is on pace for 12, which would surpass the club record for touchdowns by a tight end (**ELBIE NICKEL**, 9, 1952).....**QB BEN ROETHLISBERGER** (112.4) leads the NFL in passer rating. HOF **QB JOE MONTANA** posted the third highest passer rating for a single season with a 112.4 mark in 1989.

SAN DIEGO: **RB LA DAINIAN TOMLINSON** leads the NFL with 15 touchdowns (13 rushing, two receiving) through nine games and is on pace for 26 total TDs. The NFL's all-time season TD record is 27 (**PRIEST HOLMES**, Kansas City, 2003).....**QB DREW BREES** (2,099) is on target for 3,732 passing yards. If Brees maintains this tempo, he would join HOF **QB DAN FOUTS** (1979-81, '84-85) as the only other San Diego quarterback to post more than 3,500 passing yards in a season.....Rookie LB **SHAWNE MERRIMAN** tops the club with 5.0 sacks, which would project to 10.0 for the season. Merriman is aiming to be the first rookie to lead the team in this category for a season.

TENNESSEE: **DE KYLE VANDEN BOSCH** has 7.5 sacks and is on pace for 13.0 for the year. Vanden Bosch trails Indianapolis' Mathis for the league's sack lead by 1.5 sacks through Week 9. Vanden Bosch aims to become the first player in club history to lead the NFL in sacks.....The Titans' defense is yielding a stingy 32.4 percent conversion rate for opponents on third down. Tennessee aims to maintain this percentage at 35.0 or less for the fifth season since 2000.

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