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BRONCOS QB JAKE PLUMMER, PATRIOTS LB TEDY BRUSCHI & TEXANS KR-WR JEROME MATHIS NAMED AFC PLAYERS OF WEEK 8

Quarterback **JAKE PLUMMER** of the Denver Broncos, linebacker **TEDY BRUSCHI** of the New England Patriots and kick returner-wide receiver **JEROME MATHIS** of the Houston Texans are the AFC Offensive, Defensive and Special Teams Players of the Week for games played the eighth week of the 2005 season (October 30-31), the NFL announced today.

OFFENSE: QB JAKE PLUMMER, DENVER BRONCOS

- Denver quarterback **JAKE PLUMMER** directed an offensive fireworks show as the Broncos upended visiting Philadelphia 49-21. The nine-year veteran fired four touchdowns and passed for a season-high 309 yards, completing 22 of 35 (62.9 percent) attempts for a 129.3 passer rating. Plummer denied his opponent an interception for the sixth consecutive game (171 attempts). Behind the play of Plummer, Denver became the first team in NFL history to produce a 300-yard passer and two 100-yard rushers (**MIKE ANDERSON**, 126, **TATUM BELL**, 107) in the same game. The Broncos now stand at 6-2 and lead the AFC West. One of Plummer's four TD passes Sunday was caught by wide receiver **ROD SMITH**, who now has 65 career touchdowns and is tied with former Broncos running back **TERRELL DAVIS** for the most in franchise history.

This is Plummer's fourth career Player of the Week distinction and marks the third consecutive season that he has earned the honor.

DEFENSE: LB TEDY BRUSCHI, NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

- In his first game of 2005, New England linebacker **TEDY BRUSCHI** totaled 10 tackles to help the Patriots seize a 21-16 win against Buffalo. Bruschi became the first player in NFL history to return to the playing field after suffering a mild stroke. Six of his tackles were made within three yards of the line of scrimmage. With the win, New England (4-3) owns sole possession of first-place in the AFC East. The 32-year-old linebacker raised his arms early in the game to energize New England's "12th Man" and called signals in the huddle. Often called the "heart and soul" of New England's defense, Bruschi had been working out and attending meetings regularly since the start of training camp.

In his 10th year from Arizona, this is the San Francisco native's fifth career Player of the Week award and his third honor in his past 14 games.

SPECIAL TEAMS: KR-WR JEROME MATHIS, HOUSTON TEXANS

- Houston kick returner-wide receiver **JEROME MATHIS** played a large role in helping the Texans earn their first win of the season in a 19-16 home victory against Cleveland. The rookie from Hampton returned five kickoffs for 177 yards for a 35.4-yard average. The speedster's most critical return came with 5:06 remaining in regulation following a Browns field goal that tied the game at 16-16. Mathis fielded the kick on his own three-yard line and raced 63 yards to the Cleveland 40. Six plays later, Houston's **KRIS BROWN** made a 40-yard field goal with 2:45 left in regulation for a 19-16 lead the team would not relinquish. Mathis also added his first career TD reception on a 34-yard strike from **DAVID CARR** for a 7-0 first-quarter lead.

This is Mathis' first Player of the Week award and the first for the Texans this season.

2005 AFC PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

	<u>Offense</u>	<u>Defense</u>	<u>Special Teams</u>
Wk 1	RB Willie Parker, Pittsburgh	LB Gary Brackett, Indianapolis	K Josh Scobee, Jacksonville
Wk 2	QB Trent Dilfer, Cleveland	CB Deltha O'Neal, Cincinnati	P Hunter Smith, Indianapolis
Wk 3	RB LaDainian Tomlinson, SD	S Lance Schulters, Miami	K Adam Vinatieri, New England
Wk 4	QB Drew Brees, San Diego	LB Al Wilson, Denver	K Sebastian Janikowski, Oakland
Wk 5	QB Tom Brady, NE	DT Dewayne Robertson, NY	K Josh Scobee, Jacksonville
Wk 6	RB LaDainian Tomlinson, SD	DE Jared Allen, Kansas City	P Todd Sauerbrun, Denver
Wk 7	RB LaMont Jordan, Oakland	DE Robert Mathis, Indianapolis	K Lawrence Tynes, Kansas City
Wk 8	QB Jake Plummer, Denver	LB Tedy Bruschi, New England	KR-WR Jerome Mathis, Houston

Other nominees for AFC Offensive Player of Week 8 were:

- Miami rookie running back **RONNIE BROWN**, who became the sixth Dolphins rookie to produce two or more 100-yard rushing performances with 106 yards on 23 carries (4.6-yard average) and caught two passes for 12 yards in a 21-6 win against New Orleans.
- San Diego tight end **ANTONIO GATES**, who caught a career-high 10 passes for a career-best three TDs in a 28-20 win over Kansas City. Gates' TD catches were from 19, 20, and 35 yards. His catch and TD total account for the most by any Chargers player this season.
- Kansas City quarterback **TRENT GREEN**, who threw a pair of touchdowns and a season-high 347 yards on 31 of 43 (72.1 percent) passing for a 111.3 passer rating.
- Pittsburgh rookie tight end **HEATH MILLER**, who caught a season-high two touchdowns in the Steelers' 20-19 Monday night win against Baltimore. Miller's scores were the team's only two TDs in the game and he now leads all Steelers with six touchdowns on the season, which is the most by a Steelers tight end since **MARK BRUENER** (6) in 1997.
- Buffalo wide receiver **ERIC MOULDS**, who posted a season-high 125 yards on nine catches, including a 55-yard touchdown catch and run. The game was Moulds 25th career 100-yard receiving performance.
- Oakland wide receiver **JERRY PORTER**, who had six catches for a pair of touchdowns and 123 yards in a 34-25 win at Tennessee. Porter's 44-yard touchdown with 4:37 left in regulation helped seal the Raiders' third win in four weeks.

Other nominees for AFC Defensive Player of Week 8 were:

- Denver linebacker **IAN GOLD**, who racked-up eight tackles and a pair of passes defended.
- Pittsburgh safety **CHRIS HOPE**, who recorded nine tackles and his team-high third interception of the season.
- San Diego rookie linebacker **SHAWNE MERRIMAN**, who notched 2.0 sacks and forced a fumble. Merriman is the first Chargers rookie to chalk-up 2.0 sacks since **CHRIS MIMS** in 1992.
- Cincinnati cornerback **DELTHA O'NEAL**, who had two interceptions and a third pass defended that was intercepted by teammate **ODELL THRMAN**, and added three tackles in a 21-14 home victory against Green Bay.
- Pittsburgh safety **TROY POLAMALU**, who had a team-high 10 tackles.
- Oakland defensive tackle **WARREN SAPP**, who registered 2.5 sacks, six tackles and a forced fumble from his position in the trenches. Sapp's forced fumble was recovered in the Titans' endzone for a TD by teammate **JARROD COOPER**.
- Buffalo defensive end **AARON SCHOBEL**, who recorded 2.0 sacks for his 10th career multi-sack game.
- Pittsburgh cornerback **IKE TAYLOR**, who had nine tackles, an interception, a pass defended and a fumble recovery.
- Kansas City safety **GREG WESLEY**, who compiled seven tackles and one interception.

Other nominees for AFC Special Teams Player of Week 8 were:

- New England linebacker **DON DAVIS**, who led his team with four special teams tackles, spearheading a unit that held the NFL's No. 1 kick returner, Buffalo's **TERRENCE MC GEE**, to just 22 yards on two returns. McGee entered the game with a 34.3-yard average.
- Kansas City punt returner-kick returner **DANTE HALL**, who returned four kicks for 101 yards (25.3-yard average) and logged 54 yards on three punt returns for an 18-yard average.
- Buffalo kicker **RIAN LINDELL**, who connected on three of four field goal attempts. Lindell was successful from 23, 35, and 41 yards.
- Pittsburgh kicker **JEFF REED**, who kicked a game-winning 37-yard field goal with 1:40 left in regulation to help lift the Steelers to victory. Reed also added a 42-yard field goal in the second quarter.