



NFC NEWS 'N' NOTES

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CONTACT: MICHAEL SIGNORA (212/450-2076)

RENAISSANCE RUNNING BACKS TAKE CENTER STAGE AS ALL-AROUND OFFENSIVE OPTIONS

They present a vexing dilemma for opposing defenses and keep defensive coordinators from a good night's sleep – the running back as an all-around threat.

Whether as a rusher or a receiver, more and more running backs today have a variety of ways to make an impact. Two of the best will be on opposing sidelines this Sunday night when the New York Giants head west to face the San Diego Chargers at Qualcomm Stadium (ESPN, 8:30 PM ET).

Since becoming a full-time starter in 2000, the Giants' **TIKI BARBER** has averaged 1,198 rushing yards and 66 receptions per season, proving a dynamic offensive option. The former Virginia standout entered 2005 after posting an NFL-high and franchise-record 2,096 yards from scrimmage last season.

On the other sideline is San Diego's **LA DAINIAN TOMLINSON**, who has become an offensive force since joining the club as the No. 5 overall selection in the 2001 NFL Draft. Tomlinson has posted at least 53 receptions in each of his four seasons, adding another dimension to his dominance as a rusher. The TCU product has rushed for at least 1,200 yards in each of his first four seasons.

A look at the players who are the all-time leaders in both rushing yards and receptions for a franchise:

Player	Team	Years	Rushing Yards	Receptions
Tiki Barber	New York Giants	1997-present	7,072	477
Walter Payton	Chicago Bears	1975-87	16,726	492
James Wilder	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	1981-89	5,957	430

In Tampa, **MONTE KIFFIN** is in his 10th season as the club's defensive coordinator and is likely devising a game plan that focuses heavily on stopping Green Bay's stellar running back **AHMAN GREEN** as the teams prepare for a showdown this Sunday at Lambeau Field.

Green is yet another multi-purpose threat on offense. Since becoming the Packers' starting running back in 2000, the four-time All-Star has averaged 1,370 rushing yards and 56 receptions per season, proving he is a threat to score from anywhere on the field.

"There's no doubt about it: any time a running back can catch the ball, it's a challenge," says Kiffin, who is the NFL's longest-tenured defensive coordinator. "You know you have to worry about the screens and check-downs coming out of the backfield. It's tough to defense them in the running game. Now you have to defense the passing game also. Teams spread them out wide and you have to make sure you don't get mismatched. It definitely presents a problem."

The active running backs with the most receptions and the all-time list for most receptions by a running back with at least 5,000 rushing yards:

ACTIVE		ALL-TIME		
Running Back	Receptions	Running Back	Receptions	Rushing Yards
Marshall Faulk	726	Marshall Faulk	726	12,014
Tiki Barber	477	Marcus Allen	587	12,243
Curtis Martin	465	Roger Craig	566	8,189
Warrick Dunn	376	John L. Williams	546	5,006
Edgerrin James	319	Emmitt Smith	515	18,355