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## **GIANTS RB TIKI BARBER, REDSKINS LB MARCUS WASHINGTON & CARDINALS K NEIL RACKERS NAMED NFC PLAYERS OF MONTH FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY**

Running back **TIKI BARBER** of the New York Giants, linebacker **MARCUS WASHINGTON** of the Washington Redskins, and kicker **NEIL RACKERS** of the Arizona Cardinals are the NFC Offensive, Defensive and Special Teams Players of the Month for December/January, the NFL announced today.

### **OFFENSE: RB TIKI BARBER, NEW YORK GIANTS**

**TIKI BARBER** helped earn the New York Giants their first NFC East division championship since 2000, leading the team to an 11-5 record in 2005, including wins in four of five December/January games. Barber rushed for 742 yards – with three touchdowns – in the final five games of the season, the fourth-best total in that time span since 1990. In a 30-21 win over the Oakland Raiders on Saturday night in Oakland, Barber capped his All-Star season by rushing for 203 yards, including a 95-yard touchdown run, the longest run ever by a Giant and the ninth-longest in NFL history. Barber also turned in a 220-yard performance (220) in a 27-17 win on December 17 against Kansas City. With three 200-yard rushing games this season, he became only the third player in NFL history to accomplish the feat, joining Pro Football Hall of Famers **EARL CAMPBELL** (four, 1980) and **O.J. SIMPSON** (three, 1973). A threat as a receiver as well, Barber posted 23 receptions for 218 yards and a touchdown in December/January games, concluding the season with 2,390 yards from scrimmage (1,860 rushing; 530 receiving), the second-highest total in NFL history, trailing only **MARSHALL FAULK**, who totaled 2,429 scrimmage yards for the 1999 St. Louis Rams.

A nine-year veteran from Virginia, this is Barber's second Player of the Month award. He was previously honored in November of 2002.

### **DEFENSE: LB MARCUS WASHINGTON, WASHINGTON REDSKINS**

- The Washington Redskins concluded the regular season as one of the NFL's hottest teams, winning five consecutive games to claim the franchise's first playoff berth since 1999. Linebacker **MARCUS WASHINGTON** was one of the leading performers on a defense that played a vital role in that success, posting 35 tackles, 4.0 sacks, two forced fumbles, two fumble recoveries, one interception and two pass deflections in December/January games. In a pivotal NFC East matchup against the Dallas Cowboys on December 18, Washington turned in one of his best performances, posting 2.0 sacks, returning an interception 41 yards to set up a touchdown, and forcing a fumble in a 35-7 triumph, the club's first of three consecutive December/January wins against NFC East rivals. Then last Sunday against Philadelphia, the former Indianapolis Colt standout posted 11 tackles, 1.0 sack, one forced fumble and one fumble recovery, helping turn the Redskins' postseason hopes into reality in a playoff-clinching 31-20 triumph.

In his sixth season from Auburn, Washington earns his first Player of the Month honor. The last Redskins defender to earn Player of the Month honors was **WILBER MARSHALL** in October of 1992.

### **SPECIAL TEAMS: K NEIL RACKERS, ARIZONA CARDINALS**

- Arizona's **NEIL RACKERS** enjoyed one of the most prolific seasons for a kicker in NFL history in 2005, earning his first trip to the Pro Bowl. Rackers, who connected on eight of nine field goals in four December/January games, set the league single-season record for most field goals, connecting on 40 of 42 attempts for the Cardinals. Despite missing the club's December 4 game against San Francisco due to injury, Rackers finished strong in Arizona's final four games, with his lone miss coming from 54 yards. Rackers last field goal of the season, a 42-yarder against the Indianapolis Colts this past Sunday, enabled him to etch his name in the record books, passing **OLINDO MARE** (39, 1999) and **JEFF WILKINS** (39,

2003) for the most ever in one season. Rackers was also stellar on kickoffs, leading the NFL with 22 touchbacks.

In his sixth season from Illinois, Rackers is the only Cardinal to earn Special Teams Player of the Month honors. He previously earned the honor in October.

#### **2005 NFC PLAYERS OF THE MONTH**

|                  | <b><u>Offense</u></b>           | <b><u>Defense</u></b>       | <b><u>Special Teams</u></b> |
|------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>September</b> | QB Donovan McNabb, Philadelphia | S Adam Archuleta, St. Louis | P Chris Kluwe, Minnesota    |
| <b>October</b>   | WR Steve Smith, Carolina        | DT Rod Coleman, Atlanta     | K Neil Rackers, Arizona     |
| <b>November</b>  | RB Shaun Alexander, Seattle     | S Darren Sharper, Minnesota | P Josh Bidwell, Tampa Bay   |
| <b>December</b>  | RB Tiki Barber, NY Giants       | LB Marcus Washington, Wash. | K Neil Rackers, Arizona     |