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SEAHAWKS RB SHAUN ALEXANDER, PANTHERS DE MIKE RUCKER & BEARS K ROBBIE GOULD NAMED NFC PLAYERS OF WEEK 9

Running back **SHAUN ALEXANDER** of the Seattle Seahawks, defensive end **MIKE RUCKER** of the Carolina Panthers and kicker **ROBBIE GOULD** of the Chicago Bears are the NFC Offensive, Defensive and Special Teams Players of the Week for games played the ninth week of the 2005 season (November 6-7), the NFL announced today.

OFFENSE: RB SHAUN ALEXANDER, SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

- Seattle Seahawks running back **SHAUN ALEXANDER** continued his stellar season, leading the Seahawks to a 33-19 road win against the Arizona Cardinals. The win gives Seattle a 6-2 record and a two-game lead in the NFC West. Alexander rushed for 173 yards on 23 carries, scoring on touchdown runs of 88 and 14 yards. With his 88-yard scoring run, Alexander joined **AHMAN GREEN** (98, 90), **BO JACKSON** (92, 91) and **O.J. SIMPSON** (94, 88) as the only players in NFL history with two career touchdown runs of at least 88 yards. After the Cardinals had closed to 27-19 on a fourth-quarter field goal, the Seahawks all-time leading rusher helped seal the victory with his 14-yard touchdown dash for what proved to be an insurmountable 33-19 advantage. Alexander leads the NFL with 949 rushing yards and 14 rushing touchdowns.

In his sixth season from Alabama, this is Alexander's third Player of the Week award in 2005 and seventh of his career.

DEFENSE: DE MIKE RUCKER, CAROLINA PANTHERS

- In a game between division rivals each entering the contest with identical 5-2 records, defensive end **MIKE RUCKER** of the Carolina Panthers helped his team to an impressive 34-14 road win against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Rucker totaled three tackles, 2.0 sacks, one forced fumble and one fumble recovery in the victory. His first-quarter fumble recovery at the Tampa Bay 43-yard line led to the Panthers' first touchdown five plays later for a 10-0 advantage. Then in the third quarter, his forced fumble, recovered by teammate **BRENTSON BUCKNER**, led to a field goal. Rucker's efforts helped limit the Buccaneers to 44 rushing yards. His two-sack performance was his ninth with the club and his 46.0 career sacks are a franchise record.

In his seventh season from Nebraska, this is Rucker's first Player of the Week award. He was previously honored as the NFC Defensive Player of the Month in September of 2002 and 2003.

SPECIAL TEAMS: K ROBBIE GOULD, CHICAGO BEARS

- Rookie kicker **ROBBIE GOULD** played an important role for the Chicago Bears in an exciting 20-17 road win over the New Orleans Saints, helping the Bears improve to 5-3 and increase their first place hold in the NFC North to two games. Gould connected on two of three field goal attempts, including a 28-yard game winner with six seconds remaining. He also tied the score at 10-10 in the final minute of the first half on a 35-yard field goal. Gould's kickoffs helped limit the Saints to 22 yards per kickoff return and since he took over as the team's kicker in Week 5, the Bears have shaved their opponents average kickoff return from 25.6 yards to 21.9.

Signed by the Bears on October 8, this is the Penn State rookie's first Player of the Week award.

2005 NFC PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

	<u>Offense</u>	<u>Defense</u>	<u>Special Teams</u>
Wk 1	QB Drew Bledsoe, Dallas	DT Bryant Young, San Francisco	K John Carney, New Orleans
Wk 2	WR Santana Moss, Washington	LB Shelton Quarles, Tampa Bay	PR Bobby Wade, Chicago
Wk 3	RB Shaun Alexander, Seattle	DT Rod Coleman, Atlanta	P Josh Bidwell, Tampa Bay
Wk 4	WR Plaxico Burress, NY Giants	DE Darren Howard, New Orleans	K Neil Rackers, Arizona
Wk 5	QB Matt Hasselbeck, Seattle	CB Al Harris, Green Bay	PR R.W. McQuarters, Detroit
Wk 6	RB Shaun Alexander, Seattle	CB Anthony Henry, Dallas	P Josh Bidwell, Tampa Bay
Wk 7	QB Daunte Culpepper, Minnesota	LB Jeremiah Trotter, Philadelphia	K Josh Brown, Seattle
Wk 8	RB Tiki Barber, NY Giants	CB Charles Tillman, Chicago	K Joe Nedney, San Francisco
Wk 9	RB Shaun Alexander, Seattle	DE Mike Rucker, Carolina	K Robbie Gould, Chicago

Other nominees for NFC Offensive Player of Week 9 were:

- Carolina quarterback **JAKE DELHOMME**, who completed 11 of 18 attempts for 216 yards, one touchdown and no interceptions, finishing with a 121.5 passer rating.
- Tampa Bay wide receiver **JOEY GALLOWAY**, who totaled five receptions for 83 yards, including a 50-yard touchdown catch – his 60th career touchdown reception.
- Minnesota quarterback **BRAD JOHNSON**, who completed 15 of 22 attempts for 136 yards, two touchdowns and no interceptions, posting a 115.0 passer rating in a 27-14 win against Detroit.
- Carolina wide receiver **STEVE SMITH**, who posted five receptions for 106 yards, including his NFL-leading ninth touchdown reception (35 yards).
- Atlanta quarterback **MICHAEL VICK**, who completed 22 of 31 attempts for 228 yards, one touchdown and no interceptions, posting a 102.6 passer rating in a 17-10 road win over Miami. Vick also added 38 yards rushing on eight carries.

Other nominees for NFC Defensive Player of Week 9 were:

- Atlanta safety **KEION CARPENTER**, who had five tackles and an interception late in the fourth quarter to help seal the Falcons' win.
- Washington safety **RYAN CLARK**, who had five tackles and an interception that helped clinch the 17-10 win over NFC East-rival Philadelphia.
- Seattle defensive end **BRYCE FISHER**, who had 2.0 sacks, three tackles, two passes defended and one forced fumble.
- Carolina cornerback **CHRIS GAMBLE**, who had two interceptions, returning one 61 yards for his first career touchdown, and finished with four tackles.
- Chicago safety **CHRIS HARRIS**, who recorded eight tackles, 1.0 sack and returned a fumble 49 yards to set up the Bears' first touchdown.
- Chicago linebacker **HUNTER HILLENMEYER**, who posted seven tackles, 1.0 sack and his first career interception.
- Carolina defensive end **JULIUS PEPPERS**, who led the defensive line with six tackles and added 2.0 sacks for a loss of 12 yards.
- Minnesota cornerback **ANTOINE WINFIELD**, who had 11 tackles, two passes defended and one interception.

Other nominees for NFC Special Teams Player of Week 9 were:

- Carolina punter **JASON BAKER**, who punted six times, averaging 49.5 yards per punt with a long punt of 59 yards.
- Tampa Bay punter **JOSH BIDWELL**, who averaged 48.2 yards on six punts, with a long punt of 59 yards, and placed one punt inside the 20-yard line.
- Arizona kicker **NEIL RACKERS**, who connected on four of four field goals from 23, 31, 50 and 44 yards against Seattle.