

NFL PRESS BOX NOTES – WEEK 15

ON THE ROAD TO PERFECTION: The unbeaten Indianapolis Colts (13-0) play the San Diego Chargers (8-5) this Sunday -- the second consecutive game that Indianapolis faces a team with eight or more victories (Jacksonville, 9-3, in Week 14). This marks the third time in NFL history, and first time since 1934, that a team with a perfect record (no losses, no ties) faces teams with at least eight wins in back-to-back games:

<u>TEAM (RECORD)</u>	<u>OPPONENT (RECORD)</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>RESULT</u>
Green Bay (9-0)	New York Giants (8-0-1)	11/24/29	Green Bay 20, New York 6
Green Bay (10-0)	Frankford (9-2-3)	11/28/29	Green Bay 0, Frankford 0
Chicago Bears (11-0)	Detroit (10-1)	11/29/34	Chicago 19, Detroit 16
Chicago Bears (12-0)	Detroit (10-2)	12/2/34	Chicago 10, Detroit 7
Indianapolis (12-0)	Jacksonville (9-3)	12/11/05	Indianapolis 26, Jacksonville 18
<i>Indianapolis (13-0)</i>	<i>San Diego (8-5)</i>	<i>12/18/05</i>	<i>???</i>

Indianapolis is the fourth team in history to start a season 13-0 (1934 Chicago Bears, 1972 Miami, 1998 Denver) and the first to win all 13 games by a margin of seven points or more. Indianapolis seeks to become only the second team in history (1942 Chicago Bears, 11-0) to post a perfect regular season (no losses, no ties) and win every game by at least seven points.

The teams with the longest streaks of games won by seven or more points in a season:

<u>TEAM</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>STREAK</u>	<u>FINAL RECORD</u>	<u>PLAYOFF RESULT</u>
<i>Indianapolis Colts</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>13*</i>	<i>???</i>	<i>???</i>
Chicago Bears	1942	11	11-0	Lost NFL Championship
San Francisco 49ers	1997	10	13-3	Lost NFC Championship
Many tied	--	9	--	--
*Active				

SUPER SHOWDOWN: When the New England Patriots host the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on Saturday, the game will feature the teams that have won the past four Super Bowls. New England won Super Bowls XXXVI, XXXVIII and XXXIX and Tampa Bay won Super Bowl XXXVII. This will mark the third time in the Super Bowl era (since 1967) that the winners of the previous four Super Bowls play each other:

<u>TEAMS (SUPER BOWLS)</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>RESULT</u>
Miami (VII, VIII) vs. Pittsburgh (IX, X)	11/14/76	Pittsburgh 14, Miami 3
Dallas (XXVII, XXVIII, XXX) vs. San Francisco (XXIX)	11/10/96	Dallas 20, San Francisco 17 (OT)
<i>New England (XXXVI, XXXVIII, XXXIX) vs. Tampa Bay (XXXVII)</i>	<i>12/17/05</i>	<i>???</i>

The game also features three Super Bowl MVPs – New England quarterback **TOM BRADY** (XXXVI and XXXVIII) and wide receiver **DEION BRANCH** (XXXIX) and Tampa Bay safety **DEXTER JACKSON** (XXXVII). The last time three Super Bowl MVPs played in the same game was September 24, 2000 – Dallas quarterback **TROY AIKMAN** (XXVII) and running back **EMMITT SMITH** (XXVIII) and San Francisco wide receiver **JERRY RICE** (XXIII).

VICTORY LANE: Running backs **SHAUN ALEXANDER** (1,496) of Seattle and **EDGERRIN JAMES** (1,440) of Indianapolis are the league's top two rushers and tie for the NFL lead with nine 100-yard rushing games this season. The Seahawks and Colts are both undefeated (9-0) in those games. Alexander and James aim to surpass the season mark for the best club record in games in which a specific player rushes for 100 yards (minimum 10 such games).

The running backs whose clubs posted the best season records when they rushed for 100 yards (minimum 10 100-yard games):

<u>PLAYER</u>	<u>TEAM</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>RECORD</u>	<u>PCT.</u>	<u>PLAYOFF RESULT</u>
Jamal Anderson	Atlanta	1998	11-1	.917	Advanced to Super Bowl XXXIII
Terrell Davis	Denver	1998	10-1	.909	Won Super Bowl XXXIII
Walter Payton	Chicago	1985	9-1	.900	Won Super Bowl XX
Terrell Davis	Denver	1997	9-1	.900	Won Super Bowl XXXII
Edgerrin James	Indianapolis	1999	9-1	.900	Advanced to Divisional Playoff

RUSH HOUR: Through the first 14 weeks of the season, five running backs – Seattle's **SHAUN ALEXANDER**, Indianapolis' **EDGERRIN JAMES**, Kansas City's **LARRY JOHNSON**, Cincinnati's **RUDI JOHNSON** and San Diego's **LA DAINIAN TOMLINSON** – have each rushed for 1,000 yards and scored at least 10 rushing touchdowns. Six more players are within 150 rushing yards and/or four rushing TDs of those totals. If all six accomplish the feat, the 11 running backs with 1,000-yard/10-TD totals would be the most in a season in history.

Following are the 11 running backs (listed alphabetically) who can finish the season with 1,000 rushing yards and 10 rushing TDs and the seasons with the most such players:

RUNNING BACK	TEAM	RUSH YARDS	RUSH TDs
Shaun Alexander	Seattle	1,496	23
Mike Anderson	Denver	871	9
Tiki Barber	New York Giants	1,357	6
Steven Jackson	St. Louis	936	7
Edgerrin James	Indianapolis	1,440	12
Larry Johnson	Kansas City	1,251	14
Rudi Johnson	Cincinnati	1,235	10
Thomas Jones	Chicago	1,077	7
LaMont Jordan	Oakland	893	9
Clinton Portis	Washington	1,184	8
LaDainian Tomlinson	San Diego	1,247	17

SEASON	PLAYERS
1995	10
2000	9
2002	9
1996	8
2003	8
2004	8
2005	5*

*Through Week 14

HERE'S CARSON!: Cincinnati Bengals quarterback **CARSON PALMER** is tied for the NFL lead with 27 touchdown passes (with Indianapolis' **PEYTON MANNING**). Palmer, who won the 2002 Heisman Trophy at USC, can join **JOHNNY LUJACK** and **ROGER STAUBACH** as the only Heisman winners to lead the NFL in passing touchdowns. Lujack, who won the award in 1947 at Notre Dame, led the league with 23 TD passes for the Chicago Bears in 1949. Staubach, the 1963 Heisman winner at Navy, tied for the NFL lead with 23 touchdowns for the Dallas Cowboys in 1973.

Palmer has completed 287 of 426 passes (67.4 pct.) for 3,242 yards with 27 touchdowns versus eight interceptions for a 103.2 passer rating, the second highest mark in the NFL (Manning, 108.2). Palmer, who will be 26 years and five days old on the last day of the season, seeks to become the sixth youngest quarterback to post a 100.0 passer rating for a season since the current system was adopted in 1973.

Following are the youngest QBs to post a passer rating of at least 100.0 in a season since 1973 (minimum 200 attempts):

QUARTERBACK	TEAM	YEAR	RATING	AGE
Dan Marino	Miami	1984	108.9	23 years, 93 days
Bert Jones	Baltimore	1976	102.5	25 years, 96 days
Marc Bulger	St. Louis	2002	101.5	25 years, 269 days
Brian Griese	Denver	2000	102.9	25 years, 280 days
Drew Brees	San Diego	2004	104.8	25 years, 353 days

Carson Palmer **Cincinnati** **2005** **103.2*** **26 years, 5 days***

*Through Week 14 (Age as of last day of regular season)

FINE FIFTEEN: Entering Week 15, two running backs – Seattle's **SHAUN ALEXANDER** (23) and San Diego's **LA DAINIAN TOMLINSON** (17) – have each scored at least 15 rushing touchdowns. Three more backs – Kansas City's **LARRY JOHNSON** (14), Carolina's **STEPHEN DAVIS** (12) and Indianapolis' **EDGERRIN JAMES** (12) – are within three rush TDs of 15 with three games remaining. If the three accomplish the feat, five running backs with 15 or more rushing touchdowns would be the most for a single season in history.

The seasons with the most players with 15 or more rushing touchdowns:

YEAR	PLAYERS	NAMES
2002	4	Priest Holmes (21), Shaun Alexander (16), Ricky Williams (16), Clinton Portis (15)
1975	2	Pete Banaszak (16), O.J. Simpson (16)
1983	2	John Riggins (24), Eric Dickerson (18)
1988	2	Greg Bell (16), Ickey Woods (15)
1995	2	Emmitt Smith (25), Chris Warren (15)
1997	2	Abdul-Karim al-Jabbar (15), Terrell Davis (15)
2000	2	Marshall Faulk (18), Mike Anderson (15)
2003	2	Priest Holmes (27), Ahman Green (15)
2004	2	LaDainian Tomlinson (17), Shaun Alexander (16)
2005	2*	Shaun Alexander (23), LaDainian Tomlinson (17)

*Through Week 14