

NEWS



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## **BUCCANEERS RB CARNELL "CADILLAC" WILLIAMS & BENGALS LB ODELL THURMAN NAMED NFL ROOKIES OF MONTH FOR SEPTEMBER**

Running back **CARNELL "CADILLAC" WILLIAMS** of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and linebacker **ODELL THURMAN** of the Cincinnati Bengals are the NFL Offensive and Defensive Rookies of the Month for September, the NFL announced today.

### **OFFENSE: RB CARNELL "CADILLAC" WILLIAMS, TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS**

- A first-round selection from Auburn (No. 5 overall), Williams has paid immediate dividends for the Buccaneers, helping the club to its fourth 3-0 start in franchise history and first place in the NFC South. Williams became the first player in NFL history to rush for 100 yards in his first three games, rushing for 148 yards in a 24-13 Week 1 win at Minnesota, 128 yards in 19-3 win against Buffalo on September 18 and 158 yards on Sunday in an exciting 17-16 win over the Green Bay Packers at Lambeau Field. Williams' three-game total of 434 yards is the most by a rookie in NFL history, surpassing **ALAN AMECHE**'s 410 yards for the 1955 Baltimore Colts. Williams has scored two touchdowns on the season and averages 4.9 yards per attempt on a league-leading 88 carries.

Williams is the first Buccaneer to be honored with an NFL Rookie of the Month Award since **SHUAN KING** earned offensive honors in December, 1999.

### **DEFENSE: LB ODELL THURMAN, CINCINNATI BENGALS**

- A starter in each of the first three games of his career, Thurman has made his impact felt in a short matter of time, leading the team in tackles with 26 and punctuating his presence by producing 1.0 sack, an interception and a forced fumble to help the Bengals reach 3-0 for the first time since 1990. The second-round pick from Georgia played a large role in helping his team win on the road on Kickoff Weekend for the first time since 1995 with a team-high eight tackles and an interception in a 27-13 victory at Cleveland. In Week 2, the 6-0, 235-pound sociology major notched seven tackles and a forced fumble in a 37-8 home victory over the Minnesota. Last Sunday in Chicago, the middle linebacker led all players with 11 tackles in a 24-7 win. Thurman and the Bengals top the NFL with 16 takeaways, seven more than the next-closest teams (four tied with nine).

Thurman is the second Bengal to win NFL Rookie of the Month honors (**COREY DILLON**, December 1997) and is the first defensive Cincinnati player to win the award since its inception in 1996.

### **2005 NFL ROOKIES OF THE MONTH**

	<b><u>Offense (College)</u></b>	<b><u>Defense (College)</u></b>
<b>September</b>	RB Carnell Williams, Tampa Bay (Auburn)	LB Odell Thurman, Cincinnati (Georgia)

**Other nominee for the September NFL Offensive Rookie of the Month was:**

- San Diego running back-kick returner **DARREN SPROLES** (fourth-round, Kansas State), who stands second in the NFL with a 31.9-yard kickoff-return average with a long of 58 yards. The 5-6, 181-pounder also ranks fourth among NFL rookies with a 7.0 yard punt-return average on five returns.

**Other nominees for the September NFL Defensive Rookie of the Month Award were:**

- Minnesota punter **CHRIS KLUWE** (free-agent, UCLA), who led the NFL with a 49.9-yard punting average and ranked third in the league with a 42.3-yard net average.
- Philadelphia defensive tackle **MIKE PATTERSON** (first-round, USC), who leads all Eagles defensive linemen with 17 tackles and has added 1.0 sack and one forced fumble.
- Seattle linebacker **LOFA TATUPU** (second-round, USC), who ranks fourth on the team with 14 tackles and has one sack, helping the Seahawks hold opponents to a 24.3 (9 of 37) conversion rate on third downs, tops in the NFL.
- Denver cornerback-kick returner **DARRENT WILLIAMS** (second-round, Oklahoma State), who has 11 tackles and three passes defended. Williams also leads the AFC and is second in the NFL with a 13.3 punt-return average on six returns and is averaging 25.0 yards on seven kickoff returns.