



AFC NEWS 'N' NOTES

FOR USE AS DESIRED
AFC-N-14 11/21/06

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION,
CONTACT: STEVE ALIC (212/450-2066)

FOUNTAIN OF PRODUCTION SPRINGS FROM NFL'S YOUTH

Approximately six months removed from college life, rookies are making it in the NFL world in large numbers.

"The biggest thing about your first year is the sense of the unknown," says Pittsburgh Steelers offensive coordinator **KEN WHISENHUNT**. "Everything is new."

Included in that "new" are rookies themselves who are making an impact and contributing mightily to victories. Two areas where the league's freshest faces are making themselves heard are among those running the ball and rushing the passer.

FRESH LEGS: The NFL's rookie class of 2006 is challenging the all-time greatest number of rookies to rush for 700 yards. Five rookies hit that level in 1980 and 1983 while four reached the milestone in four other seasons: 1981, 1995, 1997 and 2001.

Four rookie rushers currently stand with more than 400 rushing yards with six games remaining in the season: Indianapolis' **JOSEPH ADDAI** (618), New England's **LAURENCE MARONEY** (577), the New York Jets' **LEON WASHINGTON** (454), and Houston's **WALI LUNDY** (404).

In addition, Denver rookie **MIKE BELL** (395), who has at least 90 rushing yards in two of the Broncos' past three games, can reach 700 with an average of 51 yards in the team's final six contests.

Below is a look at rookies who registered 700 rushing yards or more in 1980 and 1983 along with where this season's rookie crop stands:

YEAR	ROOKIE 700-YD RUSHERS	ROOKIES
1980	5	Billy Sims, Det. (1,303); Joe Cribbs, Buf. (1,185); Vagas Ferguson, N.E. (818); Curtis Dickey, Bal. (800); Earl Cooper, SF (720)
1983	5	Jerome Bettis, St.L (1,429); Reggie Brooks, Wash. (1,063); Ronald Moore, Ariz. (1,018); Roosevelt Potts, Ind. (711); Derek Brown, N.O. (705)
2006*	???	Joseph Addai, Ind. (618); Laurence Maroney, N.E. (577); Leon Washington, NYJ (454); Wali Lundy, Hou. (405)

*Through 10 games

YOUNG LEADERS: As youngsters, today's rookie pass rushers likely played "Follow the Leader." These days, when it comes to quarterback sacks, many can plainly say, "Follow me."

Four rookies currently lead their teams or are tied for their team's lead in sacks. The most rookies to lead their club in sacks for a single season is four, achieved in 2002. Only two other times (1982, 1986) have as many as three rookies led their clubs in the category.

A look at the most rookies to lead or co-lead their clubs in sacks and which NFL newcomers are now doing the same:

YEAR	ROOKIE CLUB SACK LEADERS	ROOKIES
2002	4	Dwight Freeney, Ind. (13.0); Julius Peppers, Car. (12.0); Kalimba Edwards, Det. (6.5); John Henderson, Jac., (6.5)
1982	3	Chip Banks, Cle. (5.5); Jeff Bryant, Sea. (3.0); Leo Wisniewski, Bal. (2.5)
1986	3	Charles Haley, S.F. (12.0); Tim Harris, G.B. (8.0); Jon Hand, Ind. (5.0)
2006*	???	Mark Anderson, Chi. (8.5); Kamerion Wimbley, Cle. (6.5); Elvis Dumervil, Den. (6.0); Mario Williams, Hou. (4.5)

*Through 10 games