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AFC-POW-1 9/13/06

## **JETS QB CHAD PENNINGTON, RAVENS LB RAY LEWIS & COLTS K ADAM VINATIERI NAMED AFC PLAYERS OF WEEK 1**

Quarterback **CHAD PENNINGTON** of the New York Jets, linebacker **RAY LEWIS** of the Baltimore Ravens and kicker **ADAM VINATIERI** of the Indianapolis Colts are the AFC Offensive, Defensive and Special Teams Players of the Week for games played on NFL Kickoff 2006 Weekend (September 7, 10-11), the NFL announced today.

### **OFFENSE: QB CHAD PENNINGTON, NEW YORK JETS**

- With precision-like accuracy, the Jets' Pennington led all NFL quarterbacks on Kickoff Weekend with 319 passing yards in a 23-16 win at Tennessee. The seven-year veteran from Marshall completed 24 of 33 attempts (72.7 percent) with two touchdowns without an interception for a sterling 123.2 passer rating. Returning from shoulder surgery after missing 13 games last season, the Knoxville, Tenn. native was sharp before a throng of family and friends in the stands. With the score tied at 16-16 with 5:51 remaining in regulation, Pennington led the Jets on a 57-yard touchdown drive, capped by a 12-yard dart in the end zone to tight end **CHRIS BAKER** for the game's final points.

This is Pennington's fourth career Player of the Week honor.

### **DEFENSE: LB RAY LEWIS, BALTIMORE RAVENS**

- The seven-time NFL All-Star and two-time NFL Defensive Player of the Year led a Ravens defense that made a statement in Week 1, shutting out the defending NFC South champion Tampa Bay Buccaneers at Raymond James Stadium 27-0. Making plays from sideline-to-sideline, Lewis' presence was felt with a team-high 10 tackles, including a sack and a pair of passes defended. The 6-1, 250-pounder was the heart of a Baltimore defense that permitted only 26 rushing yards on 13 carries (2.0-yard average) and just 2.8 yards per play overall along with forcing three interceptions.

For Lewis, in his 11th NFL season from Miami, this is his sixth Player of the Week award. Lewis is the second Raven in the past six regular season weeks to earn the honor as teammate **TERRELL SUGGS** earned the distinction in Week 13 last season.

### **SPECIAL TEAMS: K ADAM VINATIERI, INDIANAPOLIS COLTS**

- Signed in the off-season as a highly-valued free agent, Vinatieri brought the Colts immediate dividends Sunday night in a 26-21 road victory against the New York Giants. Playing his first game in an Indianapolis uniform, Vinatieri was a perfect four-for-four in field goal attempts from 26, 32, 48, and 32 yards. The former NFL Europe League standout's fourth field goal with 1:12 remaining in regulation significantly boosted the Colts' lead from two points to five for the team's margin of victory.

This marks the ninth-career Player of the Week honor for the 11-year veteran from South Dakota State.

## **2006 AFC PLAYERS OF THE WEEK**

	<b><u>Offense</u></b>	<b><u>Defense</u></b>	<b><u>Special Teams</u></b>
<b>Wk 1</b>	QB Chad Pennington, New York	LB Ray Lewis, Baltimore	K Adam Vinatieri, Indianapolis

**Other nominees for AFC Offensive Player of Week 1 were:**

- Pittsburgh quarterback **CHARLIE BATCH**, who passed for three touchdowns – tying a career-best – in a 28-17 victory against Miami last Thursday night. Batch completed 15 of 25 attempts (60.0 percent) for 209 yards in ringing up a 126.5 passer rating.
- New York wide receiver **LAVERANUES COLES**, who caught eight passes for an NFL Week 1-best 153 yards.
- Kansas City tight end **TONY GONZALEZ**, who caught 10 passes for 81 yards (8.1-yard average).
- New England rookie running back **LAURENCE MARONEY**, who in his first NFL game rushed for 86 yards on 17 attempts for a 5.1-yard average in a 19-17 win against Buffalo. Maroney posted two rushes for more than 20 yards.
- Baltimore quarterback **STEVE MC NAIR**, who in his first game as a Raven completed 63.0 percent of his passes (17 of 27) for 181 yards and a touchdown without an interception for a 94.8 passer rating.
- Pittsburgh tight end **HEATH MILLER**, who caught three passes for a career-best 101 yards, including an 87-yard touchdown reception – the longest in Heinz Field's six-year history.
- Pittsburgh running back **WILLIE PARKER**, who rushed for 115 yards on a career-high 29 carries.
- San Diego running back **LA DAINIAN TOMLINSON**, who rushed for an AFC-best 131 yards on 31 carries (4.2-yard average) in a 27-0 win at Oakland Monday night. Tomlinson added three catches for 18 yards.

**Other nominees for AFC Defensive Player of Week 1 were:**

- Kansas City defensive end **JARED ALLEN**, who posted seven tackles – including 2.0 sacks – and forced a fumble.
- New York cornerback **ANDRE DYSON**, who in his first game as a Jet recorded two interceptions against his former team in Tennessee.
- Buffalo linebacker **LONDON FLETCHER-BAKER**, who tallied 10 tackles, including three for losses. Fletcher-Baker also recorded a five-yard fumble recovery for a touchdown on the game's first play from scrimmage, equaling the fastest touchdown in NFL history by a team in its first game of the season. **TYRONNE DRAKEFORD** of New Orleans scored a touchdown off of a fumble recovery on the opening kickoff 12 seconds into the Saints' 1999 opener against Carolina.
- San Diego linebacker **SHAWNE MERRIMAN**, who recorded 3.0 of the Chargers' nine sacks at Oakland.
- Jacksonville linebacker **MIKE PETERSON**, who notched 11 tackles and an interception in a 24-17 home opening victory against Dallas.
- Pittsburgh safety **TROY POLAMALU**, who chalked-up a team-high 10 tackles, one interception, and forced a fumble.
- Pittsburgh linebacker **JOEY PORTER**, who registered 2.0 sacks and posted a 42-yard interception return for a touchdown.
- Buffalo defensive end **AARON SCHOBEL**, who recorded one sack and broke up two passes. Schobel tallied a total of four tackles on the day.
- New England defensive tackle **TY WARREN**, who recorded a fourth-quarter safety on a sack, earning the Patriots their two-point margin of victory. Warren posted six tackles on the day.

**Other nominees for AFC Special Teams Player of Week 1 were:**

- New York punter **BEN GRAHAM**, who punted four times for 199 yards with an NFL-best 44.0-yard net average.
- New England punter **JOSH MILLER**, who posted a gross average of 45.8 yards on four punts, including a long punt of 56 yards.
- New York kick returner **JUSTIN MILLER**, who returned three kickoffs for 89 yards, including a long return of 41 yards with 6:03 remaining in regulation to set up the Jets' game-winning touchdown drive.
- Indianapolis linebacker **ROB MORRIS**, who notched five special teams tackles.
- Baltimore kicker **MATT STOVER**, who connected on both of his field goal attempts (20 and 42 yards).