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NFL-PRE-4 8/29/06

## **PRESEASON CONCLUDES THURSDAY & FRIDAY; NFL NETWORK FEATURES 12-GAME "WHIP AROUND" THURSDAY NIGHT; FINAL ROSTER CUTS COME SATURDAY**

Whip around and stay around.

Those will be the two hot subjects in the NFL this week as the league concludes its preseason schedule in preparation for Kickoff 2006 Weekend on September 7, 10-11.

Although there are no nationally televised games this weekend, fans will be able to enjoy a unique "12 pack" of NFL games this Thursday night. Starting at 7:30 PM ET, NFL Network will conduct a record 12-game "whip around" of every game being played that night. *NFL Total Access: No Huddle* will look in on all 12 games in progress.

The 12 games in the Thursday night "whip around" on NFL Network:

- **BUFFALO at DETROIT (7:30 PM ET)**: Looks like Bills **QB J.P. LOSMAN** has secured the starting job. Lions continue change from West Coach system to **MIKE MARTZ**'s new offense. "We'll be able to win games as we grow and become more cohesive," says new Detroit **QB JON KITNA**.
- **CAROLINA at PITTSBURGH (7:30 PM ET)**: Panthers' first-round draft choice **DE ANGELO WILLIAMS** looks promising at RB and returned a kickoff 98 yards for a TD last week. Steelers are 0-3 in preseason but head coach **BILL COWHER** likes **QB BEN ROETHLISBERGER**'s progress "not just in games, but in practices."
- **JACKSONVILLE at ATLANTA (7:30 PM ET)**: Jaguars **QB BYRON LEFTWICH** seems primed for the season, going 13 of 20 for 167 yards and a TD vs. Tampa Bay last week. "We'll be ready for the opener," he says. Falcons may have found an RB to spell **WARRICK DUNN** in third-rounder **JERIOUS NORWOOD**, who comes off a 104-yard effort last week, including a 62-yard TD.
- **NEW ENGLAND at NY GIANTS (7:30 PM ET)**: Patriots already look in midseason form, not allowing a touchdown in the past nine quarters. And **QB TOM BRADY** is 35-of-54 for 404 yards with a TD and no interceptions in preseason. Giants' defense has been tough, too, not allowing a TD since the opening series of the first preseason game.
- **ST. LOUIS at MIAMI (7:30 PM ET)**: New Rams head coach **SCOTT LINEHAN** will meet the team he was offensive coordinator for last season, taking it from a 29th to a 14th offensive ranking. New Dolphins **QB DAUNTE CULPEPPER** looks ready for the season in his comeback from his knee injury, scrambling, avoiding at least two sacks and rushing for 11 yards last week.
- **BALTIMORE at WASHINGTON (8:00 PM ET)**: Battle of the Beltway. New Ravens **QB STEVE MC NAIR** has completed 31 of his 40 preseason passes with only one interception. Redskins are 0-3, but new **TE CHRISTIAN FAURIA**, a two-time Super Bowl champ with New England, says to relax. "We need to not panic," says Fauria. "It's way too early to start jumping ship."
- **CHICAGO at CLEVELAND (8:00 PM ET)**: New Bears **QB BRIAN GRIESE** is having a solid summer as he gives starter **REX GROSSMAN** a battle for the top spot. He was 10-of-14 for 131 yards and a TD last Friday. Browns '05 first-round **WR BRAYLON EDWARDS** looks like he is fully recovered

from knee surgery, seeing heavy action for 16 plays last Saturday and almost scoring.

- **MINNESOTA at DALLAS (8:00 PM ET)**: Vikings will put finishing touches on their new Tampa 2 scheme under defensive coordinator **MIKE TOMLIN**. Minny forced four Baltimore turnovers last week. It will be tested against Cowboys **WR TERRY GLENN**, who is having a sizzling summer. He notched his second spectacular TD catch in as many weeks last Saturday, and had a 52-yard reception to set up another Dallas score.
- **TAMPA BAY at HOUSTON (8:00 PM ET)**: Bucs **QB CHRIS SIMMS** wants to use this game as the time to tighten things up. "It's getting close to the time when it counts for real," he says. Texans lost to new coach **GARY KUBIAK**'s former team Denver on Sunday, but are excited about rookie **DE MECO RYANS**, a starter at MLB. He led the team with nine tackles against the Broncos. "It's a lot to ask a rookie to play middle linebacker from day one," says Kubiak. "But he has handled the challenge."
- **NEW ORLEANS at KANSAS CITY (8:30 PM ET)**: Chiefs will see a familiar face – new Saints **QB DREW BREES**, who faced them as an AFC West rival since 2002 (going 4-3). Three of Brees' seven regular-season 300-yard passing games come against the Chiefs. Saints' No. 1 draft choice **RB REGGIE BUSH** will get his final tune-up.
- **DENVER at ARIZONA (10:00 PM ET)**: Cutler vs. Leinart. Two of the three 2006 first-round quarterbacks (along with **VINCE YOUNG**) will meet when the Broncos' **JAY CUTLER** (No. 11 overall) and Cardinals' **MATT LEINART** (No. 10) go at it. Cutler is the highest-ranked AFC rookie in passer rating (104.8). Leinart comes off an outstanding game against Chicago in which he completed 15 of 21 attempts for 144 yards and a TD. He connected on 12 consecutive passes at one point.
- **OAKLAND at SEATTLE (10:00 PM ET)**: Two receivers who will play a big part in their club's fortunes this year will be in action. The Raiders' **RANDY MOSS** and new **QB AARON BROOKS** synched up together last Friday night for two TDs. New Seahawks **WR NATE BURLESON**, adapting to the team's fast-tempo offense, comes off a five-reception night on Saturday.

Week 4 of the preseason finishes up with four games on Friday (Tennessee at Green Bay; Cincinnati at Indianapolis; Philadelphia at the New York Jets; and San Diego at San Francisco). Titans-Packers is a "throwback" afternoon game at 4:00 PM ET.

Throughout all of this action, the final roster cutdowns to 53 players loom on Saturday, September 2 by 6:00 PM ET.

"It's not an easy time for the players and it's not an easy time for the coaches," says Giants head coach **TOM COUGHLIN**. "It's a process and it's part of our game. The fortunate thing about it is that sometimes you end up either having those people back or you play against them."

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# LAST WEEK'S NFL RESULTS

(Home team in CAPS)

## Thursday, August 24

CAROLINA 19, Miami 10

## Friday, August 25

PHILADELPHIA 16, Pittsburgh 7

Arizona 23, CHICAGO 16

MINNESOTA 30, Baltimore 7

N.Y. Giants 13, N.Y. JETS 7

OAKLAND 21, Detroit 3

## Saturday, August 26

JACKSONVILLE 29, Tampa Bay 18

Cleveland 20, BUFFALO 17

## Saturday, August 26, cont'd.

Indianapolis 27, NEW ORLEANS 14 (at Jackson, MS)

Atlanta 20, TENNESSEE 6

DALLAS 17, San Francisco 7

NEW ENGLAND 41, Washington 0

KANSAS CITY 16, St. Louis 12

SAN DIEGO 31, Seattle 20

## Sunday, August 27

DENVER 17, Houston 14

## Monday, August 28

CINCINNATI 48, Green Bay 17

AMERICAN FOOTBALL CONFERENCE							NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE						
East Division							East Division						
	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP		W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
New England	2	1	0	.667	94	29	Dallas	3	0	0	1.000	60	17
Miami	1	2	0	.333	49	60	N.Y. Giants	3	0	0	1.000	47	23
N.Y. Jets	1	2	0	.333	37	43	Philadelphia	2	2	0	.500	56	50
Buffalo	0	3	0	.000	61	78	Washington	0	3	0	.000	17	87
North Division							North Division						
	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP		W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Cincinnati	3	0	0	1.000	111	51	Minnesota	2	1	0	.667	60	33
Cleveland	2	1	0	.667	47	53	Chicago	1	2	0	.333	54	54
Baltimore	1	2	0	.333	43	57	Detroit	1	2	0	.333	39	54
Pittsburgh	0	3	0	.000	30	54	Green Bay	1	2	0	.333	58	75
South Division							South Division						
	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP		W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Houston	2	1	0	.667	65	51	Carolina	3	0	0	1.000	50	33
Jacksonville	2	1	0	.667	70	61	Atlanta	2	1	0	.667	56	67
Indianapolis	1	2	0	.333	61	63	New Orleans	1	2	0	.333	40	73
Tennessee	0	3	0	.000	32	74	Tampa Bay	1	2	0	.333	44	45
West Division							West Division						
	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP		W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Oakland	4	0	0	1.000	76	33	Arizona	2	1	0	.667	47	59
Denver	2	1	0	.667	65	44	St. Louis	1	2	0	.333	51	60
San Diego	2	1	0	.667	51	47	San Francisco	1	2	0	.333	42	54
Kansas City	1	2	0	.333	30	53	Seattle	1	2	0	.333	53	61

# THIS WEEK'S NFL SCHEDULE (AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 1)

(All times local)

## Thursday, August 31

Buffalo at Detroit, 7:30 PM

Carolina at Pittsburgh, 7:30 PM

Jacksonville at Atlanta, 7:30 PM

New England at N.Y. Giants, 7:30 PM

St. Louis at Miami, 7:30 PM

Baltimore at Washington, 8:00 PM

Chicago at Cleveland, 8:00 PM

Minnesota at Dallas, 7:00 PM

Tampa Bay at Houston, 7:00 PM

## Thursday, August 31, cont'd.

New Orleans at Kansas City, 7:30 PM

Denver at Arizona, 7:00 PM

Oakland at Seattle, 7:00 PM

## Friday, September 1

Tennessee at Green Bay, 3:00 PM

Cincinnati at Indianapolis, 7:00 PM

Philadelphia at N.Y. Jets, 7:00 PM

San Diego at San Francisco, 7:00 PM