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**SAINTS QB DREW BREES, COLTS QB PEYTON MANNING &
BENGALS QB CARSON PALMER; 49ERS RB FRANK GORE,
CHIEFS RB LARRY JOHNSON & CHARGERS RB LA DAINIAN TOMLINSON
CANDIDATES FOR 2006 FEDEX AIR & GROUND®
NFL PLAYERS OF THE YEAR HONORS**

Fans To Vote For Winner On NFL.com and Via Sprint Wireless Service

Quarterbacks **DREW BREES** of the New Orleans Saints, **PEYTON MANNING** of the Indianapolis Colts and **CARSON PALMER** of the Cincinnati Bengals are the finalists for 2006 FedEx Express NFL Player of the Year honors, while running backs **FRANK GORE** of the San Francisco 49ers, **LARRY JOHNSON** of the Kansas City Chiefs and **LA DAINIAN TOMLINSON** of the San Diego Chargers are the finalists for 2006 FedEx Ground NFL Player of the Year honors, the NFL announced today.

Fans can vote for one player in each category on NFL.com from 9:00am ET on Tuesday, January 9 through 12 noon ET on Wednesday, January 24 to determine the 2006 FedEx Air & Ground NFL Players of the Year.

In addition, NFL fans may cast their votes for the FedEx Air & Ground NFL Players of the Year using Sprint or Nextel wireless service - an opportunity available only to Sprint customers. This fast, convenient voting method involves texting the word **FEDEX** to short code **7777**. Sprint customers will then receive an interactive text message that links fans to the ballot with the six finalists. Data and text messaging rates may apply.

The FedEx Air & Ground NFL Players of the Year will be announced on Wednesday, January 31 during a press conference the week of Super Bowl XLI in South Florida.

Fans will be voting for more than their favorite player. The local children's hospitals in the two winners' markets will be awarded \$25,000 each. In addition, in honor of the Super Bowl host region, FedEx will donate \$25,000 to Miami Children's Hospital in South Florida. The weekly FedEx Air & Ground NFL Players of the Week Awards were a win all season for the local community. Along with the award, FedEx donated \$5,000 every week to the local children's hospital in each winning market. That means that FedEx will deliver nearly \$250,000 to local children's hospitals around the country in recognition of the 2006 FedEx Air & Ground NFL Players of the Week Award winners.

A closer look at the 2006 FedEx Express NFL Player of the Year finalists:

- **New Orleans' Drew Brees** led the NFL with 4,418 passing yards, ranked third in touchdown passes with 26, and was the third-ranked passer with a rating of 96.2. Completing 356 of 554 passes on the season, Brees recorded eight 300-yard passing games, including a string of five in a row from Week 8 to Week 12. Brees was nominated for three FedEx Express NFL Player of the Week awards in 2006, winning all three times.
- **Indianapolis' Peyton Manning** led the NFL with a 101.1 passer rating and 31 touchdown passes. He completed 362 of 557 passes for 4,397 yards, second in the league. Manning threw two or more touchdowns in nine of 16 games and recorded at least 250 passing yards 10 times. He was nominated for four FedEx Express NFL Player of the Week awards this season.
- **Cincinnati's Carson Palmer** completed 324 of 520 passes for 4,035 yards and a passer rating of 93.9, and his 28 touchdown passes ranked second in the NFL. He threw for two or more touchdowns in 10 of 16 games and threw for more than 250 yards in eight games. Palmer was nominated for two FedEx Express NFL Player of the Week awards, winning both times.

A closer look at the FedEx Ground NFL Player of the Year finalists:

- **San Francisco's Frank Gore** ranked third in the NFL with 1,695 rushing yards on 312 carries. He ran for eight touchdowns with an average of 5.4 yards per carry. Gore also caught 61 passes for 485 yards and one touchdown. He was nominated for four FedEx Ground NFL Player of the Week awards in 2006.
- **Kansas City's Larry Johnson** ranked second in the NFL with 1,789 rushing yards and 17 rushing touchdowns on an NFL-record 416 carries this season. Johnson also caught 41 passes for 410 yards and two touchdowns. He was nominated for seven FedEx Ground NFL Player of the Week awards this season.
- **San Diego's LaDainian Tomlinson** led the league with 1,815 rushing yards and an NFL-record 28 touchdown runs on 348 carries. Tomlinson added 56 receptions for 508 yards and three touchdowns and threw two touchdown passes. His 31 combined rushing and receiving touchdowns was also a record. Tomlinson was nominated for nine FedEx Ground NFL Player of the Week awards, winning eight times.

FedEx, the premier global provider of transportation, e-commerce and supply-chain management services, is the Official Delivery Service Sponsor of the NFL, Super Bowl and Pro Bowl. Through the weekly FedEx Air & Ground Awards, FedEx recognizes those NFL players who represent the same speed, precision and teamwork that their customers have come to expect from the full range of FedEx air, ground, freight and international shipping services.