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## **SAINTS QB DREW BREES, VIKINGS CB CEDRIC GRIFFIN & BEARS CB-PR-KR DEVIN HESTER NAMED NFC PLAYERS OF WEEK 14**

Quarterback **DREW BREES** of the New Orleans Saints, cornerback **CEDRIC GRIFFIN** of the Minnesota Vikings and rookie cornerback-punt returner-kick returner **DEVIN HESTER** of the Chicago Bears are the NFC Offensive, Defensive and Special Teams Players of the Week for games played the 14th week of the 2006 season (December 7, 10-11), the NFL announced today.

### **OFFENSE: QB DREW BREES, NEW ORLEANS SAINTS**

- Playing in front of a national TV audience on Sunday night, Brees completed 26 of 38 passes (68.4 percent) for 384 yards with five touchdowns and no interceptions for a 140.8 passer rating in the Saints' 42-17 win over the Dallas Cowboys. The 300-yard performance was Brees' sixth in the past seven games and his eighth this year while leading the NFL with 4,033 yards, the first 4,000-yard season in franchise history. Returning home to Texas, the Austin native lit up the scoreboard as the Saints amassed 536 total net yards. Brees threw two touchdown passes to fullback **MIKE KARNEY**, who had not scored in any of his previous 43 career games. In the final minute of the first half, Brees connected with wide receiver **JAMAL JONES** on a 27-yard scoring strike, the first touchdown of Jones' career. After a Dallas field goal cut the New Orleans lead to 21-10, Brees teamed with rookie running back **REGGIE BUSH** on a 61-yard touchdown pass, his longest of the game. Later in the third quarter, Brees recorded his fifth touchdown of the game on a 42-yard scoring play to wide receiver **DEVERY HENDERSON**.

In his sixth season from Purdue, this is Brees' fourth career Player of the Week Award and his second this season (Week 9). With teammate Bush being honored last week, this marks the first time in franchise history that two Saints have been named the Offensive Player of the Week in consecutive weeks.

### **DEFENSE: CB CEDRIC GRIFFIN, MINNESOTA VIKINGS**

- The rookie cornerback had three passes defended, an interception, one forced fumble and a fumble recovery in the Vikings' 30-20 win over the Detroit Lions. Minnesota capitalized on two of those turnovers, scoring 14 points off Griffin's fumble recovery and interception. In the first quarter, Griffin recovered a fumble in Minnesota territory to stop Detroit's opening drive. On the ensuing possession, the Vikings scored a touchdown to go ahead 14-0. Late in the third quarter, Griffin recorded his second interception of the year. Griffin returned the interception to the Detroit 26-yard line and the Vikings scored another touchdown five plays later. Griffin is tied for fourth among rookies with two interceptions this season.

In his rookie year from Texas, this is Griffin's first career Player of the Week Award.

### **SPECIAL TEAMS: CB-PR-KR DEVIN HESTER, CHICAGO BEARS**

- It was a record-breaking performance on Monday night for Hester as the Bears defeated the St. Louis Rams 42-27 and clinched a first-round bye. The rookie from Miami returned two kickoffs for touchdowns and set the NFL single-season record with six return touchdowns. In the second quarter, Hester scored his first touchdown of the game on a 94-yard return. After a St. Louis touchdown in the fourth quarter, Hester took the ensuing kickoff 96 yards for a touchdown and put the game out of reach. On the year, Hester has an NFL-record five combined kick-return touchdowns, with three on punts and two on kickoffs, and tied the mark for the longest play in NFL history with a 108-yard touchdown return on a missed field goal. Hester, who had a 21-yard punt return against the Rams, leads the NFL with a 14.4-yard average.

In his rookie season from Miami, this is Hester's second consecutive Player of the Week Award and the third of his career. Hester is the first special teams player to be honored in back-to-back weeks since Kansas City's **DANTE HALL** in 2004 (Weeks 15-16).

## 2006 NFC PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

	<u>Offense</u>	<u>Defense</u>	<u>Special Teams</u>
<b>Wk 1</b>	QB Kurt Warner, Arizona	DE John Abraham, Atlanta	K Jeff Wilkins, St. Louis
<b>Wk 2</b>	QB Eli Manning, NY Giants	DT Tommie Harris, Chicago	K Ryan Longwell, Minnesota
<b>Wk 3</b>	QB Brett Favre, Green Bay	LB Scott Fujita, New Orleans	K John Kasay, Carolina
<b>Wk 4</b>	WR Santana Moss, Washington	DT Tommie Harris, Chicago	K Morten Andersen, Atlanta
<b>Wk 5</b>	RB Frank Gore, San Francisco	CB Lito Sheppard, Philadelphia	RB-PR Reggie Bush, New Orleans
<b>Wk 6</b>	RB Tiki Barber, NY Giants	DE James Hall, Detroit	K Josh Brown, Seattle
<b>Wk 7</b>	TE Alge Crumpler, Atlanta	CB Ronde Barber, Tampa Bay	K Matt Bryant, Tampa Bay
<b>Wk 8</b>	QB Michael Vick, Atlanta	DE Aaron Kampman, Green Bay	WR Sam Hurd, Dallas
<b>Wk 9</b>	QB Drew Brees, New Orleans	LB Brandon Moore, San Francisco	S Troy Vincent, Washington
<b>Wk 10</b>	QB Tony Romo, Dallas	DE Julius Peppers, Carolina	CB-PR Devin Hester, Chicago
<b>Wk 11</b>	RB Frank Gore, San Francisco	DE Mike Rucker, Carolina	P Mat McBriar, Dallas
<b>Wk 12</b>	QB Tony Romo, Dallas	S Sean Taylor, Washington	K Josh Brown, Seattle
<b>Wk 13</b>	RB Reggie Bush, New Orleans	S Lawyer Milloy, Atlanta	CB-PR-KR Devin Hester, Chicago
<b>Wk 14</b>	QB Drew Brees, New Orleans	CB Cedric Griffin, Minnesota	CB-PR-KR Devin Hester, Chicago

### Other nominees for NFC Offensive Player of Week 14 were:

- Washington running back **LADELL BETTS**, who rushed for a career-high 171 yards on 33 carries in the Redskins' 21-19 loss to the Philadelphia Eagles.
- Green Bay wide receiver **DONALD DRIVER**, who had nine receptions for 160 yards, including a 68-yard touchdown, in the Packers' 30-19 win over the San Francisco 49ers.
- Arizona running back **EDGERRIN JAMES**, who rushed for 115 yards and one touchdown in the Cardinals' 27-21 win over the Seattle Seahawks.
- Minnesota running back **ARTOSE PINNER**, who had 29 carries for a career-high 125 yards and three touchdowns. Pinner added two catches for 15 yards.
- New York offensive lineman **RICH SEUBERT**, who played tight end, center and left guard in the Giants' 27-13 win against the Carolina Panthers. Seubert helped the team by filling in at different positions as the Giants dealt with injuries to the offensive line.

### Other nominees for NFC Defensive Player of Week 14 were:

- Atlanta defensive end **JOHN ABRAHAM**, who had 1.0 sack and a forced fumble in the Falcons' 17-6 win over the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Abraham's sack and forced fumble led to linebacker **DEMORRIO WILLIAMS'** 54-yard fumble-recovery touchdown.
- Minnesota linebacker **E.J. HENDERSON**, who had 13 tackles, 1.0 sack and a fumble recovery.
- Philadelphia safety **MICHAEL LEWIS**, who had five tackles and returned an interception 84 yards for a touchdown.
- Arizona defensive end **CHIKE OKEAFOR**, who had three tackles, 1.0 sack, a quarterback hurry and a pass defended.
- New Orleans defensive end **WILL SMITH**, who tied his career-high with 2.0 sacks and had three quarterback hurries.
- Green Bay cornerback **CHARLES WOODSON**, who recovered a fumble at the Green Bay eight-yard line and had two passes defended, including one in the end zone. Woodson added a career-long 40-yard punt return.

### Other nominees for NFC Special Teams Player of Week 14 were:

- New York punter **JEFF FEAGLES**, who placed six of his nine punts inside the 20-yard line and posted a 39.8-yard net average.
- Philadelphia punter **DIRK JOHNSON**, who punted five times for a net average of 42.6 yards and placed four punts inside the 20-yard line.
- Washington **SHAUN SUISHAM**, who converted all four field goal attempts, including a long of 45 yards, and one PAT.