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BEARS QB REX GROSSMAN, EAGLES S BRIAN DAWKINS & RAMS P MATT TURK NAMED NFC PLAYERS OF WEEK 15

Quarterback **REX GROSSMAN** of the Chicago Bears, safety **BRIAN DAWKINS** of the Philadelphia Eagles and punter **MATT TURK** of the St. Louis Rams are the NFC Offensive, Defensive and Special Teams Players of the Week for games played the 15th week of the 2006 season (December 14, 16-18), the NFL announced today.

OFFENSE: QB REX GROSSMAN, CHICAGO BEARS

- The Chicago quarterback set career-highs in completions (29), attempts (44) and yards (339) as the Bears defeated the Tampa Bay Buccaneers 34-31 in overtime to clinch homefield advantage throughout the playoffs. Grossman completed 65.9 percent of his passes and tossed two touchdowns versus no interceptions for a 104.3 passer rating. The performance marked Grossman's first career 300-yard game and was the first by a Bear since 2002. In the first quarter, the four-year veteran opened the scoring with a 24-yard scoring strike to tight end **DESMOND CLARK**. Grossman connected with Clark again, throwing a 12-yard touchdown pass to the tight end with 23 seconds remaining in the first half to put Chicago ahead 21-3. The former Florida star has now won 16 of his first 21 career starts and has an 8-2 (.800) record at Soldier Field. The Bears are a perfect 7-0 in Grossman's starts when he has a passer rating of at least 100.0. On the season, Grossman has passed for 22 touchdowns and can join Pro Football Hall of Famer **SID LUCKMAN** (28, 1943) and **ERIK KRAMER** (29, 1995) as the only Bears with at least 25 passing touchdowns in a season.

In his fourth season from Florida, this is Grossman's first career Player of the Week Award. Grossman was also named the NFC Offensive Player of the Month for September.

DEFENSE: S BRIAN DAWKINS, PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

- The veteran safety was all over the field at Giants Stadium on Sunday as the Eagles defeated New York 36-22 in a key NFC East showdown. Dawkins, who was named to his sixth Pro Bowl this week, posted a game-high 12 tackles, forced two fumbles and had an interception as the Eagles improved to 8-6 and moved one step closer to a playoff berth. In the second quarter, Dawkins stopped a New York drive by forcing a fumble at the Philadelphia 30-yard line that was recovered by teammate **SEAN CONSIDINE**. Later in the quarter, Dawkins intercepted a pass at the Philadelphia 44-yard line. On the ensuing possession, Eagles running back **BRIAN WESTBROOK** scored on a one-yard run to put Philadelphia ahead 14-7. In the fourth quarter, with the Eagles holding on to a 21-16 lead, Dawkins forced another fumble that was recovered by cornerback **LITO SHEPPARD** to thwart a New York drive.

In his 11th year from Clemson, this is Dawkins' second career Player of the Week Award (Week 4, 2002).

SPECIAL TEAMS: P MATT TURK, ST. LOUIS RAMS

- Turk punted five times for a 49.8-yard average and a season-best 48.8-yard net average in the Rams' 20-0 shutout win over the Oakland Raiders. For the game, the 12-year veteran placed two punts inside the 10-yard line and limited the Raiders to a total of five punt return yards. Turk's longest punt of the day traveled 74 yards, the longest punt by a Ram since Pro Football Hall of Famer **BOB WATERFIELD**'s franchise-record 88-yarder in 1948. In the fourth quarter, with the Rams facing a fourth-and-three at the St. Louis 27-yard line, Turk recognized the coverage formation and ran for 16 yards and the first down on a fake punt.

In this 12th season from Wisconsin-Whitewater, this is Turk's fifth career Player of the Week Award. Turk was honored twice with the Miami Dolphins (Week 4 and 12, 2002) and two times with the Washington Redskins (Week 7, 1997 and Week 9, 1998).

2006 NFC PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

	<u>Offense</u>	<u>Defense</u>	<u>Special Teams</u>
Wk 1	QB Kurt Warner, Arizona	DE John Abraham, Atlanta	K Jeff Wilkins, St. Louis
Wk 2	QB Eli Manning, NY Giants	DT Tommie Harris, Chicago	K Ryan Longwell, Minnesota
Wk 3	QB Brett Favre, Green Bay	LB Scott Fujita, New Orleans	K John Kasay, Carolina
Wk 4	WR Santana Moss, Washington	DT Tommie Harris, Chicago	K Morten Andersen, Atlanta
Wk 5	RB Frank Gore, San Francisco	CB Lito Sheppard, Philadelphia	RB-PR Reggie Bush, New Orleans
Wk 6	RB Tiki Barber, NY Giants	DE James Hall, Detroit	K Josh Brown, Seattle
Wk 7	TE Alge Crumpler, Atlanta	CB Ronde Barber, Tampa Bay	K Matt Bryant, Tampa Bay
Wk 8	QB Michael Vick, Atlanta	DE Aaron Kampman, Green Bay	WR Sam Hurd, Dallas
Wk 9	QB Drew Brees, New Orleans	LB Brandon Moore, San Francisco	S Troy Vincent, Washington
Wk 10	QB Tony Romo, Dallas	DE Julius Peppers, Carolina	CB-PR Devin Hester, Chicago
Wk 11	RB Frank Gore, San Francisco	DE Mike Rucker, Carolina	P Mat McBriar, Dallas
Wk 12	QB Tony Romo, Dallas	S Sean Taylor, Washington	K Josh Brown, Seattle
Wk 13	RB Reggie Bush, New Orleans	S Lawyer Milloy, Atlanta	CB-PR-KR Devin Hester, Chicago
Wk 14	QB Drew Brees, New Orleans	CB Cedric Griffin, Minnesota	CB-PR-KR Devin Hester, Chicago
Wk 15	QB Rex Grossman, Chicago	S Brian Dawkins, Philadelphia	P Matt Turk, St. Louis

Other nominees for NFC Offensive Player of Week 15 were:

- Washington running back **LADELL BETTS**, who rushed for 119 yards in the Redskins' 16-10 win over the New Orleans Saints. Betts has rushed for 100 yards in four consecutive games.
- Tampa Bay wide receiver **JOEY GALLOWAY**, who had three catches for 107 yards, including a 64-yard touchdown.
- St. Louis running back **STEVEN JACKSON**, who had a career-high 31 carries for 127 yards with two touchdowns.
- Green Bay running back **VERNAND MORENCY**, who rushed for two touchdowns and averaged 7.7 yards per carry in the Packers' 17-9 win over the Detroit Lions.
- Tampa Bay quarterback **TIM RATTAY**, who came off the bench and completed 20 of 35 passes (57.1 percent) for 268 yards with three touchdowns and one interception for a 98.3 passer rating.
- San Francisco quarterback **ALEX SMITH**, who passed for two touchdowns and rushed for a third in the 49ers' 24-14 win over the Seattle Seahawks. Smith's three touchdowns all came in the fourth quarter in San Francisco's come-from-behind road victory.
- Philadelphia running back **BRIAN WESTBROOK**, who totaled 137 scrimmage yards (97 rushing, 40 receiving) and scored two touchdowns.

Other nominees for NFC Defensive Player of Week 15 were:

- Washington defensive end **ANDRE CARTER**, who had nine tackles, 1.0 sack and a quarterback pressure. The Redskins allowed just 10 points and 270 yards to the NFL's top-ranked offense.
- Green Bay defensive end **CULLEN JENKINS**, who had a career-high 3.0 sacks, five quarterback hurries and recovered a fumble. The Packers held the Lions to 142 total net yards.
- St. Louis defensive end **LEONARD LITTLE**, who posted 2.0 sacks and a forced fumble as the Rams shut out the Raiders.
- Tampa Bay safety **JERMAINE PHILLIPS**, who had 13 tackles, 1.0 sack and two passes defended.
- San Francisco cornerback **SHAWNTAE SPENCER**, who had six tackles, one interception and two passes defended.
- Dallas linebacker **DE MARCUS WARE**, who had six tackles, 0.5 sack, forced a fumble and returned an interception 41 yards for a touchdown in the Cowboys' 38-28 win over the Atlanta Falcons.

Other nominees for NFC Special Teams Player of Week 15 were:

- Washington punter **DERRICK FROST**, who punted five times for a 43.8-yard net average and placed three punts inside the 20-yard line.
- San Francisco long snapper **BRIAN JENNINGS**, who snapped on both punts and kicks in inclement rain and wind condition. Jennings also had three special teams tackles and forced a fumble.
- Philadelphia kick returner **RENO MAHE**, who averaged 41.0 yards per return, including a career-long 64-yarder in the fourth quarter to set up an Eagles touchdown to give Philadelphia the lead.
- Tampa Bay's special teams unit, which allowed only 9.0 yards per punt return and 14.2 yards per kickoff return. The group forced three fumbles and recovered one.