

NFL PRESS BOX NOTES – WEEK 10

SECOND-HALF SURGES PROPEL TEAMS TO PLAYOFFS: Since 2000, 14 teams have reached the halfway point of the season with a record of 4-4 or below and proceeded to the playoffs, including at least one in each season.

The 2001 New England Patriots started 4-4, then won seven of their last eight games en route to an 11-5 regular season record and the team's first Super Bowl championship (XXXVI).

In 2002, half of the playoff field consisted of teams that started 4-4 or below, including five of the six AFC playoff participants (Cleveland, Indianapolis, N.Y. Jets, Oakland and Tennessee).

The teams since 2000 that started the season at .500 or below through eight games and earned a playoff berth:

YE A R	TEAM	RECORD (8 GAMES)	RECORD (16 GAMES)	PLAYOFF RESULTS
2000	Denver	4-4	11-5	AFC Wild Card, L 21-3 at Baltimore
2000	Tampa Bay	4-4	10-6	NFC Wild Card, L 21-3 at Philadelphia
2001	New England	4-4	11-5	Super Bowl XXXVI, W 20-17 vs. St. Louis
2001	Tampa Bay	4-4	9-7	NFC Wild Card, L 31-9 at Philadelphia
2002	Cleveland	4-4	9-7	AFC Wild Card, L 36-33 at Pittsburgh
2002	Tennessee	4-4	11-5	AFC Championship, L 41-24 at Oakland
2002	Indianapolis	4-4	10-6	AFC Wild Card, L 41-0 at N.Y. Jets
2002	Oakland	4-4	11-5	Super Bowl XXXVII, L 48-21 vs. Tampa Bay
2002	N.Y. Giants	4-4	10-6	NFC Wild Card, L 39-38 at San Francisco
2002	N.Y. Jets	3-5	9-7	AFC Divisional, L 30-10 at Oakland
2003	Green Bay	4-4	10-6	NFC Divisional, L 20-17 at Philadelphia
2004	Green Bay	4-4	10-6	NFC Wild Card, L 31-17 vs. Minnesota
2004	St. Louis	4-4	8-8	NFC Divisional, L 47-17 at Atlanta
2005	New England	4-4	10-6	AFC Divisional, L 27-13 at Denver

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SUPER-CHARGED: San Diego Chargers running back **LA DAINIAN TOMLINSON** is in the midst of one of the most prolific scoring streaks in history. Over the past four games, Tomlinson has 11 touchdowns (9 rushing, 2 receiving).

Cleveland Browns Pro Football Hall of Famer **JIM BROWN** scored 14 touchdowns over a five-game stretch in 1958 – the most by a player in history.

Tomlinson needs three scores to tie Brown's mark and four to break it when the Chargers travel to Cincinnati this Sunday. In three career games against the Bengals, Tomlinson has rushed for five touchdowns.

In 87 career games, Tomlinson has scored two or more rushing touchdowns 20 times (23.0 percent).

Most touchdowns in history over a five-game:

PLAYER	YEAR	TD
Jim Brown, Cleveland	1958	14
Jim Brown, Cleveland	1958	13
Jerry Rice, San Francisco	1987	13
Many tied	--	12
RB LaDainian Tomlinson, San Diego	2006	11*

*Four games

SAINTS ROOKIES RACK UP RECEPTIONS: A pair of New Orleans Saints rookies – running back **REGGIE BUSH** and wide receiver **MARQUES COLSTON** – can become the first rookie teammates in history to each catch 50 passes in a season.

Entering the Saints' ninth game this Sunday, Bush (46) needs four catches and Colston (44) six for 50 receptions apiece.

Bush and Colston rank Nos. 1 and 2, respectively, in rookie receptions. Bush, the No. 2 overall selection in the draft from Southern California, also leads the team and all NFL running backs in the category.

Colston, a seventh-round selection from Hofstra, leads the Saints in receiving yards (700) and touchdowns (7) and is on pace to establish team records in both categories. Wide receiver **JOE HORN** (1,399 yards and 11 TDs in 2004) owns both marks.

The five most recent rookie teammates to catch at least 40 passes in a season:

YEA R	ROOKIE DUO	TEAM
2006*	<i>RB Reggie Bush (46) & WR Marques Colston (44)</i>	<i>New Orleans</i>
2003	WR Andre Johnson (66) & RB Domanick Davis (47)	Houston
1999	WR Kevin Johnson (66) & WR Darrin Chiaverini (44)	Cleveland
1999	RB Edgerrin James (62) & WR Terrence Wilkins (42)	Indianapolis
1989	WR Shawn Collins (58) & RB Keith Jones (41)	Atlanta

*Eight games

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ROOKIE SACK RECORDS IN REACH: Chicago Bears rookie defensive end **MARK ANDERSON** has 7.5 sacks through his first eight games and is on pace to eclipse the NFL season record for sacks by a rookie with 15.0. Philadelphia Eagles defensive end **JEVON KEARSE**, who notched 14.5 sacks with the Tennessee Titans in 1999, is the record-holder.

The top five season sack totals by NFL rookies:

YEA R	PLAYER	SACK S
1999	Jevon Kearse, Tennessee	14.5
2002	Dwight Freeney, Indianapolis	13.0
1986	Leslie O'Neal, San Diego	12.5
1996	Simeon Rice, Arizona	12.5
1986	Charles Haley, San Francisco	12.0
2002	Julius Peppers, Carolina	12.0
2003	Terrell Suggs, Baltimore	12.0
2006	<i>Mark Anderson, Chicago</i>	<i>15.0*</i>

*Projected

Anderson is one of a handful of rookies who are making an impact as pass rushers.

Denver Broncos defensive end **ELVIS DUMERVIL** did not play in his team's first three games, but has already posted 6.0 sacks as a situational pass rusher in the past five games.

Two other rookies also aim to post a double-digit sack total this season. The No. 1 overall selection of the draft – Houston's **MARIO WILLIAMS** – has notched a sack in four of his last five games for 4.5 total sacks. Browns defensive end **KAMERION WIMBLEY** also has 4.5 sacks.

If two of these rookies maintain their pace, 2006 would be the seventh season since sacks became an official statistic in 1982 in which two rookies posted at least 10.0 sacks apiece.

If at least three rookies reach 10.0 or more sacks, it would mark the first time in history that three rookies posted double-digit sack figures.

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