



HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY, MOM – FROM YOUR NFL SON

"Moms are the greatest," says New York Jets tight end **JOEL DREESSEN**. "You can do no wrong by your mom."

That support is the main reason that throughout the NFL on Mother's Day this Sunday, both rookies and veterans alike will salute their moms in a variety of ways.

The 2006 NFL Draft class – though new to the league -- matches up well with the experienced veterans when it comes to dedication to their mothers.

For instance, Houston Texans rookie defensive end **MARIO WILLIAMS** -- the first overall selection in the draft – told his mother **MARY** that she did not have to play the newly launched North Carolina lotto anymore. "I'm going to be your lottery now," he told her with a smile.

Quarterback **VINCE YOUNG** is so proud of his mom **FELICIA**, he brought her to the podium with him in the interview room right after he was chosen with the third overall pick in the draft by the Tennessee Titans. "We're very close," Young said. "We've been through a lot together and I feel like the world should see where I came from. That's why I brought her up here."

Another first-round quarterback – the Arizona Cardinals' **MATT LEINART** – may be performing some unexpected Mother's Day chores.

"Matt and I talked on the phone the day he was drafted," says Cardinals starting quarterback **KURT WARNER**. "He said he wanted to be my shadow. I told him, 'You'd better like kids, because I've got seven of them.' He said he'd be up for babysitting, so maybe my wife **BRENDA** and I will go out on a date and we'll call up Matt!"

Not to be outdone by the rookies, many NFL veterans have plans for the big day both for their own mothers and others:

BLUEGRASS SPECIAL: The Manning family celebrated Mother's Day a week early this year.

Indianapolis Colts quarterback **PEYTON MANNING** and his wife **ASHLEY**, and New York Giants quarterback **ELI MANNING** and his girlfriend **ABBIE** met the Manning parents, **ARCHIE** and **OLIVIA**, and brother **COOPER** and his wife **ELLEN** at last week's Kentucky Derby for some good old-fashioned southern camaraderie. The Manning clan gathered in Louisville on Friday and attended the race on Saturday, celebrating the wives/mothers along the way.

DOLPHINS DEVOTION: Miami Dolphins linebacker **CHANNING CROWDER** will fly his mother **PAULINE** to Texas this week so she can spend time with his maternal grandmother, who is ill.

Meanwhile, his teammate, defensive back **TRAVIS DANIELS**, is planning to buy his mother **SPRING** a piece of jewelry with his uniform No. 21 attached so she can root for him in style.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Some NFL players celebrate Mother's Day by hosting functions for the moms in their community:

In Dallas, Cowboys Pro Bowl safety **ROY WILLIAMS** will make Mother's Day memorable for 11 low-income single moms.

The women will be rewarded for their participation in programs and activities sponsored by the Roy Williams Safety Net Foundation that made a difference in the lives of local children.

The moms will be treated to a dozen roses, limousine transportation to a lunch with Williams at a Dallas hotel, a Bobbi Brown makeup makeover sponsored by Nordstrom's, and a \$1,000 shopping spree at Nordstrom's.

In San Francisco, 49ers defensive tackle **ANTHONY ADAMS** and safety **MIKE ADAMS**, who both grew up in single-mother homes, will join tackle **JONAS JENNINGS** in hosting 15 mothers and their children from a local Domestic Violence Shelter at the 49ers' facility on Mother's Day.

The group will be treated to a personal tour of the facility and a viewing of the 49ers' highlight film in the team meeting room, and will participate in a discussion with the players about the importance of mothers and why showing respect to family is so important.

In addition, each woman will receive a corsage, children's goodie bag and two complimentary tickets to the 49ers' home season opener against St. Louis on September 17.

"I am going to tell the kids to listen to their mothers," says Adams. "I can relate to all of them. Sometimes kids think they know it all and they need reminding that they should listen because their mothers have been there and done that. Without their mother's support, they would be lost."

In Tampa Bay for the third consecutive year, Buccaneers linebackers **RYAN NECE** and **SHELTON QUARLES** will team with local sponsors to recognize the year's "Top 50 Moms in the Bay Area."

Together the players reviewed more than 500 nominations submitted by loved ones, but the criteria isn't what one might expect.

"We're not looking for the Bucs' best fans," says Nece. "We're looking for the best moms."

"We want stories of people who have heart, and enjoy their relationships," says Quarles.

Those selected will be treated to a special luncheon at Raymond James Stadium, the Bucs' home, where Tampa mayor **PAM IORIO** – mother of two -- will be the keynote speaker. The top three moms will be awarded prizes, including two tickets each to a Buccaneers home game, hotel stays, restaurant and spa gift certificates, and home-cleaning service for a day.

A JULY MOTHER'S DAY: Kansas City Chiefs defensive end **TAMBA HALI**, the team's 2006 first-round selection, might have the best Mother's Day present of all in store.

A native of war-torn Liberia, Hali has not seen his mother **RACHEL KEITA** since he escaped the country's violence in 1994. For several years he has worked with Penn State head coach **JOE PATERNO** and his son **SCOTT**, who is a lawyer, to get Rachel a green card so she could join him in America.

Until now Liberian officials were concerned that Hali would not be able to provide for his mother, but his new NFL earning potential has eased their fears. He is currently applying for U.S. citizenship and hopes to sponsor his mother's trip overseas before training camp.

"She's going to go from living in a grass hut to living in a nice home," says Hali. "I can't wait to see her again and teach her all about the game of football."

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