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**COLTS & SAINTS KICK OFF SEASON THURSDAY NIGHT ON NBC**

No more waiting. The NFL roars back Thursday night.

NFL Kickoff 2007 starts in Indianapolis that night when the Super Bowl XLI champion Colts host the New Orleans Saints in the season's first game (NBC, 8:30 PM ET) that will be the culmination of kickoff festivities at Monument Circle in downtown Indianapolis and at the RCA Dome, site of the game.

The Saints – who reached the NFC Championship Game last year – are the hometown team of Colts quarterback **PEYTON MANNING**, the Super Bowl XLI MVP. Manning will square off against his fellow starting quarterback in the 2007 Pro Bowl, **DREW BREES**. Indianapolis has won its last 10 primetime regular-season games, including four last year.

The Thursday night kickoff will be accompanied by musical performances to celebrate the beginning of the season and honor the Colts and the city of Indianapolis.

The pregame special show, "**NFL OPENING KICKOFF 2007 PRESENTED BY SPRINT**" on NBC, NFL Network and SIRIUS Satellite Radio at 8:00 PM ET will feature performances by Indiana-native **JOHN MELLENCAMP**, **FAITH HILL** and **KELLY CLARKSON**. **KEYSHIA COLE** will be joined by Fort Wayne, Indiana's Voices of Unity Youth Choir in singing the national anthem. Mellenkamp will perform at the RCA Dome and Hill, Clarkson and **HINDER** will sing at a free concert at Monument Circle.

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**LET'S KICK IT OFF!**

The players are ready...America's ready.

After seven months of offseason, here comes five months of pressure-packed unpredictability. The National Football League – with its 17 weeks of surprises -- is back. The excitement quotient in America just took a jump – big time!

"This is when it gets serious," says Miami Dolphins defensive tackle **VONNIE HOLLIDAY**. "This is why you go through the whole offseason. This is what it's all about."

What it will be all about when the season ends on December 30 is anybody's guess. Unpredictability? Last season, seven teams that qualified for the playoffs in 2005 did not make them in 2006. Since 2000 – that's seven seasons – 12 different teams have played in the Super Bowl.

"I think the biggest mistake is to try to pick up where you left off," says head coach **SEAN PAYTON** of the New Orleans Saints. "In our business, you start again from Day One."

"Day One" is this Thursday, when Payton's Saints visit the Super Bowl XLI champion Indianapolis Colts in the kickoff to the season. Then comes 13 games on Sunday, with Kickoff 2007 Weekend concluding on Monday night with a primetime doubleheader on ESPN.

The weekend will mark the beginning of one more raucous NFL season -- played under the theme of "Who Wants It More?" -- that arrives already packed with intrigue and change:

- **CAN THE COLTS REPEAT?:** They brought Indianapolis its first major professional sports league championship when they won Super Bowl XLI. They are the winningest team in the NFL in the past five years (60 victories). They can become the first team in history to win at least 12 games in five consecutive seasons. But the Indianapolis Colts really have only one thing in mind – matching the eight times NFL teams won back-to-back Super Bowls. Indy head coach **TONY DUNGY** played (in 1978) for the only team, the Pittsburgh Steelers, to perform the feat twice, and he learned a lesson that he and his players will follow this year.

“(Steelers head coach) **CHUCK NOLL**’s attitude and the players’ attitude was that they put the rings away before training camp because they wanted to go win another one,” says Dungy. “Coach Noll and those guys were never intimidated by trying to win another title.”

- **BRETT LOOKS TO SET A RECORD:** **TERRY BRADSHAW** calls **BRETT FAVRE** “the best quarterback I have ever seen.” Favre this season can become “the best” in one of the key QB categories – touchdown passes. With seven this year (he has 414), the Green Bay Packers’ quarterback can top **DAN MARINO** (420) for the most TD passes in history.
- **ON-FIELD TRENDS:** Versatility on defense...opening up of offensive schemes...more 3-4 defenses. Those are some of the trends NFL coaches have identified as “what to look for” in 2007.

Defensive players, more and more, have to be versatile. “You look for players whose versatility becomes a weapon,” says Baltimore Ravens linebackers coach **JEFF FITZGERALD**. “You look for a guy who can rush the passer, stop the run *and* cover tight ends and wide receivers downfield”.....More teams are going to the 3-4 defense. “A big reason is that in college, the defensive ends are 240- and 250-pound guys, and when they get to the NFL, the conversion to outside linebacker is a lot easier for them in a 3-4,” says San Diego Chargers defensive coordinator **TED COTTRELL**.....Offenses look like they will be opening up even more. “Everybody has been influenced by the emergence of the West Coast Offense and has a scheme that uses more finesse than in years past,” says Ravens running backs coach **TONY NATHAN**.

- **TIGHT COMPETITION:** Last year, almost half the games were decided by a single score. Things always seemed to come down to late in the game, and late in the year: seven games were decided in the last two minutes or overtime in Weeks 16-17. And at least one such game was played in the three playoff rounds preceding Super Bowl XLI. “You see the scores on Sunday and nothing should surprise anyone anymore,” says Seattle Seahawks head coach **MIKE HOLMGREN**. “Anybody’s capable of beating anyone else. In our league at the beginning of the season, there’s tremendous optimism in every city.”
- **NEW COACHES/PLAYERS IN NEW PLACES:** The Pittsburgh Steelers will have only their third head coach (**MIKE TOMLIN**) in the past 38 years. The Oakland Raiders will have the NFL’s youngest head coach since 1970 (**LANE KIFFIN**, 32). Those two will join five other new head coaches this season – **CAM CAMERON** (Miami), **BOBBY PETRINO** (Atlanta), **WADE PHILLIPS** (Dallas), **NORV TURNER** (San Diego) and **KEN WHISENHUNT** (Arizona).

And on the field, there are a lot of players in new uniforms (and the San Diego Chargers will have completely new uniforms): **JEFF GARCIA** is in Tampa Bay, **AHMAN GREEN** in Houston, **DANTE HALL** in St. Louis, **JOE HORN** in Atlanta, **JAMAL LEWIS** in Cleveland, **WILLIS MC GAHEE** in Baltimore, **RANDY MOSS** in New England and **TAKEO SPIKES** in Philadelphia, to name but a few.

- **CAPTAINS SALUTED:** NFL clubs will emphasize the role of season-long team captains this year on offense, defense and special teams through a team captain leadership initiative. The purpose of the program is to support and recognize the importance of team leadership through the role of the captains. The captains will wear the letter “C” on their upper right chest. “Part of good leadership is getting followers, guys that will follow you,” says Detroit Lions head coach **ROD MARINELLI** in describing the attributes of a good captain. “You have to be able to show the physical part of the game on tape and courage on tape.”
- **LONDON, HERE WE COME!:** The NFL will stage the first in its new series of international regular-season games in the United Kingdom’s capital city when the Miami Dolphins host the New York Giants at London’s Wembley Stadium on Sunday, October 28. It will be the first NFL regular-season game to be played outside of North America. More than half a million ticket requests poured in soon after the NFL announced the game.
- **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!:** Season-long anniversaries will be celebrated by the Pittsburgh Steelers (75th season), Philadelphia Eagles (75th season), Washington Redskins (75th) and Cincinnati Bengals (40th), and the Green Bay Packers will salute the 50th anniversary of Lambeau Field.
- **PLUS:** Flexible-scheduling returns after a successful first year...NFL Network shows football 24/7...a new-look NFL.com will show highlights immediately after every game...**MIKE NOLAN** and **JACK DEL RIO** will wear their “throwback” suits on the sideline...and much more.

Come the night of December 30, it will all be decided – for the regular season. Then comes the pressure-cooker of the playoffs.

But not so fast, say the coaches. There’s Week 1...then Week 2...and every week thereafter.

“The next game,” says New York Giants head coach **TOM COUGHLIN**, “is the most important game of your schedule.”

# FINAL 2007 PRESEASON RECORDS

## AFC - 2007 Preseason

### AFC East

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Net Pts	TD	Home	Road	Div	Pct	Conf	Pct	Non-Conf	Streak	Last 5
New York Jets	3	1	0	.750	84	76	8	10	1-1	2-0	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	3-1	2W	3-1
New England Patriots	2	2	0	.500	85	67	18	10	1-1	1-1	0-0	.000	0-1	.000	2-1	2W	2-2
Buffalo Bills	2	2	0	.500	56	64	-8	5	0-2	2-0	0-0	.000	0-1	.000	2-1	1W	2-2
Miami Dolphins	2	2	0	.500	57	65	-8	7	1-1	1-1	0-0	.000	2-0	1.000	0-2	2L	2-2

### AFC North

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Net Pts	TD	Home	Road	Div	Pct	Conf	Pct	Non-Conf	Streak	Last 5
Pittsburgh Steelers	4	1	0	.800	87	46	41	7	2-1	2-0	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	4-1	3W	4-1
Cleveland Browns	3	1	0	.750	72	60	12	8	1-1	2-0	0-0	.000	2-0	1.000	1-1	2W	3-1
Baltimore Ravens	1	3	0	.250	58	42	16	4	1-1	0-2	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	1-3	3L	1-3
Cincinnati Bengals	1	3	0	.250	78	84	-6	8	1-1	0-2	0-0	.000	1-0	1.000	0-3	1W	1-3

### AFC South

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Net Pts	TD	Home	Road	Div	Pct	Conf	Pct	Non-Conf	Streak	Last 5
Tennessee Titans	3	1	0	.750	91	69	22	10	1-1	2-0	0-0	.000	2-0	1.000	1-1	3W	3-1
Jacksonville Jaguars	3	1	0	.750	100	64	36	13	2-0	1-1	0-0	.000	0-1	.000	3-0	3W	3-1
Houston Texans	2	2	0	.500	104	87	17	11	1-1	1-1	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	2-2	1L	2-2
Indianapolis Colts	1	3	0	.250	77	74	3	10	1-1	0-2	0-0	.000	0-1	.000	1-2	1L	1-3

### AFC West

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Net Pts	TD	Home	Road	Div	Pct	Conf	Pct	Non-Conf	Streak	Last 5
San Diego Chargers	3	1	0	.750	95	81	14	9	1-1	2-0	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	3-1	3W	3-1
Denver Broncos	2	2	0	.500	74	64	10	9	1-1	1-1	0-0	.000	0-1	.000	2-1	1W	2-2
Oakland Raiders	2	2	0	.500	82	78	4	10	2-0	0-2	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	2-2	1L	2-2
Kansas City Chiefs	0	4	0	.000	32	67	-35	3	0-2	0-2	0-0	.000	0-2	.000	0-2	4L	0-4

## NFC - 2007 Preseason

### NFC East

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Net Pts	TD	Home	Road	Div	Pct	Conf	Pct	Non-Conf	Streak	Last 5
Dallas Cowboys	2	2	0	.500	84	81	3	10	2-0	0-2	0-0	.000	0-1	.000	2-1	2L	2-2
Washington Redskins	2	2	0	.500	51	56	-5	6	1-1	1-1	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	2-2	1L	2-2
Philadelphia Eagles	1	3	0	.250	54	79	-25	5	1-1	0-2	0-0	.000	1-0	1.000	0-3	2L	1-3
New York Giants	1	3	0	.250	66	83	-17	7	0-2	1-1	0-0	.000	0-1	.000	1-2	2L	1-3

### NFC North

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Net Pts	TD	Home	Road	Div	Pct	Conf	Pct	Non-Conf	Streak	Last 5
Chicago Bears	3	1	0	.750	87	90	-3	10	1-1	2-0	0-0	.000	1-0	1.000	2-1	1L	3-1
Green Bay Packers	2	2	0	.500	88	73	15	10	1-1	1-1	0-0	.000	1-0	1.000	1-2	2L	2-2
Minnesota Vikings	2	2	0	.500	83	77	6	8	1-1	1-1	0-0	.000	1-2	.333	1-0	1W	2-2
Detroit Lions	2	2	0	.500	73	99	-26	7	1-1	1-1	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	2-2	2L	2-2

### NFC South

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Net Pts	TD	Home	Road	Div	Pct	Conf	Pct	Non-Conf	Streak	Last 5
Atlanta Falcons	3	1	0	.750	66	70	-4	6	2-0	1-1	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	3-1	3W	3-1
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	3	1	0	.750	94	93	1	12	2-0	1-1	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	3-1	2W	3-1
New Orleans Saints	3	2	0	.600	81	59	22	9	1-1	2-1	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	3-2	3W	3-2
Carolina Panthers	1	3	0	.250	44	91	-47	5	0-2	1-1	0-0	.000	1-1	.500	0-2	3L	1-3

### NFC West

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Net Pts	TD	Home	Road	Div	Pct	Conf	Pct	Non-Conf	Streak	Last 5
Seattle Seahawks	3	1	0	.750	86	91	-5	9	2-0	1-1	0-0	.000	1-1	.500	2-0	2W	3-1
St. Louis Rams	2	2	0	.500	46	63	-17	4	1-1	1-1	0-0	.000	1-0	1.000	1-2	1W	2-2
San Francisco 49ers	1	3	0	.250	80	85	-5	9	1-1	0-2	0-0	.000	0-1	.000	1-2	2L	1-3
Arizona Cardinals	0	4	0	.000	77	114	-37	8	0-2	0-2	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	0-4	4L	0-4

## LAST WEEK'S NFL RESULTS

(Home team in CAPS)

### Thursday, August 30

SEATTLE 19, Oakland 14  
SAN DIEGO 16, San Francisco 13  
DENVER 21, Arizona 3  
Cleveland 19, CHICAGO 9  
Pittsburgh 19, CAROLINA 3  
MINNESOTA 23, Dallas 14  
NEW ORLEANS 7, Miami 0  
ST. LOUIS 10, Kansas City 3

### Thursday, August 30 Cont.'d

TAMPA BAY 31, Houston 24  
TENNESSEE 30, Green Bay 14  
NEW ENGLAND 27, N.Y. Giants 20  
N.Y. Jets 13, PHILADELPHIA 11

### Friday, August 31

CINCINNATI 14, Indianapolis 6  
ATLANTA 13, Baltimore 10

## KICKOFF WEEKEND 2007 SCHEDULE – SEPTEMBER 6, 9-10

(All times local)

### Thursday, September 6

New Orleans at Indianapolis, 8:30 PM (NBC)

### Sunday, September 9

Denver at Buffalo, 1:00 PM  
Pittsburgh at Cleveland, 1:00 PM  
Philadelphia at Green Bay, 12:00 PM  
Kansas City at Houston, 12:00 PM  
Tennessee at Jacksonville, 1:00 PM  
Atlanta at Minnesota, 12:00 PM  
New England at New York Jets, 1:00 PM

### Sunday, September 9, Cont.'d.

Carolina at St. Louis, 12:00 PM  
Miami at Washington, 1:00 PM  
Detroit at Oakland, 1:15 PM  
Chicago at San Diego, 1:15 PM  
Tampa Bay at Seattle, 1:15 PM  
New York Giants at Dallas, 7:15 PM (NBC)

### Monday, September 10

Baltimore at Cincinnati, 7:00 PM (ESPN)  
Arizona at San Francisco, 7:15 PM (ESPN)