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NFC PRO BOWL NEWS

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**BEARS LEAD NFC WITH SEVEN PLAYERS ON ALL-STAR SQUAD;
 THIRTEEN FIRST-TIME SELECTIONS ON NFC ROSTER**

The Chicago Bears placed a conference-high seven players on the National Football Conference All-Star team that will face the American Football Conference All-Stars in the 2007 Pro Bowl on Saturday, February 10 in Honolulu, Hawaii (CBS, 6:00 PM ET), the NFL announced today.

Thirteen NFC players will participate in their first Pro Bowl, including Dallas Cowboys quarterback **TONY ROMO**, who has won six of his first eight career starts and guided the Cowboys to a playoff birth.

Three of the Bears' Pro Bowl players – special teamer **BRENDON AYANBADEJO**, kicker **ROBBIE GOULD** and rookie kick return specialist **DEVIN HESTER** – are also first-time All-Stars. They join six-time All-Stars **OLIN KREUTZ** and **BRIAN URLACHER** and two-time All-Stars **LANCE BRIGGS** and **TOMMIE HARRIS** to form the largest Chicago contingent in Hawaii since seven Bears were chosen to participate in the 1987 Pro Bowl.

Joining Romo at quarterback are two-time All-Stars **DREW BREES** of New Orleans, who will start, and St. Louis' **MARC BULGER**. Brees, who leads the NFL with 4,240 passing yards, is the second quarterback in Saints history to be named to the Pro Bowl (**ARCHIE MANNING**, 1979-80). Brees was an All-Star with the San Diego Chargers in 2005 and is the fourth quarterback to be selected to the Pro Bowl for both the AFC and NFC (**JOHN HADL**, **JOE MONTANA** and **WARREN MOON**). Bulger passed for a Pro Bowl record four touchdowns and was named the player of the game in the 2004 All-Star contest.

Starting at running back for the NFC will be first-time All-Star **FRANK GORE** of the San Francisco 49ers, who leads the NFC in rushing with 1,491 yards. St. Louis running back **STEVEN JACKSON**, who tops the conference with 1,916 scrimmage yards, also will make his Pro Bowl debut.

New York Giants three-time All-Star running back **TIKI BARBER** will team with his brother **RONDE**, a cornerback and four-time Pro Bowl choice from the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, on the NFC squad for the third year in a row. The Barbers are the second set of NFL brothers to be named to the Pro Bowl in three consecutive seasons (**SHANNON** and **STERLING SHARPE**, 1993-95). They are the only set of twins to be chosen for the Pro Bowl.

Filling out the backfield is Seattle fullback **MACK STRONG**, who makes his second consecutive Pro Bowl appearance.

The NFC's starting wide receivers are six-time All-Star **TORRY HOLT** of the St. Louis Rams and Carolina's **STEVE SMITH**, who will make his third trip to Honolulu and second as a wide receiver. Two-time All-Stars **ANQUAN BOLDIN** of Arizona (2004) and **DONALD DRIVER** of Green Bay (2003) fill out the position.

A pair of four-time All-Stars represent the NFC at tight end in Atlanta's **ALGE CRUMPLER** and the New York Giants' **JEREMY SHOCKEY**. Crumpler, who leads NFC tight ends with 677 yards, will be the starter.

First-time All-Star **SHAWN ANDREWS** of Philadelphia and Minnesota's **STEVE HUTCHINSON**, who will make his fourth consecutive trip to Hawaii, will start at guard. Joining them is the most tenured member of the NFC All-Stars in San Francisco guard **LARRY ALLEN**, who has been chosen to the Pro Bowl 11 times.

Another member of the Vikings' offensive line will be **MATT BIRK**, a five-time Pro Bowl selection, who joins starter Kreutz of the Bears at the center position.

The starting tackles are Seattle's **WALTER JONES**, a seven-time All-Star, and New Orleans' **JAMMAL BROWN**, who will make his Pro Bowl debut. Washington's **CHRIS SAMUELS**, making his fourth appearance on the NFC squad, is the NFC's third tackle.

Earning his third consecutive Pro Bowl berth is Carolina defensive end **JULIUS PEPPERS**, who was named a starter. A pair of Pro Bowl newcomers joins Peppers at defensive end in Green Bay's **AARON KAMPMAN** and New Orleans' **WILL**

The starters on the interior defensive line are Chicago's Harris and Minnesota's **KEVIN WILLIAMS**, who played in the 2005 Pro Bowl. The other member of the group is Carolina's **KRIS JENKINS**, a three-time All-Star choice.

Seattle's **LOFA TATUPU**, a two-time selection, will join Chicago's Urlacher as the NFC's inside linebackers. Urlacher, who will start, is the first Bears linebacker to be named to six Pro Bowls since Pro Football Hall of Famer **MIKE SINGLETARY** was chosen for 10.

The outside linebackers are Chicago's Briggs, Seattle's **JULIAN PETERSON** and Dallas' **DE MARCUS WARE**. Peterson was selected to two Pro Bowls with the San Francisco 49ers (2003-04) while Ware will play in his first All-Star game. Briggs and Ware were named the starters for the NFC team.

Atlanta's **DE ANGELO HALL** will man one of the NFC's cornerback positions for the second consecutive season, joining Tampa Bay's Barber as the conference's starters. Hall and **DEION SANDERS** (1992-94) are the only Falcons cornerbacks to be named to back-to-back Pro Bowls. Philadelphia's **LITO SHEPPARD**, an NFC All-Star in 2005, is the third NFC cornerback.

Sheppard's Eagles teammate **BRIAN DAWKINS**, making his sixth Pro Bowl appearance, will start at free safety. **ADRIAN WILSON** of the Arizona Cardinals, in his Pro Bowl debut, received the starting nod at strong safety. The NFC's other strong safety is Dallas' **ROY WILLIAMS**, a four-time honoree.

A quartet of Pro Bowl rookies will handle special teams duties for the NFC. In addition to Chicago's Ayanbadejo, Gould and Hester, the unit features Dallas punter **MAT MC BRIAR**, who played three seasons at the University at Hawaii.

The 42-man NFC squad is comprised of 21 offensive and 17 defensive players plus four specialists. A 43rd "need" player will be chosen by the NFC head coach and must be a cornerback, defensive end, linebacker, or long snapper.

The NFL is the only professional sports league that combines voting by fans, coaches and players in determining its All-Star teams. The consensus vote of each group counts one-third towards the total. Each team submits two ballots – those of the coach and the players with no one permitted to vote for a player on his own team. This year, nearly 70 million fan votes (69.8 million) were cast on NFL.com, in stadiums and via Sprint or Nextel wireless.

The National Conference defeated the American Conference 23-17 last season in the Pro Bowl. The all-time series is tied 18-18. The 2007 NFC coaching staff will be from the NFC Championship Game runner-up team.

Under terms of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, each player on the winning Pro Bowl team receives \$40,000, while each player on the losing squad earns \$20,000.

2007 NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE ALL-STARS

AFC-NFC PRO BOWL, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2007, ALOHA STADIUM, HONOLULU, HAWAII

(Starters listed in ***Bold/Italics***)

(* First-time Pro Bowl selection)

OFFENSE

WIDE RECEIVERS		TIGHT ENDS
Anquan Boldin, Arizona		<i>Alge Crumpler, Atlanta</i>
Donald Driver, Green Bay		Jeremy Shockey, New York
<i>Torry Holt, St. Louis</i>		
<i>Steve Smith, Carolina</i>		QUARTERBACKS
		<i>Drew Brees, New Orleans</i>
TACKLES		Marc Bulger, St. Louis
* <i>Jammal Brown, New Orleans</i>		* Tony Romo, Dallas
<i>Walter Jones, Seattle</i>		
Chris Samuels, Washington		RUNNING BACKS
		Tiki Barber, New York
GUARDS		* <i>Frank Gore, San Francisco</i>
Larry Allen, San Francisco		* Steven Jackson, St. Louis
* <i>Shawn Andrews, Philadelphia</i>		
<i>Steve Hutchinson, Minnesota</i>		FULLBACK
		<i>Mack Strong, Seattle</i>
CENTERS		
Matt Birk, Minnesota		
<i>Olin Kreutz, Chicago</i>		

DEFENSE

ENDS		INSIDE/MIDDLE LINEBACKERS
* Aaron Kampman, Green Bay		Lofa Tatupu, Seattle
<i>Julius Peppers, Carolina</i>		<i>Brian Urlacher, Chicago</i>
* <i>Will Smith, New Orleans</i>		
		CORNERBACKS
INTERIOR LINEMAN		<i>Ronde Barber, Tampa Bay</i>
<i>Tommie Harris, Chicago</i>		<i>DeAngelo Hall, Atlanta</i>
Kris Jenkins, Carolina		Lito Sheppard, Philadelphia
<i>Kevin Williams, Minnesota</i>		
		STRONG SAFTIES
OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS		* <i>Adrian Wilson, Arizona</i>
<i>Lance Briggs, Chicago</i>		Roy Williams, Dallas
Julian Peterson, Seattle		
* <i>DeMarcus Ware, Dallas</i>		FREE SAFETY
		<i>Brian Dawkins, Philadelphia</i>

SPECIALISTS

PUNTER		KICK RETURN SPECIALIST
* Mat McBriar, Dallas		* Devin Hester, Chicago
PLACEKICKER		SPECIAL TEAMER
* Robbie Gould, Chicago		* Brendon Ayanbadejo, Chicago