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49ERS TIE FOR NFL LEAD WITH EIGHT PLAYERS ON PRO BOWL TEAM

PRO BOWL KICKS OFF SUPER BOWL WEEK IN PRIMETIME ON NBC ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 29

The San Francisco 49ers, who have won the NFC West and boast a 12-3 record, placed an NFC-best eight players on the National Football Conference All-Star team that will face the American Football Conference All-Stars in the 2012 Pro Bowl – the kickoff to Super Bowl week – the NFL announced today. The defending-champion Green Bay Packers, who lead the NFL with a 14-1 record and have clinched home-field advantage throughout the NFC playoffs, had seven players named to the Pro Bowl squad.

The 2012 Pro Bowl will be played on Sunday, January 29, 2012 at Aloha Stadium in Honolulu, Hawaii one week before Super Bowl XLVI in Indianapolis. Broadcast live on NBC at 7:00 PM ET, the Pro Bowl will be held prior to the Super Bowl for the third consecutive year and serve as the signature kickoff event of Super Bowl week.

Fifteen NFC players have been selected to their first Pro Bowl, including three each from the Chicago Bears (running back **MATT FORTÉ**, special teamer **COREY GRAHAM**, cornerback **CHARLES TILLMAN**), the Packers (fullback **JOHN KUHN**, interior lineman **B.J. RAJI**, center **SCOTT WELLS**) and the 49ers (free safety **DASHON GOLDSON**, cornerback **CARLOS ROGERS**, tackle **JOE STALEY**). Two Saints will make their All-Star game debuts as tackle **JERMON BUSHROD** and tight end **JIMMY GRAHAM** have earned selections for the first time. Rounding out the Pro Bowl newcomers are Philadelphia running back **LE SEAN MC COY**, Arizona rookie kick return specialist **PATRICK PETERSON**, New York Giants defensive end **JASON PIERRE-PAUL** and Seattle free safety **EARL THOMAS**.

The starting quarterback for the NFC is Green Bay's **AARON RODGERS**, who has earned his second Pro Bowl berth (2010 Pro Bowl). Rodgers, who has been named the NFC Offensive Player of the Month for September, October and November, leads the NFL with a 122.5 passer rating and is on pace to set the single-season record (121.1, **PEYTON MANNING**, 2004). He is joined at the position by six-time All-Star **DREW BREES** of New Orleans and **ELI MANNING** of the New York Giants. All three quarterbacks have been named Super Bowl MVP (Rodgers, SB XLV; Brees, SB XLIV; Manning, SB XLII). Brees has set single-season passing records for yards (5,087) and 300-yard games (12). Manning, who will make his second Pro Bowl appearance (2009), has passed for a franchise record 4,587 yards. His father **ARCHIE** was selected to two Pro Bowls and his brother **PEYTON** has been named to 11 All-Star teams.

Starting at running back is Philadelphia's McCoy, who leads the NFL with a franchise-record 20 touchdowns (17 rushing, three receiving) and tops the NFC with 1,309 rushing yards. He is joined by Chicago's Forté and three-time All-Star **FRANK GORE** of San Francisco. Forté, who has 1,487 scrimmage yards in 12 games, is the first Bears running back selected since **NEAL ANDERSON** was chosen to the 1992 Pro Bowl team. Gore ranks second in the NFC with 1,202 rushing yards, his club-record fifth 1,000-yard season.

Green Bay's Kuhn completes the backfield at fullback.

The starting wide receivers for the NFC are Arizona's **LARRY FITZGERALD** and Detroit's **CALVIN JOHNSON**. Fitzgerald, who has recorded his franchise-record sixth 1,000-yard season (1,262), has earned his sixth Pro Bowl selection and fifth in a row. He is the first Cardinal to be selected to five consecutive Pro Bowls since Pro Football Hall of Famer **AENEAS WILLIAMS** (1995-2000 Pro Bowls). Johnson, who leads the NFC with 1,437 receiving yards and 15 touchdown catches, makes his second consecutive appearance in Hawaii. He joins Pro Football Hall of Famers **LANCE ALWORTH** and **JERRY RICE** as the only players in NFL history with at least 12 touchdown receptions in three of their first five seasons. Filling out the position are Green Bay's **GREG JENNINGS** and Carolina's **STEVE SMITH**. Jennings has been selected for the second consecutive year and leads the Packers with 67 receptions. Smith, a five-time All-Star, leads the NFL with 27 catches of at least 20 yards.

Starting at tight end is New Orleans' Graham, who leads NFL tight ends with 91 receptions and ranks second with 1,213 yards and 10 touchdowns. Atlanta's **TONY GONZALEZ** has earned his 12th All-Star selection, the most all-time by a tight

end. He is the Pro Bowl's all-time leader in receptions (42), receiving yards (632) and touchdown catches (six).

Two Saints – **JAHRI EVANS** and **CARL NICKS** – get the starting nod at guard. Evans has earned his third consecutive All-Star berth and Nicks returns to Hawaii after making his Pro Bowl debut last season. Tampa Bay's **DAVIN JOSEPH**, who appeared in the 2009 Pro Bowl, completes the position.

Carolina's **RYAN KALIL** will start at center, his third consecutive Pro Bowl selection. Green Bay's Wells is the other center for the NFC squad.

The starting tackles are Philadelphia's **JASON PETERS** and San Francisco's Staley. Peters has earned his fifth consecutive All-Star selection while Staley makes his Pro Bowl debut. New Orleans' Bushrod, also a Pro Bowl newcomer, rounds out the position.

Minnesota's **JARED ALLEN** and Philadelphia's **JASON BABIN** will get the start at defensive end. Allen, a four-time selection, leads the NFL with 18.5 sacks. Babin, who will play in his second consecutive Pro Bowl, ties for second in the league with 18 sacks. The Giants' Pierre-Paul, who is fourth in the NFL with 15.5 sacks, fills out the position for the NFC.

The starters on the interior defensive line are Dallas' **JAY RATLIFF** and San Francisco's **JUSTIN SMITH**. Ratliff has been chosen each of the past four years and Smith is making his third consecutive Pro Bowl appearance. Joining them at the position is Green Bay's Raji, a first-time selection.

For the fourth consecutive year, San Francisco's **PATRICK WILLIS**, a five-time All-Star, has been selected to start at inside linebacker. He will again be joined by Chicago's **BRIAN URLACHER**, an eight-time Pro Bowl choice. Urlacher is the fourth linebacker in team history to be named an All-Star at least eight times, joining Pro Football Hall of Famers **MIKE SINGLETARY** (10), **DICK BUTKUS** (eight) and **BILL GEORGE** (eight).

The starting outside linebackers are Green Bay's **CLAY MATTHEWS** and Dallas' **DE MARCUS WARE**. Matthews, who has been selected to three Pro Bowls, is the son of four-time All-Star **CLAY MATTHEWS**. They are one of four father-son duos since 1970 to each be selected to multiple AFC-NFC Pro Bowls (Archie & Peyton Manning, Archie & Eli Manning, **TERRY & ERIC METCALF**). Ware has been selected to six consecutive Pro Bowls and ties for second in the NFL with 18 sacks. Chicago's **LANCE BRIGGS** has earned his seventh Pro Bowl nod in a row and joins Singletary (10), Butkus (eight) and George (eight) as the only Bears linebackers with at least seven consecutive All-Star selections.

At cornerback, first-time All-Star Rogers of San Francisco and eight-time Pro Bowl selection **CHARLES WOODSON** of Green Bay have earned the starting nod. Woodson ties for the NFL lead with seven interceptions and Rogers ties for second in the NFC with six. Rounding out the cornerback position is Chicago's Tillman.

The secondary is completed by strong safety **ADRIAN WILSON** of Arizona and free safeties Thomas and Goldson, both newcomers. Wilson, a five-time All-Star who joins Pro Football Hall of Famer **LARRY WILSON** (eight) as the only Cardinals safeties to be selected at least five times, will start alongside Seattle's Thomas. San Francisco's Goldson, in his fifth season, makes his Pro Bowl debut.

On special teams, Arizona's Peterson will be the kick returner. The rookie is the first player in NFL history with four punt-return touchdowns of at least 80 yards in a single season. Chicago's Graham, a five-year veteran from New Hampshire, will be the special teamer in his Pro Bowl debut. And two 49ers will round out the specialists. **ANDY LEE**, who leads the league averaging 43.5 net yards per punt, will be the punter for the third time in his career. Six-time All-Star **DAVID AKERS**, who has an NFL-record 42 field goals, will handle the kicking duties in his first year with San Francisco.

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 long snapper. The 2012 NFC coaching staff will be from the team with the best regular-season record that is eliminated in the NFC Divisional playoffs.

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, a record 100.64 million votes were cast by fans this year online and on web-enhanced mobile phones at NFL.com.

The National Football Conference defeated the American Football Conference 55-41 last season in the Pro Bowl. The 2012 game is the 42nd between the AFC and NFC All-Stars. The NFC leads the all-time series 21-20. Fans can purchase tickets to the 2012 Pro Bowl at www.NFL.com/probowl.

Under terms of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, each player on the winning Pro Bowl team receives \$50,000, while each player on the losing squad earns \$25,000.

2012 NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE ALL-STARS

AFC-NFC PRO BOWL, SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 2012, ALOHA STADIUM, HONOLULU, HAWAII

(Starters listed in ***Bold/Italics***)
 (* First-time Pro Bowl selection)

OFFENSE

WIDE RECEIVERS		TIGHT ENDS
<i>Larry Fitzgerald, Arizona</i>		Tony Gonzalez, Atlanta
Greg Jennings, Green Bay	*	<i>Jimmy Graham, New Orleans</i>
<i>Calvin Johnson, Detroit</i>		
Steve Smith, Carolina		QUARTERBACKS
		Drew Brees, New Orleans
TACKLES		Eli Manning, New York Giants
* Jermon Bushrod, New Orleans		<i>Aaron Rodgers, Green Bay</i>
<i>Jason Peters, Philadelphia</i>		
* <i>Joe Staley, San Francisco</i>		RUNNING BACKS
	*	Matt Forté, Chicago
GUARDS		Frank Gore, San Francisco
<i>Jahri Evans, New Orleans</i>	*	<i>LeSean McCoy, Philadelphia</i>
Davin Joseph, Tampa Bay		
<i>Carl Nicks, New Orleans</i>		FULLBACK
	*	<i>John Kuhn, Green Bay</i>
CENTERS		
<i>Ryan Kalil, Carolina</i>		
* Scott Wells, Green Bay		

DEFENSE

DEFENSIVE ENDS		INSIDE/MIDDLE LINEBACKERS
<i>Jared Allen, Minnesota</i>		Brian Urlacher, Chicago
<i>Jason Babin, Philadelphia</i>		<i>Patrick Willis, San Francisco</i>
* Jason Pierre-Paul, New York Giants		
		CORNERBACKS
INTERIOR LINEMEN	*	<i>Carlos Rogers, San Francisco</i>
* B.J. Raji, Green Bay	*	Charles Tillman, Chicago
<i>Jay Ratliff, Dallas</i>		<i>Charles Woodson, Green Bay</i>
<i>Justin Smith, San Francisco</i>		
		STRONG SAFETY
OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS		<i>Adrian Wilson, Arizona</i>
Lance Briggs, Chicago		
<i>Clay Matthews, Green Bay</i>		FREE SAFTIES
<i>DeMarcus Ware, Dallas</i>	*	Dashon Goldson, San Francisco
	*	<i>Earl Thomas, Seattle</i>

SPECIALISTS

PUNTER		KICK RETURN SPECIALIST
Andy Lee, San Francisco	*	Patrick Peterson, Arizona
PLACEKICKER		SPECIAL TEAMER
David Akers, San Francisco	*	Corey Graham, Chicago

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