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9/25/13
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SAINTS TE JIMMY GRAHAM, PANTHERS DE GREG HARDY & LIONS P SAM MARTIN NAMED NFC PLAYERS OF WEEK 3

Tight end **JIMMY GRAHAM** of the New Orleans Saints, defensive end **GREG HARDY** of the Carolina Panthers and rookie punter **SAM MARTIN** of the Detroit Lions are the NFC Offensive, Defensive and Special Teams Players of the Week for games played the third week of the 2013 season (September 19, 22-23), the NFL announced today.

OFFENSE: TE JIMMY GRAHAM, NEW ORLEANS SAINTS
- Graham had nine catches for 134 yards and two touchdowns in the Saints' 31-7 win over Arizona.
- His 16-yard touchdown reception in the second quarter gave the Saints the lead for good and he capped the scoring with a seven-yard TD catch in the fourth quarter.
- Graham, who had 10 catches for 179 yards and a touchdown in Week 2, has 313 receiving yards in his past two games, the most by a tight end in a two-game span since 1996 (**SHANNON SHARPE**, 314 yards).
- He has a touchdown catch in four consecutive games and has 100 receiving yards in each of his past two.
- Graham leads NFL tight ends with 23 catches and 358 receiving yards. His four receiving touchdowns are the most in the NFC by any player.
- In his fourth season from Miami, this is Graham's second career Player of the Week Award (Week 10, 2012).
- Graham is the only tight end in franchise history to be honored.
- He joins Sharpe (three) and **ALGE CRUMPLER** (two) as the only tight ends to be named Player of the Week multiple times since the award began in 1984.

DEFENSE: DE GREG HARDY, CAROLINA PANTHERS
- Hardy tied a career high with three sacks in the Panthers' 38-0 win over the New York Giants. He also had a team-high eight tackles.
- Five of Hardy's eight tackles were behind the line of scrimmage for a total of minus-22 yards.
- He was part of a defensive unit that registered seven sacks, forced three turnovers and allowed 150 total net yards. The Panthers are the first team in more than a decade to post a shutout victory of 38 points or more, record at least seven sacks and three turnovers, and hold an opponent to 150 total net yards in a game.
- Carolina recorded its first shutout since October 5, 2008 and the team's seven sacks tied the single-game club record.
- In his fourth year from Mississippi, this is Hardy's first career Player of the Week Award.
- Hardy is the first Panthers defensive end to be honored since **JULIUS PEPPERS** (Week 8, 2009).
- He joins Peppers (three) and **MIKE RUCKER** (two) as the only defensive ends in franchise history to be named Defensive Player of the Week.

SPECIAL TEAMS: P SAM MARTIN, DETROIT LIONS
- Martin punted six times, averaging 52.5 yards per punt with a net average of 40.7 yards in the Lions' 27-20 win at Washington.
- His average of 52.5 yards per punt was the highest in a game by a Lion with a minimum of six punts since **PAT STUDSTILL** (53.0) on September 11, 1966.
- Martin had a long of 72 yards, the longest punt by a Lion since September 27, 1981 (**TOM SKLADANY**, 74 yards). It was also the second-longest in franchise history by a rookie trailing **BOB CIFERS**' 73-yard punt on November 17, 1946.
- The Lions won at Washington for the first time ever and defeated the Redskins on the road for the first time since October 13, 1935 when Detroit registered a 17-7 win in Boston's Fenway Park over the Boston Redskins.
- In his rookie season from Appalachian State, this is Martin's first career Player of the Week Award.
- Martin is the first Lions punter to be honored since 1993 (**JIM ARNOLD**, Week 18).
- He is the first Lions rookie to be named Player of the Week since **MATTHEW STAFFORD** (Offense, Week 11, 2009).

	Offense	**Defense**	**Special Teams**
Wk 1	WR Anquan Boldin, San Francisco	DE Robert Quinn, St. Louis	WR-PR Dwayne Harris, Dallas
Wk 2	QB Aaron Rodgers, Green Bay	CB Richard Sherman, Seattle	KR-PR Devin Hester, Chicago
Wk 3	TE Jimmy Graham, New Orleans	DE Greg Hardy, Carolina	P Sam Martin, Detroit

Other nominees for NFC Offensive Player of Week 3 as submitted by NFC clubs:
- Chicago quarterback **JAY CUTLER**, who had 90.8 passer rating in the Bears' 40-23 win at Pittsburgh.
- Detroit wide receiver **CALVIN JOHNSON**, who had seven catches for 115 yards and a touchdown.
- Philadelphia running back **LE SEAN MC COY**, who rushed for 158 yards and a touchdown in the Eagles' 26-16 loss to Kansas City.
- Dallas running back **DE MARCO MURRAY**, who rushed for 175 yards and a touchdown in the Cowboys' 31-7 win over St. Louis.
- Carolina quarterback **CAM NEWTON**, who passed for 223 yards with three touchdowns and rushed for 45 yards with a TD.
- Detroit quarterback **MATTHEW STAFFORD**, who passed for 385 yards and two touchdowns.
- Seattle quarterback **RUSSELL WILSON**, who tied a career high with four touchdown passes and had a 117.5 passer rating in the Seahawks' 45-17 win over Jacksonville.

Other nominees for NFC Defensive Player of Week 3 as submitted by NFC clubs:
- Detroit rookie defensive end **EZEKIEL ANSAH**, who had seven tackles, two sacks and a forced fumble.
- Minnesota linebacker **ERIN HENDERSON**, who had eight tackles, two sacks and an interception in the Vikings' 31-27 loss to Cleveland.
- Dallas defensive end **DE MARCUS WARE**, who had six tackles and two sacks.
- Chicago safety **MAJOR WRIGHT**, who returned an interception 38 yards for a touchdown, forced a fumble and had seven tackles.

Other nominees for NFC Special Teams Player of Week 3 as submitted by NFC clubs:
- Arizona cornerback-kick returner **JAVIER ARENAS**, who averaged 33.0 yards per return, including a long of 46 yards.
- Carolina kicker **GRAHAM GANO**, who converted all five PATs and a 53-yard field-goal attempt.