



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NFL 1/10/08

Contact: Clare Graff, NFL
212/450-2435, clare.graff@nfl.net

FINALISTS NAMED FOR 2007 NFL HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL COACH OF THE YEAR AWARD

Winner to Receive Cash Award, Football Program Grant and Trip to Super Bowl XLII

The NFL High School Football Coach of the Year Award was created in 1995 by the NFL and its teams to honor coaches who profoundly impacted the athletic and personal development of NFL players. This year, nearly 100 NFL players nominated the high school football coaches who helped shape them during their teenage years. Five finalists have been named for the 2007 NFL High School Football Coach of the Year Award, it was announced today.

The 2007 finalists and the NFL players who nominated them are:

Coach	School	City	Nominated By
Mike Berg	Central High School	Grand Forks, ND	Brooks Bollinger, Minnesota Vikings
Trace Deneke	El Camino High School	Oceanside, CA	Michael Kracalik, Baltimore Ravens Chris Pino, Current Free Agent Antwain Spann, New England Patriots
Ed Domsitz	Archbishop Alter High School	Kettering, OH	Nick Mangold, New York Jets
Elvin James	Goldsboro High School	Goldsboro, NC	David Thornton, Tennessee Titans
Kevin Sullivan	Andrew Jackson Senior High School	Jacksonville, FL	Leon Washington, New York Jets

In his nomination essay, Minnesota Vikings QB **BROOKS BOLLINGER** called Coach Mike Berg “a great man [who] taught me a lot about believing in yourself and overcoming adversity.” Tennessee Titans LB **DAVID THORNTON** recognized Coach Elvin James of Goldsboro High School, writing, “Guys could feel his passion for the game...I have a great deal of respect for him.”

MICHAEL KRACALIK of the Baltimore Ravens praised Coach Trace Deneke of El Camino High School as an “inspirational motivator who was crucial in our education on and off the field,” while current free agent **CHRIS PINO** saluted his “big heart.” Patriots CB **ANTWAIN SPANN** also played under Coach Deneke and called him “the ultimate motivator.”

New York Jets C **NICK MANGOLD** wrote about Coach Ed Domsitz of Archbishop Alter High School and his ability to “take a program that was down and out and build it up to a powerhouse.” Mangold’s

teammate, **LEON WASHINGTON** recognized Coach Kevin Sullivan of Andrew Jackson Senior High School for his “reputation in the state of Florida for what he has done with the kids in the ‘tough’ Eastside Jacksonville Community, sending many to college with more discipline and structure into their lives.”

Each finalist receives a \$2,500 cash award and a \$5,000 grant for their high school football programs. The winner, announced during the week of January 20, will attend Super Bowl XLII in Arizona as a guest of the NFL and receive a \$5,000 cash award and a \$10,000 grant for his high school football program. All grants will be awarded by the NFL Youth Football Fund (YFF).

“Our players come from different backgrounds, regions and life experiences,” said NFL Commissioner **ROGER GOODELL**. “The one thing they all have in common is that they received guidance and learned important life lessons from their high school coaches. These five finalists have dedicated their lives to teaching young players how to become leaders both on and off the field, and we congratulate them and all high school coaches for the roles they play in helping develop the leaders of our game.”

A blue-ribbon committee of sports leaders appointed by the NFL selects winners. The panel is comprised of **JON BUTLER**, executive director, Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc.; **JACK FLEISCHER**, veteran sportswriter; **SCOTT HALLENBECK**, executive director, USA Football; **GRANT TEAFF**, executive director of the American Football Coaches Association; NFL Pro Football Hall of Fame player and former NFL coach **ART SHELL**; and **TONY DEMATTEO**, **RICH KALLOK**, **WILLIAM MCGREGOR II**, and **ED THOMAS**, all former NFL High School Football Coach of the Year winners.

Established in 1998 by the NFL and the NFL Players Association, the NFL Youth Football Fund seeks to use football as a catalyst to promote positive youth development, support youth and high school football needs nationwide and also ensure the health of grassroots football in future generations. Through the YFF’s youth football initiatives and support programs, youngsters are provided with opportunities to learn the game of football, get physically fit and stay involved in productive after-school activities with adult mentors.

To see a complete list of this year’s nominees or for more information on NFL Youth Football initiatives, visit www.NFLHS.com

###