

2008 All-NFC North Division Team

By **BOB MCGINN**

bmcgin@journalsentinel.com

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Last week, scouts from each of the NFC North teams were asked by the Journal Sentinel's Bob McGinn to rank the top three players in the division at each position. They were not permitted to vote for their own players, and none of the comments that follow was made by a scout about a player on his own team. A first-place vote was worth three points, a second was worth two and a third was worth one. Asterisks denote unanimous selections.

Offense

NO. 1 WIDE RECEIVER: Greg Jennings (GB) and Calvin Johnson (Det), 8 points.

Others: Bernard Berrian (Minn), 5; Devin Hester (Chi), 3.

Comments: Johnson caught 69 passes for 1,229 yards and 10 touchdowns; Jennings was 75-1,191-9. "Just look at Calvin's production without a quarterback," one scout said.

"Jennings is the best route runner, but Calvin is the biggest mismatch-type guy."

Jennings, said another scout, "is just an explosive vertical route runner. He's so fricking fast. He's pretty tough, too." The Vikings gave the speedy Berrian \$13 million in '08 bonuses and for their expenditure received 44 catches, a 20.1-yard average and six TDs.

"For the most part, he produced what they needed," a third scout said.

LEFT TACKLE: Bryant McKinnie* (Minn), 9. Others: Chad Clifton (GB), 6; Jeff

Backus (Det), 5; John St. Clair (Chi), 4.

Comments: Clifton had been first for the last five years. "Same Clifton to me," one scout said, but another said: "I think he's getting toward the end. He's not very explosive."

McKinnie overcame a four-game suspension and made it for the first time since sharing honors with Clifton in 2003. "But I've never been a big McKinnie guy," a third scout said. "He's just a lazy guy. He doesn't have a lot of explosion about him." Backus, who was first team in '02, had a solid year. St. Clair played surprisingly well after rookie Chris Williams hurt his back in August. "He's kind of a guy but, hey, for the most part, he held his own," one scout said.

LEFT GUARD: Steve Hutchinson* (Minn), 9. Others: Josh Beekman (Chi) and Daryn

Colledge (GB), 6; Edwin Mulitalo (Det), 3.

Comments: Hutchinson has been the pick in his three years with the Vikings. "He's good in-line," one scout said. "He does have some athletic limitations but he's just a big, powerful guy that plays pretty steady." Beekman, a first-year starter, showed some strength. "Colledge is an improving player," another scout said. "Not bad." Mulitalo, 34, was another one of the over-the-hill oldies that Matt Millen liked to collect in Detroit.

CENTER: Matt Birk (Minn) and Olin Kreutz (Chi), 8. Others: Scott Wells (GB), 5; Dominic Raiola (Det), 3.

Comments: Kreutz made it for the eighth year in a row but had to share the top spot with Birk for the third time. "They're real solid," one scout said. "Kreutz is a little bit better athlete but Birk was so steady. Birk played better this year. You're talking about an older guy that didn't descend. That's pretty good." This was the first time that Wells finished ahead of Raiola. "Is Wells somebody you go out and purchase to be your center? No," one scout said. "He's an overachiever, but he's efficient and functional. He kind of fell into a job there in Green Bay."

RIGHT GUARD: Jason Spitz (GB), 8. Others: Robert Garza (Chi), 7; Anthony Herrera (Minn), 6; Stephen Peterman (Det), 3.

Comments: Fourth in 2006 and second in '07, Spitz overtook Garza this time. "Spitz is solid, not great," one scout said. "Tough guy. You wish he was a little more powerful. He is versatile." A starter since October 2007, Herrera stabilized what had been a weak position. "He tries to play physical and aggressive," one scout said. "He's not a mauler but he's a tough, scrappy guy."

RIGHT TACKLE: John Tait (Chi), 8. Others: Mark Tauscher (GB), 7; Ryan Cook (Minn), 5; Gosder Cherilus (Det), 4.

Comments: Tait, a first-team pick at RT in 2004 and LT in '06, emerged from a poor field. "Probably the weakest position in the division," one scout said. "Tait fell off big-time. They've got to upgrade there." Tauscher, who blew out his knee in Week 13, was first team in 2003, '05 and '07. "He probably has declined from where he was two years ago," one scout said. "He looks ugly but he usually gets his guy blocked. He'll still struggle vs. edge guys because he's not a great athlete." Cook lost his job to Artis Hicks in November but had to go back in when Hicks was injured. "Cook's terrible," another scout said. Of Cherilus, a first-round pick, one scout said: "Looks the part, but I thought he was soft. He blocked with his (chest). I thought he was raw."

TIGHT END: Greg Olsen (Chi), 8. Others: Donald Lee (GB), 7; Visanthe Shiancoe (Minn), 6; Michael Gaines (Det), 3.

Comments: Olsen, the unanimous pick as the No. 2 TE last year, surpassed Lee, the first-team selection in '07. "Olsen is basically a receiver," one scout said. "He's improved as a blocker, but he's still not a great blocker." Lee wasn't quite as productive. "I think he took a step back for whatever reason," another scout said. "To me, he's always been another wide receiver. You got all those wide-receiver options, why throw to him? That might be the reason his production dropped off." Shiancoe enjoyed what easily was his finest season. "I've got to give him credit for delivering," one scout said. "Not because he's a great player but because he delivered."

NO. 2 WIDE RECEIVER: Donald Driver* (GB), 9. Others: Bobby Wade (Minn), 6; Rashied Davis (Chi), 5; Shaun McDonald (Det), 4.

Comments: Driver, a first-team pick as the No. 2 WR in 2004 and a first-team pick as the No. 1 WR the last two years, dominated an awful group. "I still like him," one scout said. "Greg Jennings has taken some of his balls away but he's still productive when he gets his chances." As for Wade, one scout said: "Every time I see him he's dropping balls. He can't really run. He's not a No. 2. He's a slot receiver. We don't worry about Bobby Wade."

QUARTERBACK: Aaron Rodgers* (GB), 9. Others: Gus Frerotte (Minn) and Kyle Orton (Chi), 6; Dan Orlovsky (Det), 3.

Comments: In the first 14 years of this team, Brett Favre had been the pick 12 times and Jeff George (1999) and Daunte Culpepper ('04) each once. "With the exception of a few games, for a first-time starter, I think Rodgers is pretty damn good," one scout said. Frerotte, who was grouped with the backups in 1999 (for Detroit) and in 2003-'04 (for Minnesota), posted a 73.7 passer rating in 11 starts. "He's old and a backup at best," another scout said. Orton played well, hurt his ankle in Week 8 and was never quite the same. "I wouldn't consider him the answer, but he's better than their other options," one scout said. "He did improve." After starting Jon Kitna for a month, the Lions turned to Orlovsky and others. "The Lions don't have a quarterback," one scout said.

FULLBACK: Jason McKie* (Chi), 9. Others: Korey Hall (GB), 6; Naufahu Tahi (Minn), 5; Moran Norris (Det), 4.

Comments: "Isn't this an ugly group?" one scout said. "I didn't grade any one of these guys to be starters." McKie, described by another scout as a "decent blocker and decent receiver," shared the spot in '07. Tahi was known for his receiving, Norris for his blocking. As for Hall, one scout said: "He rotated. Try-hard. Tough. Not great."

RUNNING BACK: Adrian Peterson* (Minn), 9. Others: Matt Forte (Chi), 7; Ryan Grant (GB) and Kevin Smith (Det), 4.

Comments: The oldest of the group, Grant, is just 26. Once again, Peterson was a unanimous choice. "It's real simple," one scout said. "Aside from the fumbles, he's the best running back in football." Forte led the Bears in rushing (1,188 yards) and receptions (60). "He had a great year," another scout said. Smith came on down the stretch to share third place with Grant, who tied for second in '07. "Smith was one of the few bright spots for Detroit," one scout said. "Grant is just a straight-line, downhill, collision runner. He's not a great runner. If he gets a lane, he's dangerous because he has speed."

NO. 3 WIDE RECEIVER: Sidney Rice (Minn), 8. Others: Brandon Lloyd (Chi), 7; Jordy Nelson (GB), 6; Mike Furrey (Det), 3.

Comments: Rice, Lloyd and Furrey all were limited by injury. "I think Rice should be their starter over Wade," one scout said. "He's big, physical, can run." Nelson had the most catches (32) and yards (357). "Nelson has a chance to be a real good possession guy," another scout said. "He's tough. He's got deceptive speed. He doesn't have great separation skills."

NO. 4 WIDE RECEIVER: Marty Booker (Chi), 8. Others: Aundrae Allison (Minn), 7; Ruvell Martin (GB), 6; John Standeford (Det), 3.

Comments: Booker, 32, had merely 14 catches in his return to the Bears. Martin probably played more than James Jones. "I'd take Martin," one scout said. "He really kind of reminds me of Justin Gage, but he's a bigger athlete. Good player. He's a nice fit in a nice rotation. Jimmy Robinson is a pretty damn good coach."

NO. 2 TIGHT END: Desmond Clark* (Chi), 9. Others: Jim Kleinsasser (Minn), 7; Tory Humphrey (GB), 5; John Owens (Det), 3.

Comments: Clark, the pick among all TEs in '06, dominated this field. Kleinsasser and Owens were used strictly to block. "I'm trying to figure out what Humphrey is," one scout said. "Their tight ends are more receivers than blockers."

UTILITY OFFENSIVE LINEMAN: Artis Hicks* (Minn), 9. Others: Tony Moll (GB), 7; Terrence Metcalf (Chi), 5; Damion Cook (Det), 3.

Comments: Hicks started four games at LT during McKinnie's suspension and then was taking over at RT before going down. "He's got some athletic ability," one scout said. Moll made three starts at RG and two at RT before being benched. "He's an old lumberjack type guy," another scout said. "He's steady, but I'm not thrilled watching him."

NO. 2 QUARTERBACK: Tarvaris Jackson (Minn), 7. Others: Daunte Culpepper (Det) and Rex Grossman (Chi), 6; Matt Flynn (GB), 5.

Comments: Jackson flopped as a two-game starter before resurfacing in Week 13 and showing marked improvement. "I was impressed he kept his mind-set right throughout this benching," one scout said. "Now he's playing pretty good." Culpepper turned down an offer from Green Bay in April and on Nov. 4 went to the Lions, for whom he started five games before getting hurt. "He could come back next year and be a stopgap guy," another scout said.

NO. 2 RUNNING BACK: Chester Taylor* (Minn), 9. Others: Brandon Jackson (GB), Rudi Johnson (Det) and Adrian Peterson (Chi), 5.

Comments: Taylor (97 carries, 389 yards) repeated as a unanimous choice. "He's a starter for a lot of teams," one scout said. "He does it all." Johnson, the former Bengal, (76-237) had more carries than Jackson (45-248) and Peterson (17-83). "Johnson has lost a step but he's got real good vision and instincts," another scout said. "He can block in blitz pickup. I like him."

Defense

LEFT END: Aaron Kampman* (GB), 9. Others: Ray Edwards (Minn) and Adewale Ogunleye (Chi), 6; Jared DeVries (Det), 3.

Comments: Kampman was a unanimous choice for the third year in a row. "He's one of those guys, every time I see him he's gotten better," one scout said. "Not the most athletic guy but his hand use and his (footwork) are pretty good." Ogunleye, the runner-up the past three years, made the first team over Kampman in 2004 and '05. He tied with Edwards, a second-year starter. "People want to tag Edwards as a pass-rush guy but he's really not," another scout said. "Really a solid run player. He had a little bit more pass rush than Ogunleye."

NOSE TACKLE: Pat Williams* (Minn), 9. Others: Ryan Pickett (GB), 7; Dusty Dvoracek (Chi), 5; Chuck Darby (Det), 3.

Comments: Since joining the Vikings as an unrestricted free agent from Buffalo in March 2005, the 36-year-old Williams has been a unanimous selection each year. "I didn't see any drop-off," one scout said. "He's the modern-day Ted Washington." Pickett tied for second in 2006 and was third in '07. "He's a big space-eater," another scout said. "Not a great player. Not a playmaker. But he can stuff the middle." The Bears made a poor evaluation starting Dvoracek in the first 12 games over Anthony Adams, the better player. Darby was another one of Rod Marinelli's washed-up imports from Tampa Bay.

THREE-TECHNIQUE TACKLE: Kevin Williams* (Minn), 9. Others: Tommie Harris (Chi), 7; Johnny Jolly (GB) and Cory Redding (Det), 4.

Comments: Strong and quick, Williams made the first team for the fifth time in his six-year career. "He's unbelievable," one scout said. "He destroyed us." Harris, who was the pick in '06 and shared honors in '05, had some personal problems and didn't always play hard. "He doesn't take over a game like he used to," another scout said. "He'd get lost at times. I think the knee is an issue." Jolly, said a third scout, "is talented and has strength at the point. But he gets out of his lanes and they give up some big runs because of it." Redding played on a bad knee and had a bad year.

RIGHT END: Jared Allen* (Minn), 9. Others: Alex Brown (Chi), 7; Michael Montgomery (GB) and Dewayne White (Det), 4.

Comments: On April 23, the Vikings traded a first-round pick and two thirds to Kansas City for Allen. "He's fine," one scout said. "He gives them some edge rush." The hard-charging Brown probably had his finest season after having his job taken away in '07. "He outplayed Ogunleye and Harris," another scout said. "He was their best defensive lineman." Montgomery replaced Cullen Jenkins, who blew out a pectoral muscle in Week 4. "I'd take Montgomery on our roster," one scout said. "More of a two-down run player." White was better than Montgomery but fell victim to the inescapable bias against players from an 0-15 team.

STRONG-SIDE LINEBACKER: Ben Leber* (Minn), 9. Others: Brady Poppinga (GB), 7; Nick Roach (Chi), 5; Ryan Nece (Det), 3.

Comments: "Boy, that's a beaut of a group," one scout said. Leber, an unrestricted signing from San Diego in March 2006, made the first team for the third time. "He can play in space, he's strong at the point, he gives you a little pass rush," another scout said. Poppinga lost playing time to Brandon Chillar. "He's not as good an athlete as Leber but they do similar things," a third scout said. "Putting his hand down is a joke but they got nobody else. I'd go with Poppinga over Roach." Roach, a Milwaukee native, became a starter in Week 8. "They consider that position to be a pawn," one scout said. "He'll be able to function with what they do. If that guy (SLB) makes plays that's gravy for them."

MIDDLE LINEBACKER: Nick Barnett (GB) and Brian Urlacher (Chi), 8. Others: Paris Lenon (Det), 5; Napoleon Harris (Minn), 3.

Comments: Barnett, who blew out his knee in Week 9, shared the top spot for the second straight year. "I didn't see any drop-off in him at all," one scout said. "He's one of the top middle linebackers going." Urlacher, a first-team pick from 2000-'06, shared the top spot after sliding to third in '07. "He's still a good player," another scout said. "He's not a great player. Still athletic. Still not very physical taking on blocks." The Lions regarded Lenon as their most consistent defensive player. "He's more physical at the point than Urlacher," another scout said. "But laterally and in coverage he can't make some plays that he should."

WEAK-SIDE LINEBACKER: Lance Briggs* (Chi), 9. Others: Chad Greenway (Minn), 7; A.J. Hawk (GB) and Ernie Sims (Det), 4.

Comments: Briggs was a first-team pick on the strong side in 2003 and on the weak side ever since. "Everybody wanted to say Urlacher makes them good but he really doesn't," one scout said. "Briggs does a much better job attacking the point. He was a little more physical at the point this year and it made him a better player. You think you can turn the corner and he comes flying and makes the play." Greenway, who was last in this group in '07, moved up. "He was their best linebacker," another scout said. "He had a really good year." Hawk settled for third place for the third year in a row. "I didn't think he played very well this year," one scout said. "Was inconsistent getting off blocks and I thought he got exposed in the pass game. He just kind of looked like, I'm not going to say a guy but he certainly didn't look like a top pick in the draft." Second in '07, Sims by far had his worst season. "But he's got tremendous close speed," one scout said.

LEFT CORNERBACK: Charles Woodson* (GB), 9. Others: Antoine Winfield (Minn), 7; Charles Tillman (Chi), 5; Brian Kelly (Det), 3.

Comments: Winfield, a first-team choice from 2004-'06, lost out to Woodson for the second year in a row. "It's hard to pick between them," one scout said. "They just had great years." Woodson intercepted six passes at LC but spent Weeks 12-14 at SS. "They dropped off playmaking-wise when they moved him and took him out of the (slot)," another scout said. "That was a mistake." Winfield isn't as good downfield as Woodson but is every bit as physical. "The first half Winfield played great football and then I think he leveled off," one scout said. "Obviously, he's not a big guy so I think the season takes its toll on him." Tillman doesn't cover as well as the top two but has a knack for forcing

turnovers. Given a \$3.25 million signing bonus March 10 to leave Tampa Bay and reunite with Marinelli, Kelly was so bad that the cornerback-poor Lions cut him Dec. 9.

RIGHT CORNERBACK: Al Harris* (GB), 9. Others: Cedric Griffin (Minn), 7; Corey Graham (Chi), 5; Leigh Bodden (Det), 3.

Comments: A unanimous pick two years in a row, Harris tied for first in '04 and '06 and was second in '03 and '05. "I still think he's a big, physical corner," one scout said. "Dangerous if he gets his hands on you. Struggles some the further you get down the field." Griffin, a starter since mid-2006, remained at the same level. "Graham benefits by playing in a Cover 2 scheme," another scout said. "Bodden would be better in man coverage. Bodden's speed is OK, but Graham can't run."

STRONG SAFETY: Darren Sharper* (Minn), 9. Others: Mike Brown (Chi), 7; Aaron Rouse (GB), 5; Daniel Bullocks (Det), 3.

Comments: The 33-year-old Sharper, a unanimous pick six times and a first-team pick seven times in the last seven years, had his lowest interception total (one) since 1998. "Sharper and Mike Brown are real close," one scout said. "Mike Brown does a good job in run support and, surprisingly, Sharper did also. Sharper isn't going to try to blow a whole lot of people up but he's a wrap tackler and brings you down. Sharper has lost his speed; he's probably a 4.6. But his reads and reactions are still good." Rouse probably played more snaps in relief of injured Atari Bigby. "He's a little tall and leggy," another scout said. "I think he could be a career backup."

FREE SAFETY: Nick Collins* (GB), 9. Others: Madiou Williams (Minn), 7; Kevin Payne (Chi), 5; Calvin Pearson (Det), 3.

Comments: Collins was the pick for the third year in a row after Sharper held sway from 2002-'05. "He had his best year," one scout said. "I thought we could get him because he's a little slow to diagnose and would kind of take some chances. He is talented and can fly." Williams, a highly paid former Bengal, didn't become a starter until Week 8 due to injury. "He's not a force in the run game or in the back picking off balls," another scout said. "But he does a good job lining guys up and usually is in the right spot. Just a solid player."

NO. 3 DEFENSIVE END: Brian Robison (Minn), 8. Others: Mark Anderson (Chi), 7; Cliff Avril (Det), 5; Jeremy Thompson (GB), 4.

Comments: "I don't see any of those players ascending to be a starter," one scout said. "They're all role players." Anderson doesn't do much other than run up the field. Avril, a rookie, has more of a repertoire than Anderson and, therefore, a better future. "Robison doesn't hold the point very well," another scout said. "But he's relentless and has more athleticism than you think. He's steady."

NO. 3 DEFENSIVE TACKLE: Shaun Cody (Det), 7. Others: Anthony Adams (Chi) and Colin Cole (GB), 6; Fred Evans (Minn), 5.

Comments: "That's a good group," one scout said. "They're all pretty good." Cody got the edge because of his ability to play both positions and provide a measure of pass rush. Adams' promotion in Week 13 galvanized the Bears' defense. "Adams is more of a two-

gapper," another scout said. "Undersized height-wise so he gets lost sometimes and can't find things. He's a physical guy at the point. Cole is an in-line powerful guy but has some athletic and range limitations."

UTILITY DEFENSIVE LINEMAN: Israel Idonije* (Chi), 9. Others: Ellis Wymys (Minn), 6; Jason Hunter (GB), 5; Ikaika Alama-Francis (Det), 4.

Comments: The Nigerian-born Idonije, 28, was a unanimous pick for the second straight year. "He's an athletic guy who can do a lot of things," one scout said.

NO. 4 LINEBACKER: Brandon Chillar (GB), 8. Others: Hunter Hillenmeyer (Chi), 7; David Herron (Minn), 5; Jordon Dizon (Det), 4.

Comments: Chillar was the choice at a spot that Lenon won for the Packers in 2004-'05. "He's a good fourth," one scout said. "He's pretty athletic. He's pretty good in coverage. He filled in OK." Hillenmeyer, a one-time Packer and four-year starter in Chicago, lost his job to Roach on the basis of speed and athleticism. "He should be a utility player for them," another scout said.

NO. 3 CORNERBACK: Tramon Williams (GB), 8. Others: Travis Fisher (Det), 7; Nathan Vasher (Chi), 6; Benny Sapp (Minn), 3.

Comments: Williams ended up starting seven games and intercepted five passes. "He's an up-and-down guy that I think has some upside in man coverage," one scout said. "He got destroyed by Houston, that (Kevin) Walter kid." Said another scout: "I thought he was excellent. He's very instinctive. He showed ball awareness. He guesses right." Vasher, a starter since '04, was injured most of the season.

NO. 3 SAFETY: Danieal Manning (Chi), 8. Others: Tyrell Johnson (Minn), 7; Charlie Peprah (GB), 6; Dwight Smith (Det), 3.

Comments: Manning made his mark covering from the slot from about midseason on. "He's really good in run support and he's a good blitzer off the edge," one scout said. Johnson, a second-round pick in '08, started the first seven games while Madiou Williams convalesced. "I actually think he played better than Madiou," another scout said. "They're probably regretting signing him. Johnson's a good player. Has speed. He's got athleticism."

Specialists

SPECIAL TEAMS

KICKER: Robbie Gould (Chi), 8. Others: Ryan Longwell (Minn), 5; Mason Crosby (GB), 3.

Comments: Gould, a unanimous pick in '06, shared the spot with Hanson, a first-team selection for the 10th time in the 15-year history of the team. Of Gould, one scout said: "To kick in those elements and have those kinds of numbers is pretty phenomenal." Hanson made 95.5% of his field-goal attempts compared to 89.3% for Gould, 84.4% for Longwell and 81.3% for Crosby. Gould led the group on kickoffs. In a tough field, Crosby was last for the second straight year. "What's that guy's deal?" one scout said, referring to Crosby. "He choked a few times."

PUNTER: Brad Maynard (Chi), 8. Others: Chris Kluwe (Minn), 7; Nick Harris (Det), 6; Derrick Frost (GB), 3.

Comments: Maynard also won in 2001 and '04. "He's very good at not only directional but inside the 20," one scout said. Of Maynard's 90 punts, 36 were inside the 20 and just five were touchbacks. The dome booters, Kluwe (47.6) and Harris (44.0), had the best averages.

PUNT RETURNER: Will Blackmon (GB) and Devin Hester (Chi), 8. Others: Charles Gordon (Minn), 5; Shaun McDonald (Det), 3.

Comments: Hester, a unanimous pick the last two years, never got untracked (6.4) and shared the top spot with Blackmon (11.5). "It's unbelievable Hester couldn't get it going," one scout said. "But he still influenced a lot of field position by teams kicking out of bounds. Blackmon does have some play-making ability. I like him better here than on kickoffs."

KICKOFF RETURNER: Danieal Manning* (Chi), 9. Others: Will Blackmon (GB), 6; Aveion Cason (Det), 5; Maurice Hicks (Minn), 4.

Comments: Manning didn't assume the job from Hester until the second half of the 10th game. Then he went on to average an NFL-leading 29.4. "It's a shame he was in their doghouse," one scout said. "It turned out to be a good move for them."

SPECIAL TEAMS ACE: Eric Frampton (Minn), 6. Others: Jamar Williams (Chi), 5; Desmond Bishop (GB), 4; Vinny Ciurciu (Minn), 3; Darrell McClover (Chi), 2; Will Blackmon (GB), Alex Lewis (Det), Calvin Pearson (Det) and Dexter Wynn (Det), 1. Comments: Frampton, a fifth-round draft choice by Oakland as a safety in '07, played five games for the Lions that year before being claimed off waivers by Minnesota in October 2007. He had 20 tackles, the fourth highest total in the division. "The guy made plays," one scout said. "They found a guy with him."

THE WINNERS

COACH OF THE YEAR: Lovie Smith (Chi), 3; Brad Childress (Minn), 1. Smith won for the fourth time in his five-year tenure.

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Ron Turner (Chi), 2; Darrell Bevell (Minn) and Joe Philbin (GB), 1. Turner tied for first in 2005.

DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Leslie Frazier (Minn), 3; Bob Babich (Chi), 1. Frazier tied for first last year.

SPECIAL TEAMS COACH: Dave Toub (Chi), 3; Stan Kwan (Det), 1. Toub also was first in 2006 and '07 after finishing second in '04 and '05.

POSITION COACH: Tom Clements (quarterbacks, GB), Karl Dunbar (defensive line, Minn) and Fred Pagac (linebackers, Minn), 1; Kurt Schottenheimer (secondary, GB) and Lionel Washington (nickel package-cornerbacks, GB), one-half. Dunbar won in 2006; he also tied for first in '04 as a member of the Bears' staff; Clements also tied for first in 2007.

OFFENSIVE PLAYER: Adrian Peterson (Minn), 3; Matt Forte (Chi), 1. Peterson was a repeat winner.

DEFENSIVE PLAYER: Jared Allen (Minn), 2; Lance Briggs (Chi) and Kevin Williams (Minn), 1.

OFFENSIVE ROOKIE: Matt Forte (Chi), 3; Jordy Nelson (GB), 1.

DEFENSIVE ROOKIE: Marcus Harrison (Chi), 2; Cliff Avril (Det) and Tyrell Johnson (Minn), 1.

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER: Adrian Peterson (Minn), 3; Matt Forte (Chi), 1. First running back to win since the award was originated in 2000.

EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR: Rick Spielman (VP of player personnel, Minn), 2; Jerry Angelo (GM, Chi) and Russ Ball (VP of football administration, GB), 1. Spielman is the first Vikings' personnel man to win since Scott Studwell in 2004.

IMPACT DECISIONS

- Green Bay's decision in August to go with QB Aaron Rodgers and trade QB Brett Favre. "Maybe they win a few more games with Favre but I still think long-term Rodgers is going to be pretty damn good," one scout said. "Look at what Favre is doing out there. He's already going to leave and the season isn't even over yet."
- Chicago's decision to go with QB Kyle Orton over Rex Grossman. "That did a lot for that team," one scout said.

- Green Bay's decision to trade Brett Favre to the New York Jets. "I'm not saying it was good or bad," one scout said. "But that team was in the NFC Championship Game. It obviously impacted the team."
- Minnesota's decision to bench QB Tarvaris Jackson after two games and start Gus Frerotte. "Whatever their reasons for doing it, I think that decision impacted their season," one scout said. "They probably won a couple games that Tarvaris probably wouldn't have won but will eventually win. So they let him sit behind a guy like Frerotte for almost a full year."