

BUCCANEERS ANNOUNCE 2008 SCHEDULE

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers' 2008 regular season schedule, released today by the National Football League, includes three prime-time contests and four games against 2007 playoff teams.

The Buccaneers open the 2008 campaign at New Orleans in a matchup of the last three NFC South winners. Tampa Bay, the defending division champion, also won the title in 2005 while the Saints claimed the NFC South in 2006. Since the division was created in 2002, the series is tied at 6-6.

Tampa Bay hosts Atlanta on September 14 in its home opener. The Buccaneers have knocked off the Falcons in five of the last seven contests. The Buccaneers' 37-3 victory over Atlanta last December at Raymond James Stadium gave Tampa Bay its third NFC South crown in the last six seasons.

In Week 3 on September 21, the Buccaneers meet former NFC Central rival Chicago at Soldier Field, the third meeting between the teams since 2005. In 2006, Tampa Bay rallied from 21 points down before falling 34-31 in overtime at Chicago.

Green Bay, playing without QB Brett Favre for the first time since 1991, travels to Tampa on September 28. The game is the fourth meeting between the teams since 2002 and the 50th all-time matchup in the series.

Tampa Bay travels to Denver on October 5 for the first time since 1996 to face the Broncos for just the sixth time overall. It will also be the first time the Buccaneers play at INVESCO Field at Mile High, having played their previous two contests in Denver at Mile High Stadium.

Tampa Bay hosts back-to-back home games starting in Week 6 against division rival Carolina on October 12. The Buccaneers then play host to four-time defending NFC West Champion Seattle on NBC's Sunday Night Football on October 19, marking Tampa Bay's first prime-time affair at Raymond James Stadium since 2003. The contest between 2007 division winners is the third meeting in the last five years.

The Buccaneers hit the road for two consecutive games starting with a Week 8 trip to NFC East champion Dallas on October 26. Tampa Bay has won three of the last four games in the series. Tampa Bay then travels to face Kansas City on November 2 at Arrowhead Stadium for the first time since 1986 before taking its Bye Week in Week 10 on November 9.

Following the bye, Tampa Bay hosts Minnesota for the first time since a 38-24 victory at RJS in 2002. The Buccaneers face former NFC Central rival Detroit when they travel to Ford Field for the second consecutive season in Week 12. The Buccaneers have won six of the last eight games in the series.

Following the Detroit contest, Tampa Bay plays three straight division games, beginning with a home matchup with New Orleans on November 30. The Buccaneers then close out its slate of division games with back-to-back road contests at Carolina on Monday, December 8 on ESPN's Monday Night Football and Sunday, December 14 at Atlanta. The Buccaneers have captured two of the last three meetings in both Charlotte and Atlanta.

The 2008 schedule closes with consecutive home games against AFC West opponents. The Buccaneers host AFC West champion San Diego in Week 16 in a game that has been tentatively scheduled as the NBC nationally-televised game on Sunday Night Football before wrapping up the regular season campaign with a Week 17 contest on December 28 against the Oakland Raiders. San Diego will be traveling to Tampa for the first time since 1993, while Oakland visits the Tampa Bay area for the first time since 1996. The Buccaneers will play their regular season

finale at home for the fourth consecutive season.

The season again will utilize “flexible scheduling,” in Weeks 11-17. In those weeks, the schedule lists the games tentatively set for Sunday night on NBC. Only Sunday afternoon games are eligible to be moved to Sunday night, in which case the tentatively scheduled Sunday night game will be moved to an afternoon start time. Flexible scheduling will not be applied to games airing on Thursday, Saturday or Monday nights.

A flexible scheduling move will be announced at least 12 days before the game. For Week 17, the change may be announced six days before the game. Flexible scheduling will ensure quality matchups on Sunday night in those weeks and give “surprise” teams a chance to play their way onto primetime.

Tampa Bay kicks off its preseason schedule at Miami on Saturday, August 9 at 7:30 p.m. before making its first-ever appearance on the NFL Network, hosting New England on Sunday, August 17 at 8 p.m. in the 2008 preseason home opener. Tampa Bay will conclude its home portion of the preseason schedule on Saturday, August 23 against Jacksonville before concluding the exhibition slate against the Houston Texans with a road contest on Thursday, August 28th. News Channel 8 WFLA-TV is once again the official home of Buccaneers preseason football.

The Buccaneers are scheduled to report to training camp on Friday, July 25, with the first practices slated for Saturday, July 26 at Disney’s Wide World of Sports Complex in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

2008 Buccaneers Season Schedule				
Day	Date	Opponent	Time	Network
-- Preseason --				
Sat.	Aug. 9	at Miami	7:30 p.m.	WFLA-TV (NBC)
Sun.	Aug. 17	NEW ENGLAND	8:00 p.m.	NFL Network
Sat.	Aug. 23	JACKSONVILLE	7:30 p.m.	WFLA-TV (NBC)
Thurs.	Aug. 28	at Houston	8:00 p.m.	WFLA-TV (NBC)
-- Regular Season --				
Sun.	Sept. 7	at New Orleans	1:00 p.m.	FOX
Sun.	Sept. 14	ATLANTA	4:05 p.m.	FOX
Sun.	Sept. 21	at Chicago	1:00 p.m.	FOX
Sun.	Sept. 28	GREEN BAY	1:00 p.m.	FOX
Sun.	Oct. 5	at Denver	4:05 p.m.	FOX
Sun.	Oct. 12	CAROLINA	1:00 p.m.	FOX
Sun.	Oct. 19	SEATTLE *	8:15 p.m.	NBC
Sun.	Oct. 26	at Dallas	1:00 p.m.	FOX
Sun.	Nov. 2	at Kansas City	1:00 p.m.	FOX
Sun.	Nov. 9	-- bye week --		
Sun.	Nov. 16	MINNESOTA	1:00 p.m.^	FOX
Sun.	Nov. 23	at Detroit	1:00 p.m.^	FOX
Sun.	Nov. 30	NEW ORLEANS	1:00 p.m.^	FOX
Mon.	Dec. 8	at Carolina *	8:30 p.m.	ESPN
Sun.	Dec. 14	at Atlanta	1:00 p.m.^	FOX
Sun.	Dec. 21	SAN DIEGO *	8:15 p.m.^	NBC

Sun. Dec. 28 OAKLAND 1:00 p.m.^ CBS

All times Eastern and subject to change

* Nationally-Televised Game

^ All Sunday afternoon games in Weeks 11-17 are subject to a time change as part of NFL's flex scheduling