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**ESPN TO RE-AIR ICONIC**

***MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL* GAME**

**OF NEW ORLEANS SAINTS DOMINATING VICTORY OVER THEIR ARCHRIVAL ATLANTA FALCONS SEPTEMBER 25, 2006**

***Saints Announce Unique Fan Engagement Opportunities to Unify Community in the Age of Social Distancing***

***BLACK and GOLD MONDAY RETURNS***

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**New Orleans** – On Monday, April 6, ESPN will re-air New Orleans’ commanding ~~28-3~~, 23-3 win over the Atlanta Falcons in the first game played at the Mercedes-Benz Superdome following Hurricane Katrina. The game marked the Saints’ home debut of then-rookie Head Coach Sean Payton, QB Drew Brees, several new players to the Saints’ roster including RB Reggie Bush, and a spunky special team’s ace in Steve Gleason. Gleason went on to earn the Congressional Gold Medal. The game, which will be shown at 7 p.m. central, is the second of several iconic *Monday Night Football* games from the past 15 years that the network will re-broadcast over the next several weeks, although, clearly the most inspirational and poignant of those selected for rebroadcast .

The game immediately entered Saints franchise lore because of the nature of the 23-3 victory over the “Dirty Birds” before a raucous crowd that welcomed the Saints back to the Superdome. In the year prior, the team, along with many in New Orleans and the Gulf South, were exiled suddenly from home because of the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The victory also propelled the Saints to a 3-0 record to start the season and served as a launching pad for the team’s run to their first NFC Championship game appearance and a season sweep against Atlanta.

“We are excited about the ESPN rebroadcast of our 2006 homecoming game against Atlanta,” said New Orleans Saints Owner Gayle Benson.  “That game was such a magical experience and a symbol of what we can overcome and accomplish as a community.  Our resilience, strength and care for one another is what defines New Orleans and is what will get us through this crisis just as we have overcome so many before.  I encourage everyone to wear their black and gold on Monday and share with each other, virtually, this opportunity to unite and remind ourselves of the better times that are to come. Most importantly, I hope our fans will use this opportunity to have fun, share a great memory experience and focus on the joy of what it means to celebrate our love of team and home.”

ESPN’S re-air of the game reflects the efforts by both ESPN and the New Orleans Saints to deliver fans some of their favorite sports moments as a small but welcomed distraction in the middle of a difficult and unprecedented time. The *Monday Night Football Classics* series showcases legendary National Football League players and current stars, popular franchises and a handful of the most memorable games in the 50-year history of sports television’s signature series. These games will also include advertising and PSA inventory to support COVID-19 relief-focused organizations.

The Saints have planned some engagement activities in conjunction with the re-airing on the broadcast, including:

* **BLACK AND GOLD MONDAY:** A time-honored tradition in New Orleans and across the Gulf Coast in the days leading up to a New Orleans Saints game is Saints Black-and-Gold Fridays or Mondays. This Monday, and with proper permissions (who is going to say no this?) the Saints are asking their fans of all ages to don their favorite Saints apparel, costume, gear or threads. Whether it is during home schooling or remote workplaces, the team encourages their fans to dress for the occasion. Please share your photos at NewOrleansSaints.com, Twitter (@Saints) and Instagram (@Saints)! ***#BlackAndGoldMonday***
* **FULL SOCIAL MEDIA SUPPORT PLATFORMS:** Allowing fans the ability to share their photos, videos and memories of the day, which featured star-studded musical acts U2, Green Day, the Goo-Goo Dolls, Irma Thomas, Trombone Shorty and the late Allen Toussaint. Please share your photos and videos at NewOrleansSaints.com, Twitter (@Saints) and Instagram (@Saints). ***#BlackAndGoldMonday***
* **NEW ORLEANS SAINTS LEGENDS COMMUNITY:** New Orleans Saints Legends from the 2006 team, including Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Steve Gleason, will be sharing their unique insights about the 24 hours leading up to the contest. The Saints Legends will share their thoughts about Head Coach Sean Payton’s message to the team the night before the game, the first time back in the Superdome for practice prior to the game, recollections of the mood around the team throughout the day at the team hotel and their thoughts about the action throughout the iconic game. Select Legends will also be encouraged to show where they are watching the rebroadcast of the game and how they are getting ready for the contest. ***#BlackAndGoldMonday*** ***(Please note: The opinions shared on social media are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the New Orleans Saints).***
* **GAYLE BENSON COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE FUND**: We are asking fans to kindly consider partnering with the Saints and the Greater New Orleans Foundation to provide needed assistance to the New Orleans service industry. If any or more of these plays occur during the rebroadcast of the game, then fans would be encouraged to make a small donation. The proceeds will directly assist and help the hospitality workers of our state facing unemployment due to the COVID-19 impact. Please visit: <https://www.gnof.org/benson>.

Some unique plays and circumstances that may merit a donation might be, but are not limited to, the following:

* A monetary donation equal to their favorite Saints player’s jersey from that game (for example, $9.00 for #9, $25 for #25, $37.00 for #37)
* If the Saints block a punt in the first quarter
* If the Saints, as a result of a blocked punt, score a TD on a special teams play
* If the Saints hold their opponent to less than four points
* If a skill player scores a touchdown
* If the Saints boot three or more field goals
* **FASCINATING TRIVIA FOR THE MOST AVID FANS:** While the Saints hosted virtually every single media outlet that night, ranging from small local community newspapers to global news networks, virtually every aspect of the team’s triumphant return to the Superdome was covered. However, the Saints have pieced together ten head-scratching trivia questions that will test even the most attentive Saints fan. Test your mettle to see if you know everything about that night in the dome at the Official New Orleans Saints app!
* **NEWORLEANSSAINTS.COM:** **The Saints Are Coming**-NewOrleansSaints.com and the team's Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts produced a one hour-long documentary. The story is told from the perspective of players, coaches, and people involved with the rebuilding of the Saints and Mercedes-Benz Superdome, as well as the musical influences from the entertainment. <https://www.neworleanssaints.com/video/saintsarecoming>
* **ART ACTIVITY:** The Saints graphic design team has created a special project for younger fans. Check NewOrleansSaints.com for a direct link. The team’s popular website recently added a fun activity guide perfect for all younger Saints fans.
* **INSTRUMENTALS/MUSIC:** Just like New Orleans, music played a huge part in the re-opening of the Superdome. Saints fans were left with indelible memorable sounds that they still carry with them and cherish to this day. Fans with special musical talents or TikTok Skills are encouraged to share their Saints sounds! Please share your photos, videos and TikTok skills at NewOrleansSaints.com, Twitter (@Saints) and Instagram (@Saints)! ***#BlackAndGoldMonday***
* **NEW ORLEANS SAINTS RADIO-**WWL (870 AM/105.3 FM/WWL.com): WWL is the flagship station of the Saints Radio Network and will be participating in re-telling all of the activities in a special produced pre-game show this Monday from 4-7 p.m. CT.  Former Saints quarterback **Bobby Hebert**and**Kristian Garic** will host pregame coverage with several special call-in Saints Legends guests and members of that team including all-time leading rusher Deuce McAllister and tackle Zach Strief. Fans can then enjoy the nostalgic trip by listening to the re-airing of the game in its entirety, with the call coming from legendary play-by-play man Jim Henderson and the on-point analysis of the late Hokie Gajan at 7 p.m.

**-New Orleans Saints-**