

**ESPN**  
**MONDAY**  
**NIGHT**   
**FOOTBALL**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 6, 2006

**ESPN'S MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL: A PRODUCTION LIKE NO OTHER**

When Monday Night Football debuts on ESPN with a doubleheader on September 11 – Minnesota at Washington at 7 p.m. ET followed by San Diego at Oakland at 10:15 p.m. – the new open, music, graphics and more will be impressive to the eye, and ear. But, after months of planning and preparation, it is what viewers won't see – the coordination of an unprecedented weekly assembly of personnel and equipment – that will be most impressive.

**LIGHTS, CAMERAS, HI-DEF ACTION**

Even with a pair of Emmy Awards for producing television's best sports series in ESPN's Sunday Night Football, producer Jay Rothman and director Chip Dean know assuming the helm of MNF – the pre-eminent franchise in sports television – will require all their creative energies and most of their waking hours.

The game will be produced using three production trucks. The star of the trio is a new state-of-the-art HD (high definition) 53-foot mobile production unit, designed and built with the demands of MNF in mind. There will be no fewer than 33 cameras to catch every movement on and around the field, including four "Slo-Mo" cameras (120 frames per second) and one new "Ultra-Slo-Mo" (as slow as 1000 frames per second) to catch every muscle twitch of a runner's leg or a quarterback's arm.

Another camera will be an NFL first – an "RF Steadicam", a camera worn by a person who will be allowed to go onto the field when the clock is stopped. He or she will be able to range from either end zone to the 35-yard line. The wireless camera, which will not have a microphone and not be used to cover injuries, will bring fans closer to the players on the field, particularly after scoring plays.

The HD truck debuted at ESPN's coverage of the MLB Home Run Derby in Pittsburgh on July 10 and was used at X Games in Los Angeles. Rick Abbott, vice president, remote operations, calls it "ESPN's big-event truck" because of its tremendous capability. After a year on the MNF tour, it will also be used at Women's Final Four, the College World Series and other marquee events.

**ESPN'S MNF FUN FACTS:**

7 – Production trucks used each week (three for game telecast, four for studio shows)

15 – Digital recording devices recording game action.

35 – 42" plasma screens in the three MNF game telecast production trucks

47 – Cameras used for MNF each week, including 33 game cameras and 14 for studio shows

60 – ESPN staffers working inside ESPN's MNF trucks during games

108 – Monitors on main wall of MNF production truck used by producer Jay Rothman and director Chip Dean

400 – Credentialed ESPN personnel working on MNF each week

20,000 – Feet of cable used each week for MNF

25,000 – Miles ESPN's fleet of production trucks will travel during MNF season. Longest week: 3,067 miles (60 hours) from Jacksonville to Seattle (Nov. 21-27).

80,000 – Maximum weight in pounds of each truck in MNF fleet

The three trucks – aside from the primary unit, the others handle replays, audio, the Emmy Award-winning "First & 10" line, Skycam and more – require two days of setup and 200 personnel. They are a tape-less environment. Reel to reel? Antiques. One inch tapes? Forget about it. Beta SP? No thanks. Everything in this truck is server-based – digitally recorded – allowing both the game and studio production crews to more quickly turn around replays and eye-catching montages.

**CINEMATIC "TRANSFORMATION" OPENING**

A visually stunning cinematic opening signals the start of the MNF game telecast at the new 8:30 p.m. timeslot. If it looks like a movie, that's no coincidence. ESPN turned to The Syndicate, an acclaimed high-end visual effects company in Santa Monica, Calif., as well as a pair of accomplished young filmmakers in Kurt Mattila and Matt Checkowski – whose credits include the dream sequences for the Steven Spielberg thriller *Minority Report* – to create the opening "Transformation" sequence, which depicts an urban city morphing into a giant football cityscape after a pedestrian discovers an ESPN helmet on a city sidewalk.

Each week during the season, a different celebrity will pick up the helmet and initiate the "Transformation." The season-opening double-header will feature California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, who will ask the famed question, "Are You Ready for Some Football?"

"Transformation" features computer-generated visual effects as buildings shift and interconnect with one another to form a giant football stadium at the center of this hyper-real city. Residents become players, referees, coaches and cheering fans, as all the activity in the city begins to surround the game.

"We wanted the new open to feel like an edge-of-your-seat, high-end trailer for a blockbuster movie, yet remain organic to football and to the rich tradition of MNF when the biggest game of the week comes to a city," said Rick Paiva, vice president, ESPN creative services.

The entire project was filmed in 35MM. It took 14 months in the making and included a live-action film shoot over four nights on the streets of downtown Los Angeles in March, as well as months of computer-generated enhancements by The Syndicate and sound mixing at George Lucas' famed Skywalker Ranch. The Syndicate created a series of related 15-second bumpers from the show open and also teamed with Mattila and Checkowski on creating an entirely new brand identity and visual presentation for MNF and all of ESPN's NFL studio shows.

Heavy Action, the iconic MNF music composed by Johnny Pearson and chosen for the series debut in 1971, has been updated and freshened by APM, the production company behind the music, for the move to ESPN with bold guitar riffs, modern percussion and lush scores using a 60-piece orchestra in Seattle. The soundtrack actually boasts three final versions that are modern takes on the classic theme – one pure orchestral and two with different rock grooves.

General Motors also returns to occupy the coveted MNF opening sponsorship with a significant brand presence for its featured vehicle, the 2007 GMC Sierra truck.

#### HANK IS BACK WITH ROWDY FRIENDS

Just before the opening kickoff, fans will hear the familiar Monday Night Football theme music, "All My Rowdy Friends Are Coming Over Monday Night," sung by Hank Williams, Jr., but now with a twist. A solo act for the past 15 years, Williams, Jr. is now joined by an all-star collection of musicians with roots ranging from rock to country, including Clarence Clemons, Charlie Daniels, Joe Perry, Little Richard and Little Steven Van Zandt.

The new MNF opening video was taped in June at House of Blues Orlando with all of the musicians. ESPN's Paiva produced the video with Wayne Isham directing and technical resources provided by Stephen Levy of Habana Avenue. Van Zandt and John Colby produced the music, and Greg Jennings wrote the lyrics, which feature team-specific mentions based on weekly ESPN MNF match-ups.

All My Rowdy Friends Are Coming Over Monday Night

By Hank Williams Jr. and All Star Band

Crank up the volume

Cue my rowdy friends

We're rockin' and rollin' on ESPN

You've seen all the faces

You know all the names

It's the world's most famous primetime game

An NFL tradition

Everything's right

The ultimate gig comes on Monday Night

Are you ready? Are you ready? Are you ready? Are you ready?

Are you ready for some football?

A Monday night party

The stage is set

Let's get it kick-started

Getcha' game face on

This crowd is psyched

All my rowdy friends are here for Monday Night

Week 1 lyrics:

The Vikings are ragin', ready for action  
The Skins'll make sure they get no satisfaction

The 'Bolts are loaded and licensed to thrill  
Oakland aims to be king of the West Coast hill

#### MORE THAN JUST A GAME

For 36 years, Monday Night Football has been a three-hour game telecast and the most-storied and honored franchise in television sports history. But at ESPN, it will be more than that. SportsCenter will be on site starting Sunday night, including a new show Monday at 3 p.m., SportsCenter Special Edition: Monday Night Kickoff. After the popular 5-6 p.m. combination of Around the Horn and Pardon the Interruption (featuring MNF analyst Tony Kornheiser from the game site), NFL PrimeTime (6 p.m.) and Monday Night Countdown (7 p.m.) from the site will lead into the game telecast. In addition, ESPN Radio and Monday Night Surround on ESPN.com will also be on site.

With that sort of approach, the technical requirements are massive. Every week the MNF city will know for sure that ESPN has come to town. There will be seven production trucks and 47 cameras, various support vehicles, Kornheiser's personal bus (he dislikes flying), 400 staffers and often even ESPN The Truck, an interactive attraction for fans. That caravan will be hard to miss.

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