

Jerome Bettis, Tony Gonzalez, Ray Lewis & Charles Woodson named 2017 Pro Bowl Legends Captains

Re-Imagined Pro Bowl Week Culminates with Traditional AFC-NFC Matchup at Camping World Stadium in Orlando

Pro Football Hall of Fame running back **Jerome Bettis**, All-Pro tight end **Tony Gonzalez**, two-time NFL Defensive Player of the Year and Super Bowl XXXV MVP **Ray Lewis**, and former NFL Defensive Player of the Year and All-Pro defensive back **Charles Woodson** will serve as 2017 Pro Bowl Legends Captains, and will be a part of the weeklong Pro Bowl festivities set to take place at Walt Disney World Resort and throughout Orlando in January.

The 2017 Pro Bowl will feature a return to the traditional AFC vs. NFC format following three years using a revised, “unconferenced” structure. Each conference will be led by two Legends Captains – one offensive and one defensive. Bettis (offense) and Lewis (defense) will lead the AFC, while Gonzalez (offense) and Woodson (defense) will lead the NFC. During Pro Bowl Week, the four Legends Captains will serve as mentors for the Pro Bowl players, attend team meetings and practices, and coach on the sidelines on gameday.

The game will be played on Sunday, January 29, 2017 and simulcast live on ESPN and ESPN Deportes from Camping World Stadium in Orlando, Florida.

Fans may vote to select players for the 2017 Pro Bowl online and on web-enabled mobile phones at www.NFL.com/probowlvote. Pro Bowl rosters will be announced on Tuesday, December 20 live on NFL Network.

Tickets to the 2017 Pro Bowl are now on sale and fans may visit NFL.com/ProBowlOnSale to purchase tickets.

This year, the Pro Bowl is more than just a matchup of the NFL’s biggest stars. It’s a week-long celebration, with many family-friendly events taking place at Walt Disney World Resort. In addition to their roles on the sidelines, the 2017 Pro Bowl Legends Captains will take part in the unprecedented number of youth activities and community events during Pro Bowl Week. Highlights of Pro Bowl Week festivities at Walt Disney World Resort:

- 2017 Pro Bowl players and Legends Captains will be able to invite their former high school coach to be a part of the week’s celebrations. Players on the winning Pro Bowl team will receive a grant from the NFL Foundation to support their youth or high school football program.
- **NFL FLAG Championships** and **Punt, Pass, and Kick National Championships** will take place at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World Resort. The 13-14 Boys Championship Game

will be aired on ESPN as part of the network's broadcast of the Pro Bowl at Camping World Stadium.

- The first-ever **NFL Women's Career in Football Forum** will be held in conjunction with **USA Football's Women's World Football Games** at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World Resort. The forum will prepare women for careers in football operations, including coaching, officiating and scouting.
- **Pro Bowl festivities for youth and their families will take place throughout the week across Orlando**, including a Pro Bowl-themed 5K run at Epcot and a parade of Pro Bowl players and captains in the Magic Kingdom.

About the captains:

JEROME BETTIS

A member of the 2015 Pro Football Hall of Fame class, Bettis was a six-time Pro Bowl selection and Super Bowl champion (XL) during his 13-year career with the Pittsburgh Steelers and Los Angeles and St. Louis Rams. Bettis the 2001 Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year, finished his career with 13,662 rushing yards and ranks sixth among the NFL's all-time rushing leaders.

"Playing in the Pro Bowl was always exciting for me," said Bettis. "It meant a lot to be recognized as one of the best in the game, and I'm looking forward to returning as a captain and sharing in the experience with the current and next generation of football's best."

TONY GONZALEZ

Gonzalez, who starred for the Atlanta Falcons and Kansas City Chiefs during his 17 NFL seasons, stands as the NFL's all-time leader in receiving yards (15,127), receptions (1,325), and touchdowns (111) for a tight end. The All-Pro tight end's 14 Pro Bowl appearances are tied for the most of all time. He ranks as the Pro Bowl all-time leader in receptions (42) and touchdowns (6).

"Some of my favorite NFL memories were from my Pro Bowl trips," says Gonzalez. "One thing that made my Pro Bowl experiences so special was getting to share them with my family. Pro Bowl Week in Orlando brings that to a whole new level, and I'm excited to be a part of this event that brings together the entire football community - players, coaches, families and fans - to celebrate the game's best."

RAY LEWIS

A 13-time Pro Bowl selection and two-time Super Bowl champion (XXXV and XLVII), former linebacker Lewis played his entire 17-year NFL career with the Baltimore Ravens. Lewis, a two-time NFL Defensive Player of the Year (2000, 2003) and Super Bowl XXXV MVP, is the only player in NFL history with at least 40 career sacks and 30 career interceptions. He led the Ravens in tackles in 14 of his 17 seasons, and his 50 total takeaways are the second-most by a linebacker in NFL history.

"It was always a great honor to be selected to the Pro Bowl and play among an elite group of players," says Lewis. "The return to the traditional AFC-NFC format will add another level of excitement to the game this year. I'm looking forward to the opportunity to come back as a captain to lead the AFC and help inspire young athletes who hope to one day be on the Pro Bowl stage."

CHARLES WOODSON

A nine-time Pro Bowl selection and Super Bowl champion (XLV), Woodson returns to the Pro Bowl stage as a

captain having played in the game in 2016. Woodson, the 2015 Art Rooney Sportsmanship Award winner, was a standout defensive back for the Green Bay Packers and Oakland Raiders during his 18 NFL seasons. The former NFL Defensive Player of the Year (2009) ranks sixth on the NFL's all-time interceptions list (65) and is tied for the most career defensive touchdowns (13).

"Playing in the Pro Bowl last year and now coming back as a captain is really special. I'm excited to return and take part in the week-long celebration of football's best," said Woodson. "I learned a lot from the veterans I played alongside during my career, and now I have the opportunity during Pro Bowl Week to give back and impact current players and young athletes."