



Bubba Franks, Marlon McCree Let Go Broncos Cut Six Players



Denver, February 15th, 2009: The Broncos announced the release of six players today, including a number of veterans, as the Denver rebuilding program begins in earnest at the start of Hank Sienzant's second year at the Broncos helm.

Offensive starters Brian Griese and Bubba Franks were among those let go by the Broncos. Griese was the Broncos leading passer last season, completing 65% of his passes and throwing eight touchdown passes, but was undone by his 16 interceptions in only 220 attempts. His 16 picks were the third most in the league in 2009, behind only Brett Favre and David Garrard. In 2008, Griese was much better, throwing 25 TDs and only 12 picks. Ironically, the Broncos acquired Griese from Jacksonville prior to the 2008 season in partial exchange for Favre. It was clear, however, that the 33-year-old Griese was on the decline last year, and his release most likely clears a roster spot for a younger developmental quarterback. The Broncos only have two QBs on the roster at present, and neither is viewed as solid starting material, in the often-injured Daunte Culpepper and the erratic Rex Grossman.

Tight end Bubba Franks likewise had a better 2008 than 2009, and was likewise on the wrong side of 30. Franks caught 27 for 247 yards in 2008, but his play fell precipitously in 2009, catching only 9 for 79, only a third as good as his numbers the year before. With youngsters Jermichael Finley (just 21), Tom Santi (23), and Delanie Walker (24) waiting in the wings and vying for playing time this coming year as the starting tight end, Franks release was a not unexpected development.

The Broncos also released three defensive 2009 starters. Safety Marlon McCree (31 years old), defensive end John Engelberger (32), and cornerback Jason Craft (32) were the three veterans given their unconditional release. McCree's release came as a bit of a surprise, as he had 70 tackles last year to lead the team's defensive backs in that category, and also forced three fumbles and recovered one. But on a team in rebuilding mode, the players in their 30's might as well wear targets on their practice jerseys instead of numbers.

Also released was backup offensive center Andy McCollum, age 38, who can be thought of as wearing a bright orange bulls-eye since the end of the 2009 season.