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## STATE OF THE FAN 2006

### 71 WE STILL CARE, BUT ...

Sports fans are more invested in their teams than ever, but our fifth annual State of the Fan survey finds that sometimes, that can be a problem.

### 72 ... IT TAKES MORE TO FIRE US UP

As big business and even bigger egos push regular fans further away from the action, one company is energized to bring the disaffected back to the party. No bull.

BY PETER KEATING WITH ALYSSA ROENIGK

### 79 ... MAYBE WE CARE TOO MUCH

Face-painting in preseason? You bet. These guys have given their lives over to the Carolina Panthers. You could call them a team owner's dream. Or just plain crazy. BY JEFF JOHNSON

### 88 ... THE PARTY'S OUT OF CONTROL

Their Buffs stink, but Colorado fans have a reputation to live up to, which means come Saturday morning, the beer will flow, and chaos won't be far behind. BY L. CHRISTOPHER SMITH



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Multitasker ADALIUS THOMAS hasn't met a defensive position he doesn't like. Now the Ravens are hoping he'll help them get that trip to Miami they're dreaming of. BY DAVID FLEMING

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He rose from sideline obscurity to turn around a shaky team in Big D. Now even Cowboys haters want to know: Who is Tony Romo, and where the heck did he come from? BY EDDIE MATZ

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It's fourth and short. The smart play is to send in the kicking team, right? The author of *Moneyball* and *The Blind Side* says not so fast, and he isn't alone. Why is no one listening? BY MICHAEL LEWIS



### 62 MAGIC PRINCE

Ever since Shaq left for Hollywood, Orlando has struggled to replace the big man with the big grin and the bigger game. Is DWIGHT HOWARD ready to inherit the kingdom? BY RIC BUCHER

### 100 DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY

His career season ended when MANNY LEGACE was shown the door in Detroit after a first-round exit. Now he's out to prove he's a legit No. 1 who can win it all—even in St. Louis. BY CHRIS SMITH



**EXCLUSIVE FAN SURVEY** WHICH WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE:  
A CHAMPIONSHIP, GREAT SEX OR \$100,000? (AND OTHER BURNING QUESTIONS)

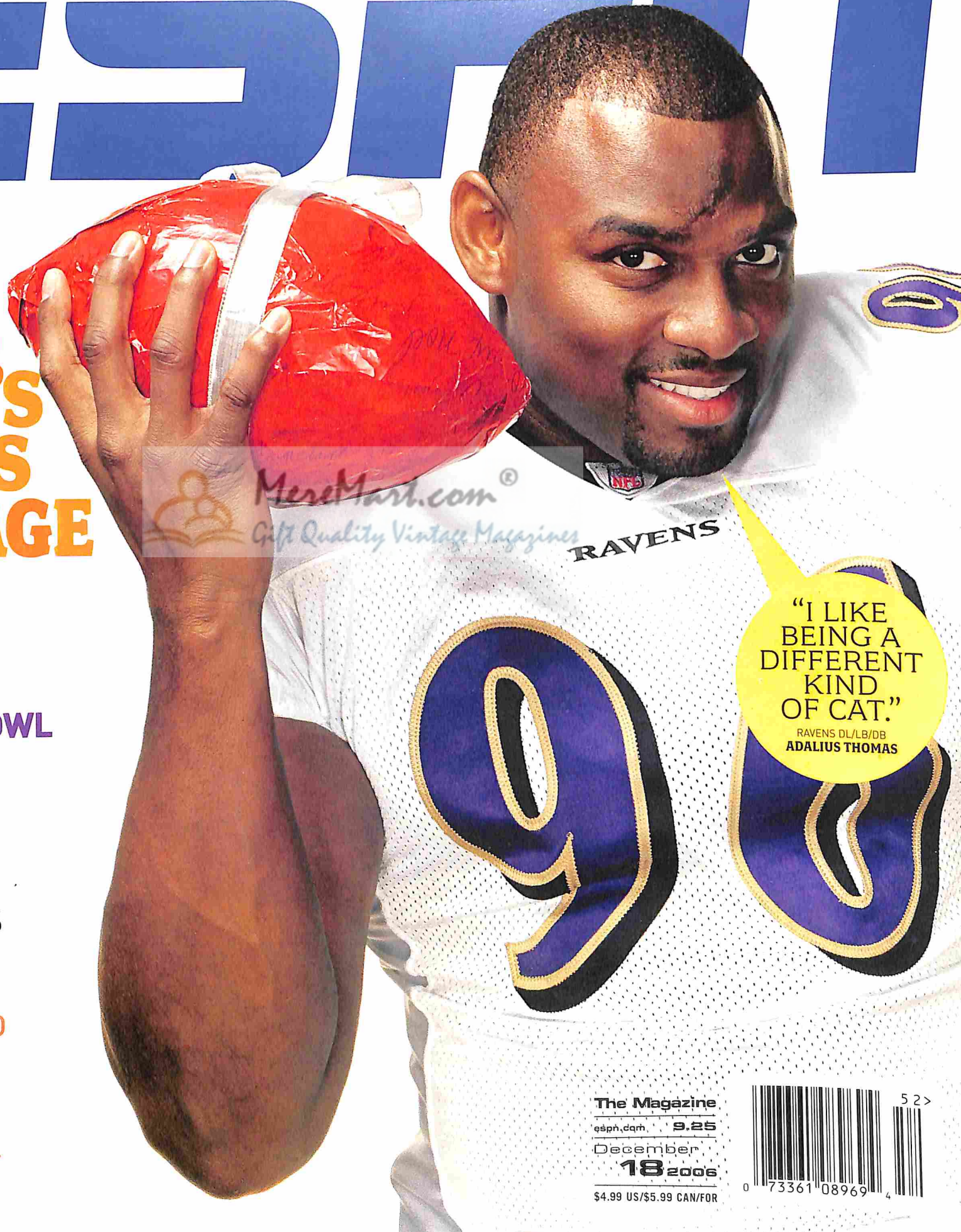
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DWIGHT  
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YOU DON'T  
KNOW ABOUT  
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