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For Immediate Release

**NBA and NFL Join The V Foundation to *Blow the Whistle on Cancer!*  
Leagues and Officials Donate Money for Cancer Research**

**Cary, N.C.** -- Officials from the National Football League (NFL) and the National Basketball Association (NBA) will participate in The V Foundation for Cancer Research's annual "Blow the Whistle on Cancer!"<sup>®</sup> campaign this weekend, December 9-12, kicking off the 2005-06 drive.

For the fourth consecutive year, the NFL Referees Association will participate in The V Foundation's "Blow the Whistle on Cancer" campaign. All 120 NFL game officials will donate a portion of their salary to The V Foundation to fund essential cancer research. Front office personnel, scouts and replay officials in the NFL will also join in the fight against cancer and the NFL will match the donations of the officials and all full-time employees. Since the NFL Referees Association helped kick off the campaign in 2002, the officials and the NFL have combined to contribute more than \$100,000 to The V Foundation.

"I could not be more proud to be associated with a great group of officials who will support The V Foundation for the fourth consecutive year," said Mike Pereira, the NFL director of officiating. "This cause is personal to so many in the NFL family because many of us, including myself, have been touched by this disease. Participating with The V Foundation and bringing visibility to their noble cause is the least we can do to help find a cure for cancer."

In 2002 the NFL officials helped to fund a breast cancer research grant in honor of their wives and mothers. This year, The V Foundation named a research grant in honor of NFL observer Jack Gatto, who lost his battle with cancer last winter.

The National Basketball Referees Association (NBRA) will join the fight against cancer and donate \$5,000 to The V Foundation as their annual charitable contribution in support of "Blow the Whistle on Cancer!" The NBA will match the contribution made by the NBRA for a total donation of \$10,000 to The V Foundation, raising their two-year total to \$22,000.

"The NBA referees are proud to play a role in this vital campaign for a second year," said Lamell McMorris, official spokesman for the NBRA. "The V Foundation's commitment to eradicating cancer is not only honorable – but imperative. We are also pleased that the NBA has again chosen to support The Foundation's efforts by matching the funds that our officials are donating."

"Officials play an integral role in every organized sporting event," said V Foundation CEO Nick Valvano. "We are so grateful to the members of the NFL Referees Association, who have been 'Blow the Whistle on Cancer' advocates from Day One of this program. To have their NBA colleagues join the program for the second consecutive year is not only a tremendous boost for our 'Blow the Whistle' campaign, but a visible example of the great people who have embraced this program."

The V Foundation for Cancer Research and the National Association of Sports Officials partnered in 2002 to encourage sports officials at all levels to help "Blow the Whistle on Cancer!" Officials nationwide, in all sports and at every level – professional, college, high school and recreation leagues – are encouraged to join their colleagues in the NFL and the NBA by donating a stipend from one game to The V Foundation. For additional information on The V Foundation's "Blow the Whistle on Cancer" campaign, visit [www.jimmyv.org](http://www.jimmyv.org).

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