

NEW YORK (AP) — Rob Gronkowski is a difficult

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man to stop. Just ask the Kansas City Chiefs. The latest example was Sunday night [Lance Kendricks Color Rush Jersey](#) when the Patriots tight end had two key catches in the fourth quarter as New England edged the Chiefs 43-40. He has caught 76 TD passes from Tom Brady in his career. "He made a big play. He's been making a lot of those his career," Brady said. "I'll keep throwing to him in the biggest moments." Because of his knack for coming through when needed most, Gronkowski was the runaway choice as the NFL's top tight end by a panel of 10 football writers for The Associated Press. The All-Pro received eight first-place votes in balloting released Friday. "He hasn't played in all 16 games since 2011, but when he's on the field he's still essentially unstoppable," said Minnesota-based AP Football Writer Dave Campbell. Kansas City's Travis Kelce was second. He has 33 catches for 468 yards and three touchdowns for the Chiefs, who are off to a 5-1 start entering Sunday night's matchup against Cincinnati. "Kelce is already just a notch behind Gronkowski and could top this list soon while playing in Kansas City's high-flying offense with Patrick Mahomes throwing him the ball," said New York-based AP Football Writer Dennis Waszak Jr. Zach Ertz of the Super Bowl champion Philadelphia Eagles was third. He leads tight ends with 48 catches for 480 yards. "One wonders if Wentz-Ertz will be a household combo along the lines of Brady-Gronk five years from now," said Dallas-based AP Football Writer Schuyler Dixon. "It's lofty company, but the pieces are in place." Green Bay's Jimmy Graham was fourth. He has 27 catches for 349 yards and a touchdown in his first season with the Packers. "Aaron Rodgers sure knows what to do with a tight end like Graham <https://www.thepackersfanshop.com/Davon-House-Jersey>," said Nashville-based AP Football Writer Teresa Walker. Graham edged out Carolina's Greg Olsen, who has been dealing with injuries the past two seasons. After Olsen, Minnesota's Kyle Rudolph finished sixth. Tennessee's Delanie Walker, who is also hurt and out for the season with a broken leg, still managed to finish seventh. "It's a shame he is injured, and the flop of the Titans' offense has a lot to do with his absence," said New York-based AP Football Writer Barry Wilner. Eric Ebron, who has six touchdowns, has been a bright spot for the Colts in his first season in Indianapolis. He finished eighth. "He's become a go-to guy in the red zone for Andrew Luck [Bryan Bulaga Jersey](#)," Philadelphia-based AP Football Writer Rob Maaddi said. Veteran Jared Cook, who's third among tight ends with 32 receptions, was ninth. "Might be the only bright spot in Oakland right now," said Denver-based AP Football Writer Arnie Stapleton of the one-win Raiders. Rounding out the top 10 was San Francisco's George Kittle. The 2017 fifth-round pick is tied for sixth among tight ends with 27 catches. "Kittle has emerged from being primarily a blocking tight end in college at Iowa to a real dual threat for the 49ers," Bay Area-based AP Football Writer Josh Dubow said. The momentum building between the Green Bay Packers and Pat Fitzgerald is reportedly taking another step forward in the coming days. According to ESPN's Adam Schefter, the Packers are planning to formally request an interview with Fitzgerald for the team's vacant head coach position. Fitzgerald, the head coach for Northwestern University, has grown to become one of the favorites for the Packers job. He has a strong connection with Packers president Mark Murphy, who hired Fitzgerald at Northwestern in 2006 when serving as the university's athletic director. The Packers hired Murphy in 2007. According to Schefter's report [J'Mon Moore Color Rush Jersey](#), the Packers will submit the request following Northwestern's bowl game on Monday. The #22 Wildcats play the #17 Utah Utes in the Holiday Bowl on Monday evening. This report comes on the heels of Ian Rapoport's comments on Saturday, which indicate that Fitzgerald is one of the leading candidates for the job. Packers beat writer Tom Silverstein also notes that general manager Brian Gutekunst has admired Fitzgerald for his work at Northwestern as well, going back to Gutekunst's days as a scout. Fitzgerald, 44, played at Northwestern in the mid-1990s, so it appears that it would be difficult to pry him away from

his alma mater. Both he and Northwestern's athletic department could decline the interview opportunity. However, the Murphy connection and the opportunity to stay close to home may be enough to at least get him to talk to the team in earnest about the job.

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