

Commissioner Goodell Press Conference

League Meeting – New Orleans, LA

October 24, 2006

Good afternoon. We had a very good meeting today. We covered a lot of ground. The owners approved two specific and important decisions: moving our nfl.com operations in-house and playing a limited number of international regular season games starting next season. These are important decisions about our future, about growing our game and reaching new fans.

The reports that we had on many of the subjects were informative, including a report on football operations and the competitiveness of our season so far through Week 7, both from Ray Anderson and Rich McKay, who is the head of our Competition Committee. We also had an update on the NFL Network and various stadium matters, including the New York-New Jersey project and Kansas City. We also announced our first flexible scheduling game with the Bears at the Giants on Sunday night (Nov. 12). We moved it to an 8:15 PM ET start. As part of that, we also moved the New Orleans-Pittsburgh game to 4:15 PM ET on FOX.

I'll be happy to take your questions.

Q: You've stated that the NFL will play a limited number of international games during the regular season beginning next season. How many games is that?

RG: Up to two.

Q: Did you take a tour of the Superdome while you were here?

RG: I have not. Unfortunately, I've barely left the hotel.

Q: Can you provide any insight as to whether or not New Orleans will be in the running for a Super Bowl in the near future?

RG: We had a Super Bowl report today on the 2011 bid process. We did update the owners on that process, which will begin immediately with a decision by next spring. We did not talk about any specific projects, though. Our focus in New Orleans has obviously been on some other matters for now, so I haven't had any discussions with the New Orleans officials on that.

Re: Moving the New Orleans-Pittsburgh game to 4:15 on Fox on November 26.

RG: That change – moving the New Orleans Pittsburgh game to 4:15 on FOX – that's reflective of the success the Saints are having and the fact that they've become a national story. That's the whole benefit of having flexible scheduling and the ability to allow some movement with our schedule to allow the bigger games to get into those

windows where they'll reach a broader audience. I think that's a tribute to the Saints' success.

Q: What are your thoughts on New Orleans post-Katrina? How does the NFL fit in here and how capable is this city of hosting big games in the future?

RG: We had a great event down here just a month ago with the reopening of the Superdome. I was fortunate to be here for that. It was a great thing for the NFL. We actually took a few moments during the meeting today to talk about how wonderful that event was not only for the NFL, but also for the whole nation in general to see the spirit of New Orleans, to see how the city has recovered, and to see how the NFL has been able to play a role in that. We're very proud of that.

Q: Do you get a sense that, while owners seem to embrace the idea of playing international games in the regular season, teams will be ready to step up and volunteer to forego a home game to play?

RG: We did this last year. We did it in the game in Mexico with Arizona and San Francisco. We did that with the eye towards trying to get to the point where we could have a series of regular-season games outside the U.S. There are competitive issues. There are logistical issues. We recognize the fan issues, but we are talking about a limited number of games that we feel will have a tremendous impact. It's in response to the growing fan interest in our game overseas. There are more and more fans on a global basis, which is one of the reasons why we're playing our first preseason game in China next year.

Q: Some of the owners have said that the estimated cost for a stadium in the Los Angeles area is now approaching \$1 billion. Are there any creative ways to offset those costs? At what point does it become prohibitively expensive?

RG: That may not be unique just to the Los Angeles market. These projects are becoming increasingly costly for a lot of reasons, primarily because of the costs of steel and concrete. They are becoming more and more complex and more challenging financially not only in Los Angeles, but in other markets. But that's our challenge: to figure out how to get them done in an economic way that's good for the NFL and good for the community. We will take on that challenge very aggressively. We're not giving up.

Q: Should we expect anything definitive by the end of this year on the Los Angeles situation?

RG: I've said this before and I will say it again: from my standpoint, it's not about a timeline. It's about getting the right decision for the community and the NFL. As long as that takes, we will stay at it.

Q: What is the status of the Giants-Jets Stadium G-3 loan application?

RG: We had an update on that today, along with Kansas City. Those are both important projects for us. They're moving along. We have some further consideration with our committees and with other parties, but that is moving along.

Q: How much preparation was done in finding potential teams to play in these international games before this proposal was put forth to the ownership?

RG: There are a number of teams that have an interest in playing. They see the benefits of getting the global exposure. Our focus internationally was to get this resolution passed today so that we knew we had the ability to be able to do this. We will start a bidding process with the various sites almost immediately. I would hope by early next year that we would start to have some indications of where we'd be playing.

Q: Some teams are more popular than others. Is it important to you to get some of the less popular teams some exposure by having them participate in these international games?

RG: We look at all 32 of our teams equally. There's a broader following for some teams compared to others, but from our perspective we are promoting the National Football League. If two teams are interested in going, we want to create the greatest success in that marketplace as well as back in the states. We will be talking to all 32 of our clubs about their interest.

Q: Have there been any developments on the issue of steroids and human growth hormone?

RG: We are having continuing dialogue. We're looking at everything from the standpoint of how we can continue to have an effective program and continue to be the leader in this area.

Q: Have you decided whether or not these international games could potentially feature divisional match-ups?

RG: In the resolution, it stipulates that it can be a division opponent with the consent of the two clubs.

Q: Is the drug policy as clear as it can be? In other words, if a player complains that he tested positive because of a supplement that was incorrectly labeled, does he have a leg to stand on?

RG: I know why you are asking the question. I am not going to answer that one because that one's under an appeals process. Let the appeals process take its course and we'll see where we come out.

Q: The league has received some criticism since the Dr. Shortt case that players aren't being caught often enough. With last week's news about player suspensions, do you think it gives the program more credibility?

RG: We have always believed we have an effective drug program, but we always look to see how we can make it more effective.

Q: You and the NFLPA have an approved supplements list available for players. Does this indicate to you that maybe the players aren't utilizing that list?

RG: I don't know the circumstance yet because we haven't had the appeal. Until I know the circumstances of what he took or what he says he took, I don't know the specifics on that. We do have a program that allows our players to take supplements where we have confidence in what is put into the supplement. We think that has been a positive thing. I don't know the circumstances of what this player took.

Q: Is the plan you are following in Los Angeles (selecting a stadium site first and finding a team later) still applicable as the situation moves forward?

RG: That's a fair question. We haven't been successful to date on the approach that we've taken. We do believe we've made some progress, but the circumstances may change where we take a different approach as we go forward.

Q: What are the intermediate steps that will be taken on trying to find a solution in Los Angeles between now and the next league meeting in April?

RG: I spoke to the mayors (Pringle and Villaraigosa) last Thursday night in both Anaheim and Los Angeles and told them we would regroup with them after we'd made the report and talked about the proper next steps. We will do that later this week, including with our internal team. I'm still positive about the Los Angeles market. I think the NFL and Los Angeles together can be a win-win combination.

Q: Is there any concern about the challenges facing other California teams and their plans to build new stadiums and achieve capacity crowds?

RG: Building new stadiums is becoming more and more challenging when you look at the cost of these facilities. That doesn't mean they aren't challenges that can be met. From our perspective, we know the oldest stadiums in the league are in California right now. That is a particular area that's challenging for us and we're working with those clubs in California to make sure that we can find a solution that works. They are challenging throughout the nation.

Q: Are you encouraged about the long-term future of the Saints remaining in New Orleans?

RG: It's hard to imagine where we are now after where we were a year ago. The progress that has been made in the last year has been extraordinary. There are a lot of people to salute on that, including Tom Benson and the entire organization here. I also salute our owners for their continuing support and leadership in this area, but also a lot of hard-working people in this area that have made the Superdome and the Saints a priority. It's a tremendous tribute to all of those parties as to what they've accomplished over the past year.

Q: Will there be an effort to have only east coast teams participate in any games staged in Europe because of the distance factor?

RG: We haven't gotten that far yet. The basic reason for wanting to play international games is because we believe there is an interest in our fans overseas to see regular season games. We believe that this is responsive to that demand and that that demand will continue to grow. This is just one more way to respond to that.

Q: What are the potential sites for these international games?

RG: The focus is Mexico, Canada, and Europe.

Q: What is the status on the subject of revenue sharing and qualifiers?

RG: We had an excellent report on that today. McKinsey had a report on two levels – one was qualifiers, and we will have another meeting of the Qualifiers Committee sometime in the next few weeks. In addition, we had a very good report on our best practices initiative, which they have led from the outside, talking about how we can improve our club operations and league operations. Both were received very well.

Q: You said you wouldn't give up on the LA project. Are you concerned that the two potential sites are considering other options and that the potential cost continues to rise?

RG: I don't anticipate the costs are going to go down, but it's a challenge for all of us. I said this to the mayors last week: we are willing to take on the challenge and continue to look for creative ways to meet those challenges so we can find a win-win solution for Los Angeles and the NFL.

Q: Can you give us a cost estimate for what a facility would be in Anaheim or Los Angeles at this point?

RG: Off the top of my head, I can't. I believe that they range somewhere in the range of \$820 million to \$1 billion, somewhere in that area, but that was based on a 2010 opening, which is a big issue. If you delay it, it could be a significant difference. When you are talking about billion-dollar projects, a 10 percent increase is pretty significant dollars.

Q: Is that the standard increase? Ten percent for each year the project is delayed?

RG: Not necessarily, no.

Q: There seems to be a big difference between a seven-figure project and an eight-figure project. Does the \$1 billion price tag change the dialogue significantly?

RG: No. If you are talking about a project that is a million dollars less, I'm not sure that is significant. But when you are talking about projects that were, just a few years ago, \$400 or \$500 million dollars and are now creeping up on \$1 billion, there are a lot of reasons for that. A lot of legitimate reasons. From our standpoint, it's just another challenge that we're going to have to meet.

Q: How much would a relocation fee for an NFL team be?

RG: I haven't gotten into that in so long.

Q: Was it strange overseeing a league meeting for the first time?

RG: To be honest, I didn't think much about that today. We had a very productive discussion. We started on time, we finished on time, and we got done what we needed to get done. I've been in that meeting room for so long and actively involved in the management of those meetings. It really wasn't a significant difference for me.

Q: Any chance of utilizing the carbon-isotope test more in future testing for banned substances?

RG: We said two months ago that we thought that this was a test that had a lot of potential and we will continue to try to find new ways to be able to use that.

###