

An Interview With:

ROGER GOODELL

(Q&A with Football Writers)

ROGER GOODELL: Good afternoon. First off, before I get started, one thing I wanted to do which I didn't do when I saw many of you in Chicago, because the event sort of over took it, was thank you. During the search process which was a long process, each of you treated me with respect and I appreciate that. It gave me an opportunity to do my current job as chief operating officer, but you also gave me a chance to go through the search process without putting me in a difficult position and I really do appreciate that and I owe a thank-you to many of you for doing that and wanted you to understand that.

Second was a lot's been made of me being a **Jets** intern and here I am at Giants Stadium attending the Giants practice. That was a valuable experience for me. One, because I was able to meet some of you that are here today during that process, but also understand a little bit more about what you do and how important it is to the League going forward. And I had came in, I must tell you, totally insensitive to that when I first came into the league. I didn't understand the importance of that.

So I look forward to a very good relationship, but I also understand there will be times where we may not agree on things and that's fine.

The best news I have for today is that the transition is finally over. I took the office on Friday. It went smoothly. We're ready to go. We're focused. I've been spending an awful lot of time on football matters, meeting with Ray Anderson who is our new head of football operations, redoing his department. We hired Ron Hill recently. They have a good team focusing on football and I've been spending a lot of time in that area.

I'm now starting my tour of 32 teams which I'm going to begin immediately. I'm attending three games this weekend. Going to Pittsburgh for the opener tomorrow night against Miami and be back here Sunday night for what you guys are referring to as the Manning Bowl Giants-Colts game which

will obviously be tremendous in the start of NBC's new package. And I will be Monday night down in Washington with Minnesota, which I think will be a fun game also.

So I've got a full schedule for a weekend of games and excited about being here. So, fire away.

Q. Roger, you worked, you spent most of your entire career in the NFL, you worked for Pete, you worked for Paul, does that mean it's more or less a straight line through them to you, and what do you take from each of them and what are you going to do of your own to make the Commissioner's job a little different?

ROGER GOODELL: Well, I have been fortunate to work for what I consider the two greatest commissioners of sports. They taught me the most important thing which I think is that this isn't about the commissioner. The game of football is about the players, the coaches, the fans. It's not about commissioners. And understand your role and the importance of that game. That's one of the reasons I focused during the search process on the game was any No. 1 priority; what can we do to make sure the game stays healthy, not only at the NFL level but also the college level, high school level and youth football level. That's critically important for our long-term future.

So I was able to I think take some of those key lessons and obviously being a part of the decision-making process over the last several years has given me an opportunity to understand how I want to do things and I think we are poised, to continue to have the success we've had.

Q. Is there one element of the game whether it be on-the-field celebrations, penalties, referees, anything specifically that you have a vision of that is not happening right now that you would like to see happen?

ROGER GOODELL: Well, there are a number of things. But if you start with the core of how we make sure the game remains at the level of popularity and make it even grow in popularity, we have to continue to challenge ourselves to find out what we can do to make the game more attractive from a fan perspective.

And we just announced a deal with Motorola today, but one of the elements of that is an example is how do we use technology in our game. Should we be using the technology that

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exists nowadays to make sure that our players can communicate with each other so that they can come in to a stadium, an opposing stadium, it may be loud and be able to play at the highest possible level. That's what our game is about, our athletes and coaches playing at the highest possible level and being able to execute their game plans.

To some extent right now I think we are hindering that a little bit because they come into an opposing stadium and they are able to put the full offense in, they are not able to run in place, they are not able to change the plays at the line of scrimmage, and frankly, I'm not sure that's best for not only the quality of play but also the unnecessary stoppages that occur. We also had that happen with the Giants and Seattle last year.

Q. Inaudible?

ROGER GOODELL: That's one thing we'll look at with the competition committee. But the point is, the pace of the game, making sure that the game has as much action as possible, and how we use technology to achieve that, not that we're going to Star Wars, but these are very simple ways we've used technology in the past, very successful. Instant replay is a very good example of it. Everyone seems to be doing it now and it's a part of the game and I think we need it continue to look at how we do that.

Q. What's the Motorola deal?

ROGER GOODELL: It's just an extension of our Motorola agreement, but what that will do is allow us to use some of the technology that they have developed for the Defense Department that they use in the field which allows their people to communicate. We'll be working with them. How can we use some of that technology for the game? And we'll put that through the competition committee, and see if that makes sense for our game --

Q. Everyone will have something in their helmet?

ROGER GOODELL: It could potentially be that. We've talked about that in the past with the competition committee, whether we start with everybody or just receivers or offensive linemen or should we have an equity rule where the defensive linemen are also wired. That's something we'll have to look at.

Q. Something basic, High Definition TV, looking at replays, which seems to be almost behind the curve right now?

ROGER GOODELL: We are looking at that, too, Sam. If the quality of the picture can be better, should we use that in instant replay and we have been looking at that. We probably are looking at that over the season, experimenting with some alternatives.

Q. What was your conversation with Shaun O'Hara, issues--

ROGER GOODELL: I've seen Shaun, I saw him at the Giants kickoff last weekend and we had a nice conversation. And we have a couple mutual friends we were talking about, primarily personal issues.

Q. You know L.A. better than anybody in the league. The past two years it seems like the league has been very vigorously kicking the tires in the various options. Is there anything more that local politicians can do to move up these sites?

ROGER GOODELL: I don't think it's an independent decision from any party. I think we have to work with the community and we have to work with our ownership and we've got to find the right solution that works for the community and for the NFL. It can't work for one party and not the other. And we'll continue to have that kind of dialogue.

We've had great dialogue in the last couple years, as you've pointed out, with the leadership, both on the public sector side and the private sector side to figuring out how to do it successfully. That's the most important thing, Sam. We know the hundreds of thousands, millions of fans out in southern California who want to see football back in Los Angeles, but they want to see it done properly and they want to see it done successfully and that's our challenge.

Q. How do you see the G3 program working for the partnership in the stadium, and how much money could it potentially - inaudible?

ROGER GOODELL: I assume you're referring to Giants Stadium?

Q. Yes.

ROGER GOODELL: Well, I believe the teams are working today to try to come up with a final design plan, a final focus of what the stadium is actually going to be, and then we'll have to go through our process of figuring out how the NFL will participate in that. We're the only league I think to be able to have a league-wide funding

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program that I think has been helpful in getting a lot of these projects done.

I've been involved with a lot of these different projects in different forms, but that program has been helpful. We've had since the mid 80s, it's gone through different variations over those years but it is important I think that the league continue to be able to participate and get these facilities built.

Q. Which team receives a contribution – or could both?

ROGER GOODELL: That's an issue that has to come before the ownership. We've never had a stadium where we've had the G3 program applying to two teams playing in the same stadium. So those are two issues we have to bring to our ownership.

Q. What are your biggest challenges?

ROGER GOODELL: Well, the good news and the bad news is we've got multiple challenges. That's I think the challenging part of the job is that we have a number of issues that we've got to deal with, whether it's the labor agreement, making sure that works for both players and the ownership, and most importantly, the game and the fans, to revenue sharing, which is potentially an element of that; and how we keep the game competitive and making sure every team has the opportunity to field a successful team, which has been our hallmark; to a variety of other issues that we're going to be facing, performance-enhancing drugs certainly would be an issue that we're going to be dealing with very aggressively and we have been over our history. I think we have a leadership role in that position and -- we have to be aggressive, we're looking at how technology is changing and how science is changing and how we can stay ahead of that.

Q. How far along are you in the details of cost and revenue sharing just in terms of from a labor agreement and going back?

ROGER GOODELL: Well, Jarrett, I was involved in all of the negotiations so I have a pretty good feel for the issues.

Revenue sharing will constantly be an issue for the league. It needs to be an issue for the league going forward. But right now we are clearly in a position where we have the best revenue sharing system of all professional sports and that allows us to make sure that our teams can remain competitive.

Q. But the parameters needed to be put in place for the deal go forward?

ROGER GOODELL: What we approved last March?

Q. Had to be resettled?

ROGER GOODELL: That's one specific issue on the qualifiers that's an element of that, yes, that we need to be addressing with them. We'll be meeting with our qualifier committee sometime in the next month before we get to the New Orleans meeting in the fall and we have to address that very quickly, yes.

Q. Where are you on the drug testing, specifically what have you heard back from Gene?

ROGER GOODELL: I had a long conversation with Gene yesterday, and I've had multiple conversations with him over the last few weeks. I think he shares my commitment that we are going to do everything possible to have the best possible drug program and to address these issues as quickly as we can using the technology and the science that exists and that our program right now is an outstanding program, but it can always be improved and that's how we will approach it. What can we do to improve it?

Q. What do you think specifically needs to be done in the short term to improve?

ROGER GOODELL: The drug program? I spent the last few weeks getting more involved in this area and trying to get the best education I can on this. And I think we've got a lot of great experts in a lot of these fields that have helped us not only in the drug testing aspect of it, but also in understanding where we are legislatively and some of the issues in Washington. And I think we'll continue to work with the best in the business to figure out how this world is changing and how the NFL has to modify to make sure that we continue to have the best program in sports.

Q. How concerned are you with what happened in Carolina a few years ago?

ROGER GOODELL: Well, the Carolina issue was a Dr. Short issue. That was an issue where we had a doctor who has now since been convicted and serving time for violating the law, prescribing drugs to players and, I'll point out, a number of people that weren't players.

So this issue goes well beyond just professional athletes. This goes into society in general, particularly as we go into the new forms of

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these drugs, HGH and some of these drugs which are going to be potentially used on a broader basis and it will become a societal issue.

Q. Are you concerned there are other Dr. Shorts out there?

ROGER GOODELL: I think you always have to be, Gary. I think that's why this is a comprehensive approach. It's not just drug testing. It's also education. It's also going to be working with our legislative sector to make sure we have the strongest laws, and, law enforcement, to make sure that when we do find people that have been violating the law, we can get after them.

Q. Are you specifically concerned that the league has a problem with HGH and what do the experts tell you about how far down the road a reliable test might be?

ROGER GOODELL: We have no indication that we have a significant issue in HGH, but that doesn't mean that you shouldn't approach it as aggressively as possible to say, what is it we can do to stay ahead of that?

One of my themes in the search process was that we cannot become complacent, and I would say that about this issue, also. So HGH right now, it does not have a reliable test. The only thing that some experts have pointed to is that there's a blood test, but even that they have acknowledged is not a reliable test. We have been funding separately, independently, how we can get to a urine test which would be reliable that we could use at the NFL, and we are going to be seeking assistance on that, including potentially federal funding to be able to address those issues.

Q. On your tour of the 32 teams, what are some of the specifics issues you hope to glean from these visits and what do you hope to take away?

ROGER GOODELL: Well, Vic, one issue, having been involved with the league now for close to 25 years, is that you can never assume you have all the answers. By the opportunity to be able to sit down with the ownership, with the team, with the coaches potentially and with front office people, and sometimes with community leaders, which I will be doing, I'll get a better perspective of what's working well, what's not working well and what we need to focus on in our agenda.

Q. What's your strategy for growing the NFL globally, international in particular?

ROGER GOODELL: I think a couple of things, Jarrett. Our efforts to play a regular-season

game in Mexico last year were extremely successful. We were very pleased with that, in part because we could do it without having negative consequences from a competitive standpoint for the two teams. But also the reaction we got in Mexico was extraordinary and we have millions of Latino fans. That opportunity to be able to play more regular season games internationally is something that we'll continue to look at and figure out how we can do that.

In addition, we'll continue our preseason games. We're focusing very hard on trying to get something done in China for next season and we hope that we'll be able to get -- in a position to be able to do that.

Q. Do you feel like you're in competition with the NBA on a global level like the Chinese market, for example?

ROGER GOODELL: I guess it's part of my nature to I feel like we're competition. I feel like the NFL is not only a professional sports league but it's an entertainment product and we have to look at everything as not necessarily a competition but a challenge and how do we take advantage of those opportunities that exist out there.

Q. California, three of the worst stadium situations, not counting Los Angeles. Is Los Angeles an independent situation or do you look at California -- inaudible -- that maybe Los Angeles, and maybe what to do the with other cities?

ROGER GOODELL: Sam, I would tell you my experience with stadiums is that there is no set recipe. I think that you have to address each stadium issue independently and try to balance the local issues that exist.

Sometimes you can approach it on a statewide basis. There are certain statewide programs that could exist that would provide all of those stadium opportunities. But I think each one has its own unique challenges and we're just going to have to look at those individually.

Q. Can you expect the NFL Network to have wider distribution?

ROGER GOODELL: Yes. We've been working very aggressively on distribution of the network. We think that it's extremely attractive from the consumer standpoint and that our fans want more NFL Network and more NFL, and we've been very fortunate to be able to get an agreement with Comcast to assure that we'll be on, our games will be on this fall. I think we are making progress

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in our other negotiations. So I'm optimistic that we'll have greater distribution. Of course don't forget those games will be on in the local markets, the two teams.

Q. Have you made a decision on whether Bryant Gumbel should be employed by the NFL Network?

ROGER GOODELL: Yes, I met with Bryant last week at a private meeting, just the two of us. I expressed my concerns to Bryant about the comments, and I think we have a very good understanding and respect for one another and what we expect, and I expect he will be a terrific announcer for us.

Q. What were some of the concerns?

ROGER GOODELL: I'm not going to go into all of the background. I think you're aware of the comments Commissioner Tagliabue made and I expressed those privately to Bryant, my concerns, and I think we'll leave it private.

Q. Have you followed the Deion Branch situation and will you have any role in that at all?

ROGER GOODELL: Yes, right now they are actually having a hearing I believe right now to determine jurisdiction of whether it goes to an arbitrator or special master, and it could end up going to both, interestingly enough. To date, though it is not in the hands of the NFL. When and if it does come to that position, I will certainly be prepared.

Q. How do you plan to improve the drug program?

ROGER GOODELL: Well, specifically, I think the most important thing is to understand what the limitations of science are, what the limitations of our program are, if there are any, and be able to have an open dialogue with the experts and our partners, most particularly the union, to figure out what we can do that's responsive and responsible.

Q. Have there been drug program improvements since the Dr. Shortt case?

ROGER GOODELL: Again, this issue wasn't created by Dr. Shortt. I don't know if a year has gone by since we had these programs in the '80s that we have not made modifications to our program, and we will continue to do that, including some of these issues if they are responsible and responsive.

Q. Gene Upshaw expressed a couple of weeks ago that he didn't think more testing was necessary. Did he tell you that?

ROGER GOODELL: We had a discussion about the testing, if additional testing was going to be effective. There was no reason just to increase testing if it wasn't going to be effective. We needed to figure out what the best testing mechanism was. We spent a fair amount of time and I spent a fair amount of time on this carbon isotope testing on whether that was a new technology which frankly we pioneered to a large extent and has been quite effective and been an effective test. We should be expanding that. We should be doing more of that. I think he accepts that.

Q. Speaking of expansion, what are your thoughts about the number of teams in the league growing over the next however many years, do you have any idea of where that could go?

ROGER GOODELL: My view of that was – and we went through this in the search process – we just got done expanding to 32, which is a pretty rapid expansion in the last 10 years. And with realignment, it's been quite effective and I don't think expansion would be something that would be high on our list immediately.

Q. What about the Los Angeles market and how you go there?

ROGER GOODELL: That may be the one exception that you have to look at, if there was a creative solution that allowed us to get back into Los Angeles in a successful fashion, and that may be one area where we would have to revisit that issue.

Q. The evolution, has it affected where you might expand? In other words, to a less populous area where access to games is not as good?

ROGER GOODELL: I don't think access to NFL games has been an issue. I think it's been the feeling that you get when you have an NFL team in your community and the feeling of pride. That's the issue. There's no question that where you'll see a team that's properly operated, promoted and playing in a community that there is more interest in that local market.

So it involves the emotional support that a team brings to the community. It becomes a real driver of unity bringing a community together. I don't think you can ever replace that.

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Q. Obviously there's been a lot of talk about the officiating in the Super Bowl; will you implement anything in that regard?

ROGER GOODELL: We've actually been spending a great deal of time in the off-season including trying to address our collective bargaining with officiating, officials union, and I think we've reached an agreement in the last 24 hours to extend our agreement with the officials for five more years, so we have six more years of labor peace.

In addition, we've been working with our officials to figure out how it is that we can maintain the pace of the game, what it is in their procedures that we can do to make sure that we keep the focus on the play and not on officiating.

I think we're seeing that, it's a trend in our preseason, and again, preseason is the first four weeks, but games have actually reduced in length close to 11 minutes and penalties have actually been down, I believe, it's close to seven penalties a game.

So those are positive trends from our perspective and we'd like to see that continue. We'll see how that goes as we move into the regular season. It's difficult to make an assessment after four weeks.

Q. In your conversation with Bryant Gumbel, did he express any remorse for the comments he made?

ROGER GOODELL: I think I'd like to keep our conversation private. We had a very good dialogue. I think we understood each other, and I feel comfortable proceeding properly.

Q. Did it cross your mind or was it a serious consideration going into the meeting that if it didn't turn out the way you wanted that maybe it was a mistake for him to take the job --

ROGER GOODELL: Well, I came to the meeting with an open mind, but this was my decision and I made the decision and I believe it's the right one.

Q. Do you see the role of the NFL Network as an independent entity reporting on you, or is it part of the league's promotional arm, for lack of a better word?

ROGER GOODELL: Well, it's, one, a distribution outlet for the NFL. By putting games on there this year, it's a good opportunity for us to bring games to more of our fans.

Secondly, obviously, there's a marketing tool where we're able to get our fans more access to the NFL. But we do not in any way censor what our talent says, and that is not the role that we play.

Q. What would you say are the most important issues that you have in front of you ?

ROGER GOODELL: The three themes of focus that I presented to the ownership during the search process was the game, strength of 32 teams and innovation. The game as I mentioned earlier was about keeping the focus on how do we keep the game of football healthy on the NFL level, the college level, the high school level and the youth football level, all levels, and I think that's critical going forward.

Part of that also means you have a collective bargaining agreement that allows the game to be exciting and gives every team an opportunity to succeed. The strengthening of 32 teams, obviously we want our teams operating at the highest possible level. The more successful they are locally, the more successful the NFL can be on a national basis.

Q. Parity?

ROGER GOODELL: Well, we don't use that word. (Laughter) and then innovation, which --

Q. Competitive balance.

ROGER GOODELL: Competitive balance is a good term. I like that. But the issue of innovation goes to some extent to the complacency issue, which is how do we keep our leadership position in the NFL. We cannot get to the point where we become satisfied with our leadership position. We have to continue to find ways in which we can make our league even more successful going forward, and that means challenging business models; that means challenging the way the game is being played; and making sure that we're doing everything we can to stay ahead of the curve.

Q. You talk about the game of football at the high school and youth levels, what responsibility do you feel that the league has on the issue of performance-enhancing drugs-- an example, sending a message to the next generation?

ROGER GOODELL: A lot. I think our NFL players, and the NFL in general, are held to a higher standard, and we should be. We're the National Football League.

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So I believe that it is our responsibility and that's why we have to continue to maintain our leadership position. So I do feel a sense of responsibility to younger players – younger fans and our whole game – and I think our players do and I think we have to set the right example.

Q. On the Dr. Shortt issue, it's been suggested, three or four offensive linemen from Carolina were patients. It's been suggested that that Super Bowl is tainted. Do you feel that way?

ROGER GOODELL: No, I don't, Charles. I think that when you look at NFL competition, I don't look back at any game as being tainted. I think our job is to make sure we look forward, how we take that out of anyone's perception, and that would be our challenge going forward.

Q. Talking about technology, is there a chance there to be over-technology? There are certain stadiums where the fans feel like a part of the team –

ROGER GOODELL: And I'm not trying to take that away. As a matter of fact I would tell you the 12th man in Seattle, I was out there for the championship game last year, was one of greatest things I've experienced. I thought it was terrific.

But we actually have rules that restrict crowd noise, which seems counterintuitive to me. I want to encourage fans to make as much noise as possible. I love the 12th man. I love the fact that home fans can influence the game. I'm not trying to take that away. I'm just trying to let our teams perform at the highest possible level in a way that will allow our fans to enjoy the experience as much as possible.

Q. Have you gotten positive responses from the people you've spoken to about that, whether it be players, about the technology?

ROGER GOODELL: We've had quite a few discussions with the competition committee and we actually looked at how we could experiment this past season. We were just able to get the technology in a place where we were comfortable to be able to try it.

Listen, there's always resistance and I'm not suggesting this is my platform. It's not. It's just one of the things we should look at as far as how to keep our game strong. We'll go through the right procedures, we'll go through the competition committee, we'll go through making sure that we understand all of the ramifications. And it may take five different turns before we get there. But it's important that we look at these issues.

Q. Do you have a specific vision for what the experience might be like for a fan in five, ten years, how it might be different for them than it is now?

ROGER GOODELL: Sam, technology changes so quickly, fans are asking for more information on different platforms, and immediately. They want it on-demand.

So if you're a fan at home or if you're a fan at the stadium, they have multiple media opportunities whether it's on their iPods or over their Blackberries or whether they are watching a High Definition Television set or with a telephone, which is going to become an incredibly important medium to consumers going forward.

We've got to know how to be there and how we can deliver games and more NFL over those media platforms, but not in a way that hurts the overall picture of the NFL, the overall popularity and the business model that we've created so successfully in a broad medium platform like broadcast television, which has been the core of our success.

We've stayed successful on free television to the broadest possible audience. I think we don't want to hurt that. We want to make sure that we continue that success while experimenting and delivering more product, more games, more football, on these new platforms, and we've done it quite successfully over the last several years.

Q. Do you envision next year the NFL Network having a full slate of games?

ROGER GOODELL: No. We're under contract for the next six years.

Q. How do you draw the line between using technology for improving communication to players versus not eliminating the effect of the crowd noise?

ROGER GOODELL: I don't know if crowd noise -- the 12th man effect -- was to eliminate teams from executing their offense, Gary. I think it's an emotional lift to be able to play in front of your home fans and know that there's 75,000, 80,000 people that are cheering you on. But I don't think it was necessarily designed to be able to restrict teams from coming in and playing at their highest possible level. That's my issue. That's the issue that I'm referring to.

I don't want to take out the 12th man effect. I'd love to see the 12th man in 32 cities. It's a great thing for our fans, and I think they do influence the game. The question is: How far should that influence go?

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Q. You're saying you want teams to be able to hear the signals despite --

ROGER GOODELL: Execute your offense. Be able to go in and play at the highest possible level and allow the athletes, the greatest athletes in the world, and the coaches to be able to execute what they do.

Q. Now into the job a couple of weeks, no one was ever better prepared --

ROGER GOODELL: Five days.

Q. No one is better prepared for this than you have been, but did it sink in when you sat in that office or are the people around the building treat you differently? Has it changed anything really for you?

ROGER GOODELL: Well, I haven't sat in the office yet to be honest with you. I haven't moved in yet just because I've been too busy and actually working over the weekend.

But it does change your perspective when people call you commissioner after being in the league for that long and knowing the two people that I knew who held that title before. When they presented me the first football that had your name on it, it sets you back a little bit. You understand how important that job is, and that you have grown into that role, and it's a pretty daunting role.

Q. Did you sleep with that football?

ROGER GOODELL: No, I didn't.
(Laughter).

Q. Do you enjoy having the Duke coming back at the same time your name is on?

ROGER GOODELL: Yes, I thought about that the either day, David. Interesting, you know, someone as important to the NFL as Wellington Mara, and the fact that I was very involved with the whole rebranding of that football from my old position, I never dreamed that my name would also be going on at the same time as someone that I have such great respect for, Wellington Mara and his family.

Q. Where were you at 6:00 AM Friday?

ROGER GOODELL: I was on my exercise machine.

Q. Did you notice --

ROGER GOODELL: I was riding a bike in the morning. Actually, I didn't, because I was reading the newspaper and it was, I think I got on

about quarter to six, got off at 6:30. My daughter reminded me when I came upstairs.

Q. I read that you were injured playing football in high school?

ROGER GOODELL: Twice. Broken arm and a knee.

Q. Surgery?

ROGER GOODELL: Only on the arm, not on the knee. What's that face for?

Q. I went to school next door. We never played you because we were too big.

ROGER GOODELL: Oh, don't go there. Oh, don't go there.

Q. All of the injuries in football, anything you can do about that?

ROGER GOODELL: It's a physical game and unfortunately, that is part of it. I think we have to continue to look at how we make the game safer for our players. I think most of our rules changes in any given year have been designed to try to make the game safer for our players, and I think they have been quite effective. That will be a continuing challenge.

Q. Do you have any particular thoughts about --

ROGER GOODELL: Specific rule changes to make the game safer?

Q. Equipment?

ROGER GOODELL: We've been looking at equipment. I was very involved with the equipment change we made in the helmet several years ago think that has proven to be quite effective and had been another advancement of technology where it's made our game safer for our players.

I think we've got to continue to look at what we're doing with shoes also. We look at what are the proper shoes because there's an issue of performance versus safety and our players want to perform at the highest level, so they want the fastest shoe. But there's also going to be a shoe that provides the greatest kind of support so you don't risk unnecessary injury.

Q. What is the NFL's responsibility in rebuilding New Orleans and the Gulf Coast?

ROGER GOODELL: Tom Benson, Paul Tagliabue and the NFL took a leadership position here about not turning their back on a community

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that needed us, and the NFL was there, and they brought that team back. And they are playing there. They are operating there. They have been there since January. We are not talking about coming back. We are back. We did it at a time when we didn't know whether we could get the dome completed.

We went to the state. They determined that the rehabilitation of the dome was a critical component in the rebuilding of the community. They believe it was a huge economic driver and a huge symbolic effort to be able to get that dome reopened and be operating.

So we found a creative way to be able to get that done in the shortest possible timetable and contribute a significant amount of money, up to \$20 million to get that done, and the 25th will be a celebration of the collective effort to get that stadium completed, not just for the New Orleans Saints, but for the community and the economic driving that that will mean and all of the events that will combine that.

So the NFL is an important partner here and we wanted to play that role and I think we have very effectively, and we're there and we're operating.

Q. Can you say the return, how that situation is going to play out?

ROGER GOODELL: Bob, I don't have any crystal ball on what the community of New Orleans is going to be like going forward. Obviously there are lots of questions, but we're going to be there, continue to go try to do our part. And we hope that the New Orleans community will come back even stronger than it was.

Q. Carbon isotope ratio testing for testosterone, can you use that more extensively --

ROGER GOODELL: We have been using it. We want to continue to work to see how we can use it more extensively.

Q. How are you deciding to use it -- why don't you use it all the time? Is it the expense?

ROGER GOODELL: I don't know if it's a matter of just finances. I think there's a question of whether you can use it in every circumstance. I have to get the details before I can answer that question.

Q. The September 11 game in the nation's capital, thoughts of doing anything special to recognize that?

ROGER GOODELL: Yes, we are. There will be a number of events going on in the stadium in Washington, particularly with the Department of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff is involved in the coin flip, and we'll have a number of moments that will reflect the proper recognition of the anniversary.

Q. What will you be doing here?

ROGER GOODELL: I don't have the answer whether we're doing something here. I think the Giants are.

Q. Regarding the movie "Invincible," Is there a ruling, a budding relationship with Hollywood, more movies now than in the past?

ROGER GOODELL: You want to know if you're going to get more gigs. (Laughter).

We went into this very carefully. We're very protective of the NFL brand and how it's presented. We thought this was a great story. It's a true story. It's a feel-good story. It's an opportunity to talk about the importance of football in the community and the importance of football in one person's life. We thought it was a unique opportunity to get involved.

I think we'll probably look for the right opportunities to do it more often. I think it's been a great success for us. It's a terrific movie and I think reflects well on the NFL, and the reaction we've been getting at the box office, despite your cameo, was really good.

Q. The whole dynamic of the power of the commissioner's position versus actually working for the people that you're overseeing --

ROGER GOODELL: 32 owners.

Q. Yeah, exactly. Is that weird, especially given your background, now you're the figure that is going to lead them or be in charge to lead them?

ROGER GOODELL: My view of the commissioner's role is to oversee the collective interests of the NFL and to do what's in the best interests of the collective 32 owners. It is impossible to do what's in the best interests of each individual 32 teams at all times. That's not my job, and if it was, it would be impossible to do that. I want to do what's in the best interests of all 32, which ultimately will be in the best interests of each of those individual clubs.

Q. Why do you think revenue sharing has been such a problem?

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ROGER GOODELL: No, I'm not sure I agree with that. 67 percent of our total revenue is shared equally. That's extraordinary.

Q. The areas they are talking about --

ROGER GOODELL: Four years ago -- just let me finish here. Just four years ago, we pooled our visiting team's share and shared that equally. That's an extraordinary event.

I think our ownership has been very responsible on that and looking at how they can do that. So I believe our ownership, and I think what you saw back in March was, again, another big step of sharing even more revenue. So I don't accept the premise that it's been a big issue.

It will obviously be an ongoing challenge for the NFL, and for any professional sports league to make sure that every team has the financial capability to compete. I think we've met that challenge and I think we'll continue to meet that challenge going forward. It's an important issue.

Q. Do you think the opt-out clause in the contract in '08, that enough owners will be upset about this deal being too expensive that that becomes an issue?

ROGER GOODELL: I think we've got to first see what the impact of the deal is. I think we have to really truly understand it over the next two years and make an evaluation of what's working and what's not working and share that and make sure the union understands that. I think it's too early to say. I will agree that we have a two-year window to make that evaluation and make sure we address those issues.

Q. Just a question about your personal preference on whether the Giants and Jets can or should double up on the G3 money on a new stadium?

ROGER GOODELL: I haven't gotten that far into it. I think we're going to have to look and see what the total project is and how that fits in our program.

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