

An Interview With:

**ROGER GOODELL with Rich Eisen,  
NFL Network**

ROGER GOODELL: Well, you know, I know how things work in the NFL, and I think the NFL is such around important institution that it was important to go outside and look for the best possible candidate, and I supported that. I actually think that was good, and it ended up being good for me.

So I think for the *National Football League*, it was the right step. I must say it was a little difficult at times, but it prepared me better I think for the job ahead and I'm excited by it.

RICH EISEN: Who better to let you know? Dan Rooney, was that the man that broke the news to you.

ROGER GOODELL: Yes, Dan came up and knocked on the door. I was doing some work and trying to keep a little distracted and he was standing at the door and smiled. So I think I knew the answer to what he came up to tell me at the time.

RICH EISEN: Right. So now what, I guess, is the question. Do you go back to New York and begin, I guess, sitting down with the man you are succeeding and putting together a staff, or what happens next?

ROGER GOODELL: Well, you know, the highlight so far is I got my first appearance on the NFL Network. So I'm excited by that.

Yes, the answer is I'll head back to New York and get to work. We haven't discussed the specifics about how the transition will take place, but thankfully I'll be able to hit the ground running because I know all the people. I think that I have a pretty good understanding of what we need to get focused on immediately.

RICH EISEN: For those who might be wondering about your managerial style, is there a little bit of Tagliabue, a little bit of Rozelle, maybe even a little bit of your dad, the former U.S. Senator? What can you describe about how many of those people are within you?

ROGER GOODELL: Well, the great thing in my life is that I've had great influences, whether it be my parents, my family, Pete Rozelle, Paul Tagliabue. There's just so many people that have had a great influence on me and helped me develop my own leadership style.

So I'm sure I'll be different, but I sure would like to be as successful as the last two guys. They were the gold standard.

RICH EISEN: What do you say to people who believe that labor is going to be the key issue for you to deal with throughout your tenure, and maybe even sooner rather than later?

ROGER GOODELL: Well, I think labor is always something that has to have a tremendous focus for the Commissioner and for the Ownership. Our players are what make this game special, and I think we need to make sure that we have a system that allows our players to continue to do what they do well, and make sure that it works for the entire 32 teams and makes the league successful.

So we will continue to focus on labor, I'm certain, but there are also plenty of other opportunities that we're going to have to address quickly.

RICH EISEN: Is there one thing that you want to stress, I know the Commissioner in the last few years was very focused on youth football. I also know you serve on the boards of Big Brothers, Big Sisters of America as well as in New York City. Is there anything that you have in mind, I know you were just named, but I was just wondering.

ROGER GOODELL: Well, the first thing I've got to do is focus on the NFL Network. We're very proud of the network.

But I think we'll continue to work hard to make sure that that continues to grow and flourish and brings more football to more of our fans because that's what people want. They want football.

RICH EISEN: Appreciate that. I guess while we're on that subject, did my candidacy loom over this process in any way, shape or form?

ROGER GOODELL: The best information I have is that it did, Rich. In fact, I think that's why it took so long to reach a conclusion. But I'm glad you're out on the West Coast, not here in Chicago.

RICH EISEN: I appreciate that. Again, congratulations. I believe I've been told you're still clutching the football.

ROGER GOODELL: I am.

RICH EISEN: There it is. I guess you're going to end up having to sign a signature yourself because your name is going to go on these footballs, Commissioner.

ROGER GOODELL: Yes, that's hard to believe. That is correct.

RICH EISEN: Excellent. Thanks so much for taking the time. Again, congratulations to you and your family on what is obviously a big day.

ROGER GOODELL: Thanks, Rich.