

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**COMMISSIONER TAGLIABUE OPENS MEETING WITH ANNUAL REVIEW**

Commissioner Paul Tagliabue opened the 2006 NFL Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida with a 30-minute review of overall league affairs for a group of approximately 300 owners, club presidents, head coaches, front-office employees, and league officials.

Following are excerpts from the Commissioner's review:

- “The 2005 season was the kind our fans have come to expect, filled with extraordinary team and individual performances, intense competition, and lots of excitement and unpredictability.”
- “In 2005, you set a paid attendance record for the third year in a row; your stadiums were filled again to 90 percent of capacity; and television ratings continued to deliver unmatched audiences. The Super Bowl was the second most-watched program in television history with 141 million viewers. For the season, ratings for NFL games on broadcast television were 60 percent higher than the primetime average for the broadcast networks. In December, the Harris Poll showed pro football's lead as the No. 1 sport continuing to widen.”
- “This week's annual meeting is my 17<sup>th</sup> as commissioner. But I first started attending these NFL annual meetings 34 years ago this month when I was a young and starry-eyed attorney. Three years before that 1972 meeting, I first met Pete Rozelle. It was the early summer of 1969 and he was considering whether to require Jets quarterback Joe Namath to divorce himself from a watering hole in New York City that didn't have the greatest reputation. I was a young attorney sitting in the back of the room. In the 37 years since 1969, I have been privileged to serve the NFL and its teams with – by my count -- about 80 different principal owners of NFL teams. Then in recent months, my wife Chan pointed out that we now have head coaches in the league who were not yet born when I got started with the NFL.”
- “The league is a very special institution and it works because the game continues to be great, because of thousands of talented people, and because of great teamwork across the entire league. That's what we have and must continue to have. I want to thank all of today's owners plus everyone in the league, plus all former owners, for giving me the opportunity and responsibility to be part of the NFL. It's been a tremendous experience.”

- “The extended CBA is complicated and presents a unique set of challenges, but we can now build on what we have accomplished in recent years, including shared investments with the Players Association in important initiatives such as stadium construction, youth football, and NFL Europe.”
- “The league is well-structured, complex business partnership. Thirty-two strong, independent franchises operate in different ways. This diversity is one of our great strengths. But, as different as your teams may be, there is far more that unites you and the league than separates you. We will strive in the months ahead to focus on our common interests and objectives.”
- “Now we enter a period of transition for the league. The critical elements of success are in place. This should enable us to accomplish twin goals. The first is to present great football to the fans in 2006, while maintaining the momentum we have created on all business fronts, both domestically and internationally. The second goal is to manage the search for a new commissioner in a well-organized, inclusive way that will strengthen the league and underscore that the NFL is indeed the world’s preeminent sports organization.”

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