

Commissioner Tagliabue with FOX Pregame

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James Brown: Welcome back to this Hurricane Katrina special edition of FOX NFL Sunday. Joining us is NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue. Let's begin with the continuing efforts of the NFL to assist those in need. I know next week you have a major campaign to raise money for the hurricane victims. Tell us what that entails?

Commissioner: It will involve support from all of our teams, all of our players, and all of our television partners and many, many other people associated with the league and it's designed to use our platforms to encourage Americans to reach out as they're doing and help Americans in need.

Howie Long: One of the big questions I know the Saints players, their family and the fans of the Gulf Coast would like to know is where the Saints will be playing this season. I know you're going down to Baton Rouge, LSU tomorrow with owner Tom Benson to look at the viability of playing down there. I know Houston has offered their facilities and there's talk of San Antonio. Where do you see the Saints playing their games this season?

Commissioner: I can see the Saints playing in several different locations. When we decided that they would play in the New York against the Giants, it took a count of three things. Number one, obviously, we had an unprecedented natural disaster. Number two, the Saints' responsibility is to the people of Louisiana and New Orleans and we felt putting them against their opponent in New York would address the third point, which is rebuilding.

The connection between this tragedy and what the people of New York went through on 9/11, as you've alluded to, we thought suggested the game in New York. Now going forward, we're going to look at different sites, and we'll start with LSU tomorrow.

Long: Even before the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and now with the devastation into the Superdome, the facilities down there in New Orleans and the city, there's been a lot of speculation that even before the tragedy, they were looking, and the Saints were looking to relocate to San Antonio or Los Angeles. What, if anything, can you tell the people of the Gulf Coast, specifically the city of New Orleans, about their future with the Saints?

Commissioner: Every team, represents its city and the state where its team is. When we've had tragedies in the past -- earthquake in San Francisco, wildfires in San Diego -- we've kept the team close to home and they've managed to stay there for the long term. That is our goal here. That's the reason we're looking at Tigers Stadium in LSU to have the team play there as often as it can. As for the future, I've been reading about the business leadership, the political leadership determined to rebuild New Orleans and we hope to be part of that process and to be at the table.

Long: When do you think the decision will be made as to where the Saints will play this season?

Commissioner: Early this week, maybe tomorrow, I think we can focus on the next two or three games. The Buffalo Bills game on October 2, the Falcons game in the middle of October and the Dolphins game at the end of the month. I think that will give us a good planning process and, at some point, we can address the question of whether and when there is a game in the Alamodome.

Brown: Commissioner, thank you so much for your presence this morning and certainly we encourage you to continue the league's efforts to assist those in need. Thank you so much.

Commissioner: Thank you.