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An Interview with:

**GREG AIELLO
and
RICH McKAY**

RICH McKAY: With respect to the state of the game, I think we feel very comfortable that the game is extremely competitive as we look at it.

Since we went to the eight divisions of four teams a number of years back, we've now had 27 of the 32 teams qualify for the playoffs in that time period.

We've also had 22 different divisional title winners. So we feel very good about where the game is from the standpoint of competitiveness top to bottom.

The key stats this year were good also in the sense that time of game was down to 3:04:07, three hours, four minutes, seven seconds.

That's basically three minutes less than the year before. And obviously we like that. That's good for the game, good for the pace of the game, good for the fans.

Plays per game at the same token were only down ever so slightly. It's down to 152.50 plays per game. Year before it was 152.75. So we were able to reduce game time without losing plays which is a positive.

And points per game were virtually the same as the year before. 41.3. The year before they were 41.23.

So our major statistics hold pretty good. We looked at them all. There are a couple of trends with respect to field goals and touchdown ratio we want to keep looking at, but we feel good from where the game is from a statistical standpoint.

Accordingly, I don't think this is a year where we have a lot of big rules proposals. I'll

cover some of them with you and let you ask any questions that you may have with respect to them.

First one I'll talk about is instant replay. This year we will propose that instant replay be adopted as a permanent rule.

We have two years remaining on the current rule. We'll propose it as a permanent rule. At the same time we'll propose that we buy and refurbish all our instant replay equipment for all of our stadiums and convert into high-definition.

We think instant replay has been an accepted part of our game now for a number of years. It's worked quite well. College has now gone to an instant replay system. Now we feel is the time to go on a permanent basis.

We'll propose moving the kickoff from the 30 to the 35 in overtime. This is something that we've kind of resisted for the last four or five years, even though the statistics have shown that in overtime we were having a definite advantage gained by the coin toss.

We've looked at the statistics. We believe that we can cure those statistics and make the coin toss less of a factor if we make the move on the kickoff. So we will propose that.

We'll propose creating a five-yard penalty for spiking or throwing the ball while on the field of play. This is an issue to us that has really shown itself in the last two years where it seems like every play, whether it's a three-yard gain or 15-yards results in a player stepping up, spiking the ball; the ball bounces 15 feet away, officials having to go run it down.

We don't think it's good for sportsmanship or administration. We would propose a five-yard penalty for that.

We will propose to the Commissioner that he revise the injury reporting system that is currently used. We think the system needs some tweaking. As it is now, we report to the media and everyone else that on Wednesday and Thursday and Friday we put players in categories.

We'll propose that on Wednesdays and Thursdays that be limited to actual practice

reporting where we detail players that have full participation, have limited participation, have no participation or are they out.

And we'll do that on Wednesday. We'll do that on Thursday. We'll do the same thing on Friday. But on Friday we'll then categorize the players as to where the coaches think they will be with respect to the game, using the same categories or some slight modification of those categories on Friday.

So we'll propose that change to the Commissioner. He will then determine what policies will be enacted. That is something that he's done in years past.

We will move the location of the umpire this year in NFL Europe and let the umpire operate from the offensive side of the ball. We think it's something we need to look at long-term in our game. We will then experiment with that movement in our game. In the preseason, the first two weeks, you'll see the umpire back behind the offensive line of scrimmage, obviously positioned opposite the referee.

We just think it's something we need to look at from a safety standpoint, from an operational standpoint. So we will test that this preseason and in NFL Europe. We're going to propose coach-to-defense which is a communication device that would be allowed in one player on the defensive side of the ball. We think it's competitively fair, and we now have the technology to do it. So we will propose that that go in this year.

The last thing I'd bring up to you that is not a playing rule but does affect our game is we'll propose a second interview window for coaches that are interviewed during the playoffs pursuant to our rule that we enacted a number of years ago.

And we'll say basically if you interviewed a coach in that window, the first two weeks of the playoffs, you likewise would have the right to interview him again if you'd like after the conference championship game, during that dead week before the week leading up to the Super Bowl.

So it's something that Mr. Rooney brought up in his process. Something we talked about a lot in Naples in our competition committee meetings and we'll propose that to the membership.

So there's a number of other things we will talk about in our report and you can see it when we get there. But those are the major rules proposals that we have on the table.

GREG AIELLO: Okay. Let's go to questions.

Q. I know we're supposed to be talking policy here in the owners' meetings, but there's reported developments with the Falcons and Houston regarding the (inaudible) with Matt Schaub.

RICH McKAY: Don't believe everything you hear, Steve.

Q. Is there any development going on with Matt Schaub in Houston?

RICH McKAY: Quickly, I'll tell you that Matt is a restricted free agent, clearly entitled to visit any team and do what he may want to do. We've talked to a number of teams that have interest in Matt. And beyond that I will say that's about all I'm going to say.

Q. Mr. McKay, any proposals coming from any of the teams?

RICH McKAY: Yes, there are. A number of them. I'm glad you brought that up. Tampa has proposed a change in instant replay in which I believe -- and Joel, correct me if I'm wrong on this -- that Tampa would propose that all penalties be subject to review except for offensive holding.

Is that correct, Joel?

JOEL BUSSERT: Right.

RICH McKAY: That's Tampa's proposal. And San Francisco has proposed that, and this has been proposed before, but they have proposed this year that we change our defensive pass interference rule to match or be closer aligned to the college rule, which would have a maximum 15-yard penalty. Except the way they've written it, they say in the case of a major interference, then it would be a spot foul. In the case of a minor interference, it would be 15 yards from the previous spot.

So that is obviously different than college's rule. But that is what they have proposed.

Q. Anybody proposing an expanded playoff field?

RICH McKAY: No, I do not believe -- is that in the agenda? I don't believe it is.

JOEL BUSSERT: There's no bylaw proposal.

Q. This is probably more relative to Detroit. Anybody talking about moving the Thanksgiving games, either changing the format, changing the teams that are in it or changing the Lions' position on the TV schedule?

GREG AIELLO: No, Mike, I don't believe

there's any proposal or agenda item for the league meeting on that subject. There's nothing in front of the competition committee on that.

RICH McKAY: No, there was not.

Q. Rich, two if I may. What's your expectation? I understand it's as Greg said that it's the commissioner's discretion. But do you anticipate major changes in the personal conduct policy and what's your sense of how that's going to play out?

RICH McKAY: I'll just give you my personal opinion from what I've heard and the discussions that we had in Indianapolis with the players, and when we met with the competition committee. I think the players were very interested, as was the union, in pursuing a modification to our current policy.

I think we're all concerned with the things that go on off the field and how the actions of a few may affect the many. And don't like that. So I do expect something. What it will be, I really don't know. I'm going to be very interested to hear. I know there were a number of really good exchanges in Indianapolis between the players, the union and the Commissioner.

And I'll just be interested to see how the policy is revised. Do I expect it to be? I really do, but I am not sure myself what that will mean.

Q. Secondly, could you kind of just address the first month of free agency. Assess for me how the market's panned out in your eyes as compared to years past. Maybe the money that's spent, the teams that are patient. Do you see any trends or developments that are significant in the first four weeks?

RICH McKAY: I really don't. I see the same thing I see every time which is we're all initially shocked by the market. It usually -- the first 10 days everybody sits there and says 'wow' about the size of the contracts and the activity. But in reality when the cap goes up as much as it's gone up the last two years, it's really not all that unexpected.

And every team has to do what they see best within this system. And so I really don't see this being a lot different than when we had the market shift in '98.

I think when the size of the contracts are initially seen, people are somewhat shocked. But I think in the end you see this has happened before and this is just a little bit of a market shift. And as I say, every team is going to operate a little differently based on their own circumstance.

Q. Here in Dallas/Fort Worth some conspiracy theorists believe Seattle snuck in a slick ball there for Tony Romo when he dropped the snap. Was there any discussion, I know kickers and punters have wanted that rule changed where they can go back to rubbing down the ball. Was there any discussion to change the K ball the way it's rubbed down before the game?

RICH McKAY: Yes, there was. And we'll recommend the procedure, just to make sure that there's no perception that is not reality in our mind either; but there's no perception that we're not doing everything we can to make sure that people feel comfortable, the balls that are being played with in the games are appropriate.

So I think we'll propose that the period for rubbing down the balls and getting the balls prepared for the kicking balls be expanded from 20 to 45 minutes pregame.

It will still be done by the same people that have done it forever, the ball boys. Each team is allowed to send one person in and get the balls prepared. So we want likewise to do everything we can to eliminate that perception. And we think this will help do that.

Q. Did that come directly from the Romo play?

RICH McKAY: No. Because I think that there were people -- I don't want to say that didn't further the discussion -- but I would say that there was discussion of it earlier than that, that they just felt like to make sure they got all the balls prepared appropriately, that the footballs be given more time. And so that had been talked about during the season. I think the other thing we're going to try to do is have the balls actually numbered so that we try to do the best we can, have the balls sequentially used.

So, in other words, try to use kicking ball number one until kicking ball number one is no longer available. Then you go to number two. So we're trying to give the kickers a little more comfort that the balls that they're kicking in the games, footballs have been kicked before and have been appropriately prepared.

Q. I may be a doddering old president here. But explain to me the difference on the 35-yard line and 30-yard line and overtime. Seems to me it would give the team that wins the coin flip not that much of a disadvantage. Five yards is going to make that big a difference?

RICH McKAY: We think it will, actually. Basically -- I wish I had the one-pager in front of me that I could show you. We've done a summary chart of overtime and the effect the moving of the kickoff had on overtime. Just look at it this way. Prior to '94, which would be '74 to '93 in which we had overtime, 46.8% of the time the team that won the toss won the game. 46.8% of the time the looser of the toss one the game. Absolutely equal.

When we shifted to the K ball, in '98, now we've moved from the 30 to the 35 with the K ball, you now have the team that wins the toss winning approximately, let's say over this period of time, maybe about 62 to 63% of the time, and the team that loses the toss winning therefore 37, 38% of the time.

So there's been in our mind a pretty dramatic shift. It's not been for one year. It's not been for two years. It's been closer to eight to nine years, and we just think that the easiest way to attack that is to move that kickoff line.

Q. On the injury report, what was the rationale on not putting out a 'questionable' or any kind of status until Friday?

RICH McKAY: We feel like, number one, the coaches don't have as good a feel as they should early in the week. So we think oftentimes they're subject to a lot of criticism from an integrity standpoint that we don't really necessarily like and we think also that it would be better to give more detailed information on practice, which, quite frankly, goes to the heart of whether a guy's going to play than categorizing the player.

We think it's more appropriate for them to be categorized on Friday.

GREG AIELLO: Let me add something there, Rich. The categories we're talking about for Wednesday and Thursday in terms of practice participation rules essentially equate to the old designations.

In other words, if a player is listed as having a knee injury and he's not practicing, that's essentially questionable. And if a player has a knee injury but he's fully practicing, then you would say that that player was probable. If a player has a knee injury and is limited in practice, then he's questionable. Maybe the guy not practicing at all with the knee injury is doubtful. So they equate but what we're doing is providing more detailed and more factual information tied to the amount of practice participation for an injured player.

So we think it will strengthen the credibility of the reports.

Q. Greg, when do you think that Roger will come out with a ruling on the personal conduct policy?

GREG AIELLO: I think during the meeting, probably on Tuesday. I think we would expect to have something to say in some detail on Tuesday.

Q. Greg, do you expect a resolution and/or an announcement on the status of talks over qualifiers for revenue sharing at this meeting? For the expanded revenue sharing.

GREG AIELLO: Right. Well, it's the expanded revenue sharing that was agreed to last March as part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and the final piece of that issue is to agree on the quote, unquote qualifiers for the teams to receive that money. And as you know the qualifiers committee has been meeting regularly for the past year.

And the subject is on the agenda, and it's possible there will be a vote. We're hopeful that there will be a resolution at this meeting.

Q. One question for Greg and one for Rich. Greg, is Los Angeles on the agenda for this meeting?

GREG AIELLO: No, it's not, Michael.

Q. And for Rich, has there been any discussion about the San Francisco proposal about defensive pass interference and if so, what is the committee's initial take on that?

RICH McKAY: There has been some discussion. I don't think -- I think we try to traditionally stay away from our position until we get in front of the membership on Tuesday. I would tell you that we also spent a long time talking about the proposal with the players' union and the players themselves and got some interesting feedback. But I think it's more appropriate for us to first talk to the membership as to our position rather than doing it here.

Q. We talked a little bit about the change in overtime. What's the overall rationale behind the moving it up five yards and then, secondly if you want to take another shot at the Schaub deal that would be appreciated?

RICH McKAY: Appreciate the first one. Not sure I'll take the second one. The first one, the rationale for the overtime and going from the 30 to 35 is simply to take away or to lessen, if you will, the advantage that has now shown up for the team that wins the toss.

The field position has obviously helped them in winning games. Doesn't mean they're going to score in their first possession, because those numbers, although up, are not wildly up. They are up. But what's happening is that field position is carrying the day in some way shape or form because they're winning. Those that are winning the toss are winning approximately 62% of the time, whereas prior to the time we moved the kickoff from the 35 back to the 30 they were only winning 46.8% of the time. So we just think this is a minor tweak, if you will, to try to bring equality back to the winner of the coin toss.

Q. Rich, I have a procedural question. I'm wondering, everybody has characterized the performance-enhancing drugs as a competitive issue. I'm wondering how much time, if any, the actual committee has spent on that.

RICH McKAY: We've not. We really do not spend a lot of time on it. That is something that's been handled by the Management Council, the union and the Commissioner. The only thing we ever spend time on with respect to the drug policies deals with how those players are allowed to interact with their team during suspensions. Any of those types of issues we've never really dealt with and don't deal with the issue of testing of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable.

Q. Rich, very minor point. Has there been any talk about making the tiebreaker rules more consistent on draft order?

RICH McKAY: You know, there was that discussion, Tony. It's interesting you bring that up. Yes, there was. I guess it's more appropriate for me to wait until we get there. But we've got a recommendation with respect to that, but we did discuss that at length. That is a very complicated transaction, because of the fact that in the draft you're dealing with an entire league and not just teams that are in the same division and/or conference.

It's a lot easier to break ties in a division or a conference than it is in a league. But we did discuss it at length.

Q. Any rule changes proposed by the Steelers, and also you talked about the opening of another window for assistant coaches to interview for head jobs during the playoffs. How much did Dan Rooney push for that, and did he talk about whether that affected the Steelers coaching search this year?

RICH McKAY: I know of no rule changes proposed by the Steelers unless Joel knows of any.

GREG AIELLO: Joel shook his head no.

RICH McKAY: With respect to Mr. Rooney, he did not push for the second window as much as he raised the question. And it was brought to us through the committee he's the chairman of, the diversity committee. And he never voiced to us whether that had any effect whatsoever on his search.

But he did raise the issue and say it was something that he felt would benefit teams in the future. And we talked about it and really felt like the disruption to the team that would be participating in the Super Bowl was not something that would be too much of a distraction in that off-week and therefore we would propose it.

Q. Just a quick clarification, Rich. The first time you mentioned the new spike penalty after the play, I think you said five yards, and then I thought I heard 15. Although I might have been mistaken?

RICH McKAY: No, it's five. And so you understand the rule, too, let's make sure it's understood.

If a player ran for a first down and got up and got all excited and spiked the ball, when the penalty flag was thrown, it would still be first and 10. It would be a five-yard penalty and then first and 10. But that's how the penalty would operate.

Q. The only other question I had is you mentioned how it's risen now to 62/63%, the incident of the first team winning. How often -- is it 62 to 63% of the time that the team winning the coin flip is doing it on its first drive?

RICH McKAY: No, that wouldn't be the case. No, the team winning on the first possession, for instance, this year that percentage was 45.5% of the time, which is extremely high. But it has been since we moved from the 30 to 35, it's been about let's say 10 to 12% higher than it was under the old kickoff 35. It used to be 25% of the time the team would win on its first possession. Now it's up to 35 to 37% of the time they're winning on their first possession.

Q. Rich, a few things. Any discussions on increasing the game day roster for active players?

RICH McKAY: It has been discussed. I think we actually had a proposal submitted.

GREG AIELLO: Chicago.

RICH McKAY: Chicago. And I think I would wait until we get Howard to Phoenix to discuss our position on it but it was discussed and it was discussed at length.

Q. Curious how do you decide in terms of stuff that comes to you when it's a team suggestion or it's competition committee or you propose a rule but others are just team suggestions?

RICH McKAY: What we do is the team suggestions come in and basically we try to hash them out and try to make sure -- they also come in through the survey. We do a survey every year, competition committee survey and ask all the coaches and the GMs, presidents whoever it may be. We get a ton of responses back, a series of questions and we open end ask them give us ideas.

We then have proposals that can be made pursuant to the constitution and bylaws. And what we try to do in the committee is go through all those proposals and talk about what we like, what we don't like, what the problems would be and then we take a position on it as a committee and give that position when we get to the owners meeting.

With respect to our own proposals, we may very well take that survey or from the meeting with the union and the players that come in and give us suggestions, we'll take those ideas and then we'll craft a proposal and make it and submit it as a rule coming from the competition committee.

It doesn't mean it's going to pass. We've had many a rule not pass, but we will usually be unanimous with respect to that proposal and we'll submit it.

Q. Was there any discussion also in terms of another possible rule on roughing the passer?

RICH McKAY: Roughing the passer was discussed at length because this year obviously it drew a lot of press. One of the things that we wanted to point out on roughing the passer was that when you look at the actual number of calls, the number of calls in 2005 was 127. And the number of calls in 2006 was 106. The calls went down but the exception because of a few unique plays, it was not as consistently called as it should have been.

So we watched a lot of tape and we'll make some recommendations with respect to certain interpretations of the rule that we hope continue to clarify it and make it as consistent as it can be from an officiating standpoint and from a player understanding standpoint.

Q. But there was no discussion in terms of making, say, certain minor, like roughing the kicker or running into the kicker, any discussion on that, making one a five-yard supposed to 15?

RICH McKAY: As far as the quarterback goes? No.

Q. To clarify on the injury report, you mentioned breaking down obviously the practice participation and then you mentioned or out. Was that if a player is actually out of the game on Wednesday or Thursday and they know that that will be announced?

RICH McKAY: Yes. Right, Greg?

GREG AIELLO: Oh, absolutely. Yes. It would be a list of injured players and somebody is either out or the team's not sure if they're out and then they have to tell you how much they're practicing.

Q. Coach-to-defense communication, can you talk a little bit about that, if a player gets injured or any of those things, how that would work?

RICH McKAY: The way it would work is one player and if that player gets injured then the defense goes back to communicating the way they always have.

We're just not comfortable that you can put it in multiple players because of all the packages we play. We don't want to get in the business of having to administrate whether there's two players on the field at the same time that have communication in.

So we felt like the cleanest way to do it is to give it to one player and if that player were to get injured, then you'd just go back and signal in the defenses as you always do now. We always treated these like the coach-to-quarterback as aids to the teams, not as something they should rely upon.

When the coach's quarterback goes out for one team, it doesn't mean the other team has to stop using it. You just have to begin signaling at that point. So on defense we would just put it in one player's helmet.

Q. I'm going to talk about San Francisco for a minute on two different levels. What is the refunding for the new stadium for development? When are we reupping on that?

GREG AIELLO: We're not familiar with the issue.

Q. When a team is trying to build a stadium, the NFL will --

GREG AIELLO: You're talking about the stadium financing program which used to be called G3, which is now expired and that is a subject that's on the agenda to discuss not in terms of San Francisco, specifically, at this point, but to talk about the next evolution of a league stadium financing. That will be discussed, possible alternatives going forward.

Q. And one last thing. It was really, we talked about it yesterday about how great the 49ers were back in the old days. One of the things that we saw based on the personal conduct policies that Bill Walsh and the administration did is they brought in Harry Edwards. Now is there, in your discussions, you were talking about the unions, the players. Are there different conduct ideas being placed on the table how to rectify this issue?

GREG AIELLO: Yes, absolutely. It's really on two parallel tracks. One is the education component -- player programs and rookie symposium and veteran life skill programs and how to evolve and improve and strengthen those. And then the other track would be the disciplinary track and the discussion is how to make that more effective.

So the simple answer to your question is yes. Many ideas are being discussed.

Q. We're looking forward to it. We work very much with these inner city kids in our television network, and we're hoping something will come out of it because we work directly with these children.

GREG AIELLO: Appreciate it.

Q. I'm just following up on the coach-to-defense communication, would it be a designated player that would have that in their helmet or would it be, would the teams be free to choose a player?

RICH McKAY: The teams are free to choose a designated player. How is that?

(Laughter)

In other words, you'll have to put on your pregame deactivate sheet you're actually going to designate the defensive player that's going to wear that in his helmet. But it could be any position.

Q. Couple questions. One quickly for Greg. I just want to, I'm wondering if there's going to be any discussion at all regarding San

Francisco's stadium proposal. Anything on the agenda about that?

GREG AIELLO: No, Nancy, I don't believe so. Not specifically. No.

Q. Rich, I want to clarify. The proposal to raise the game day roster from 45 to 47, that was simply something that you considered but will not necessarily be voted upon during this meeting?

RICH McKAY: It will be voted upon during this meeting. The way those work, in this case I believe Chicago was the one that submitted it. So Chicago will get their opportunity to get out, present it, make their arguments as to why.

We'll, as a committee, will take our position as to what our internal vote was and then there will be a vote.

GREG AIELLO: It was Chicago that proposed that.

Q. Rich, seems like every year during the season there's talk there are more injuries, worse injuries. I know you look at the numbers every year. What's your sense as a committee in terms of the injuries? Has that remained steady? Are we on a climb here in terms of number and severity of injuries?

RICH McKAY: I don't want to speak out of school, because maybe there's certainly people that know those numbers better than I. I know what was presented to us in Indianapolis, because we every year get a little snippet from the team doctors as to injuries and the injury studies.

There's no question that in 2004 there have been an uptick in injuries and written about a lot and people were concerned.

2005 and 2006 have gone back to the traditional levels and so what we were hoping for was that 2004 was a little bit of an aberration than it's shown itself to be. I think those numbers have come back down. I couldn't give you the exact numbers but they're more comfortable that the numbers are back more in the historical range than they were two years ago.

Q. Rich, following up on the spiking proposal, would it include spikes on touchdowns?

RICH McKAY: No. Spikes on touchdowns are absolutely acceptable, as they are if you're out of bounds. We're not trying to take anything away from the game that way. It's just in the field of play became in our mind much more of an issue.

Q. Rich, one question that's been asked before do you think it's going to be a different meeting this year with Roger being in charge this time and Paul not being there?

RICH McKAY: I don't know. I've been very impressed with the meetings that I've been at that Roger has run to date. The commissioner's done a very good job of running a very business-like meeting that moves along quickly. I don't know how much different it will be. Both of them are pretty bright guys that have been around the league a long time and know how to run these meetings with a lot of us that like to talk a lot and they have to cut us off at times.

But I assume the meeting will be pretty efficient.

Q. Greg, if you could circle back to the personal conduct policy stuff for a second. Can you just go through the leeway the Commissioner has with it, the parties that he's had input from, and how quickly you expect changes to go into effect? I mean if you guys talk about it on Tuesday, could we see somebody suspended on Wednesday?

GREG AIELLO: That would be doubtful. But as far as the Commissioner, he has the disciplinary authority to deal with these matters.

But as I mentioned before, in developing an appropriate policy, he wants to have input from as many different constituencies as possible. So as you know he's talking to players and spoken to Gene Upshaw extensively and Troy Vincent, owners, head coaches, front office executives, and outside experts that he's had conversations with.

He's looking to develop an overall comprehensive and more effective program. As he puts it, one negative incident is too many for him.

Q. Is your sense that this still with him being relatively new to the job is issue 1 or 1-A for him early in his tenure?

GREG AIELLO: He has many priorities, many top priorities. And that's certainly among them. And also to, just to go back to what you said, yes, the policy could be in effect immediately when he decides that he's comfortable with it and so, yes, it could be as soon as next week. And then we would begin dealing with whatever disciplinary matters are before us under the personal conduct policy.

Q. Rich, quick question about the instant replay. You mentioned the word "permanent" which is a very difficult concept for any pro sport. What safeguards might be in

there in case there are problems down the road or there are changes that might want to be made to instant replay?

RICH McKAY: Well, the changes can always be proposed as we have even since it's been instituted on a temporary basis, for instance last year we proposed that down by contact be reviewable play. It was passed for one year.

The system we felt works very well this year as something that we added to the reviewable plays. So that won't change. If this were passed as a permanent rule like any other rule we've have, then if somebody wants to amend it, wants to add reviewable plays, wants to take away from reviewable plays, wants to extend the time -- last year we likewise changed the review time from 90 to 60 seconds, which will again have to vote on this year.

But we just believe that this has now been a part of our game. It's been an accepted part of our game. It's been one that's also been now adopted by the colleges. So we think with the time to switch our equipment, to make an HD commitment that we think it should be part of our game.

Doesn't mean it can't be changed in the future doesn't mean it can't be voted out in the future. But we just felt we would get to the point where we don't have to every two or three or four or five years revisit the issue of whether it passes or not.

GREG AIELLO: Let me go back one second to the personal conduct policy and make one other point about that in terms of the Commissioner's thinking.

What's important to him in developing this policy is that it is supported by a wide faction of people in our league, meaning the owners, the players' association, the players and the clubs. And so that's what he's trying to develop. And he's been very encouraged by the strong stance that the players have taken in terms of looking for a more effective policy, as Rich mentioned earlier.

Q. Was there any discussion in your surveys of coaches about concern about the proliferation of Thursday night games and how it might affect competitively or disrupt their routine?

RICH McKAY: That's a good question. Joel, I might defer to you. I believe it was raised in a couple. I think that we as a committee we did sit down with the department that's in charge of scheduling and go through certain guidelines, Tony, with respect to that, and recommendations

as to home games, away games, travel, all those types of things, just to make sure.

But I think everybody in the league is pretty comfortable with the fact that this is going to be an acceptable part of our game. And we're just going to have to find ways to get prepared for it.

But I couldn't tell you that I saw it in a number of surveys. It might have shown up in one or two. But it certainly didn't show up in a lot.

Q. Greg, on the personal conduct thing, how much has PASS has been involved, how much to you anticipate possible legal challenges if you start suspending players who have not yet gone through the legal process, which I understand is a possibility?

GREG AIELLO: Jeff has been very involved. Ray Anderson has been very involved. Mike Haynes has been very involved. So that's certainly an issue that has to be considered. And it's the reason that it's important to develop a policy that has widespread support.

Q. Do you anticipate, if you do this, spending more time in court?

GREG AIELLO: No, we don't. No, because we believe we're developing a policy that is going to be very widely supported by the players and the clubs.

Q. How about the lawyers?

GREG AIELLO: They work for the players and the clubs. (Chuckling).

Q. Greg, on this conduct thing, if you've got a guy like Chris Henry who has had numerous things, could he suddenly -- I guess he's not grandfathered out of this thing. Could he suddenly -- because they're talking about multiple offenses, could be a year suspension. Would a guy who has had multiple, would he suddenly be exposed to something like that under this new policy, even though he did this stuff under the old one?

GREG AIELLO: No policy is going to go back in time and apply discipline to matters that have already been dealt with.

But if a matter has not been fully resolved, then it would presumably fall under this policy. But it would depend on the specifics.

Q. And, Rich, on the quarterback thing, was the Justin Smith play against Tampa, was that one of them that was looked at that you have to get more consistency on that?

RICH McKAY: That is certainly one of the plays we looked at. We looked at a lot of them, though, just because there were certain plays that stood out this year, that being one of them.

Obviously the New York Giant play being another one. We just wanted to understand what the concerns were and make sure we were consistent in the way it was going to be officiated and the way the players understood it to be officiated and hopefully we can do that.

GREG AIELLO: Thank you very much and we'll see you in Phoenix.

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