



NFL COMMISSIONER ROGER GOODELL JOINS FS1's FIRST THINGS FIRST

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With the 2017-18 NFL regular season set to kick-off, Commissioner Roger Goodell appeared on FS1's FIRST THINGS FIRST WITH CRIS CARTER AND NICK WRIGHT to discuss leading narratives surrounding the league. Below are highlights from this morning's interview.

Goodell on what he and the NFL accomplished during the off-season:

"We had a very busy off-season this year, focusing on a lot of changes for the game presentation and how we make the game better on the field and off the field. We focused a lot on officiating – centralizing replay and also adding full-time officials. Also spending an awful lot of time on the game presentation – how do we make the game experience better for the fans in the stadium and also at home? And reducing the commercial time and trying to make sure we reduce the interruptions – I think all those things are going to make a difference for our fans this year."

Goodell on Colin Kaepernick not being on a roster to start the NFL season:

"The thing we've always been about is meritocracy and opportunity. I want to see everyone get an opportunity, including Colin, but those are decisions made by football people. As you [Cris] know, also Tony Dungy and I were talking about this, when teams have a need and feel like they can get better, whether the player knows the system has the talent or whatever it may be, that's what they're going to do. I'm still convinced that he'll get that opportunity when the right opportunity comes along. That's what our league is all about."

One thing I do as commissioner, I don't make those decisions. I'm not a football expert, I'm a huge fan. I have a role as commissioner, but for me I watch the games, enjoy it and I let the football people make those decisions. The reality is there are 32 decisions and further, multiple decisions within an organization. So there is always a dispute and the idea of who can play and who can't play, who's best for a system and not best for a system are decisions that should be made by those 32 teams."

Goodell on frustrations in the timeline of the Ezekiel Elliott case:

"The frustration is we have a process and have been very careful and deliberate in that process. There was a very long investigation; there was a process for which we have agreed in our collective bargaining agreement. We followed that to a T, and still there is litigation from the NFLPA. We understand that, and we believe that the law is clear on this and that the process we followed is completely consistent with the CBA....That's why we believe our system should stay as we collectively bargained and not in the courts, but they have a right and that's been done in the past. Frankly, we've prevailed on that, and we think we will prevail again."

FIRST THINGS FIRST airs live from New York City weekdays on FS1 from 6:30 to 9:30 AM ET.

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