

NEWS



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NFL DESIGNATES SEPTEMBER 18-19 AS "HURRICANE RELIEF WEEKEND"

MONDAY NIGHT FUND-RAISING TELETHON TO CAP ACTIVITIES

The National Football League has designated week two of its season (September 18-19) as "Hurricane Relief Weekend," which will culminate with an unprecedented fund-raising telethon that will be part of ABC's Monday Night Football, Commissioner Paul Tagliabue announced today.

Under the theme of "Recover & Rebuild," the NFL, its clubs, network television partners (ABC, CBS, ESPN and FOX), and sponsors will use the September 18-19 NFL games in a special way as part of an ongoing initiative to raise funds and bring attention to the massive needs of the Gulf Coast region following the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina, Commissioner Tagliabue said.

"The Gulf Coast and our entire nation face extraordinary challenges," Commissioner Tagliabue stated. "We will continue to do our part to contribute to the recovery and rebuilding process. The weekend of what should have been the Saints' first home game in New Orleans this year is an appropriate time for a special leaguwide effort to focus on the restoration of the Gulf Coast."

Every NFL game on September 18 and 19 will include elements that will highlight and contribute to the national relief effort. The NFL's network television partners will participate during their NFL programming that weekend. The NFL is also working with its sponsors on several ways that they can join the initiative.

The weekend's activities will culminate with a fund-raising telethon from ABC's Times Square studio in New York City that will be incorporated into the ABC and ESPN telecasts of the NFL's Monday Night Football doubleheader on September 19. The telethon will raise money for the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund (www.bushclintonkatrinafund.com). Former Presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton lead the fund, which serves as an umbrella organization for three special funds established by the governors of Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi to assist in the long-term recovery plan for those states.

The NFL, its owners, clubs and players have contributed nearly \$8 million so far to Hurricane Katrina relief. Saints owner Tom Benson donated the first \$100,000 to a special relief fund created by the team – the New Orleans Saints Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund (www.saintshurricanefund.org), which will provide assistance to people in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast region.

The Saints-New York Giants game, originally scheduled for the New Orleans Superdome on September 18, will be played on Monday night, September 19 at Giants Stadium beginning at 7:30 p.m. ET. ABC will televise the Saints-Giants game until the 9:00 pm ET start of the Washington at Dallas game. At that time, the Saints-Giants telecast will switch to ESPN in most markets. The New York, Louisiana and selected hurricane-affected areas will see the Giants-Saints game to its conclusion on ABC before joining the Washington-Dallas game.

The NFL produced a national television public service announcement this week to promote donations to the American Red Cross and the United Way for Hurricane Katrina relief. The message features three NFL quarterbacks from the Gulf Coast – Brett Favre of the Green Bay Packers, Steve McNair of the Tennessee Titans, and Peyton Manning of the Indianapolis Colts. The message will be seen on NFL game telecasts and in NFL stadiums beginning this week.

In addition, Saints coach Jim Haslett and players Joe Horn and Wayne Gandy filmed a television message this week to promote the Saints Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund.

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