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ROGER GOODELL NAMED NFL COMMISSIONER

Roger Goodell, the NFL's chief operating officer who has worked in every area of league operations over the past 24 years, was selected today to succeed Paul Tagliabue as NFL commissioner.

Goodell, who will become the eighth chief executive in the 87-year history of the NFL, was chosen by a vote of the NFL clubs at a meeting in Chicago. He will assume the duties of commissioner when Paul Tagliabue officially retires prior to the start of the regular season. Tagliabue, who has served as commissioner since 1989 when he took over for Pete Rozelle, announced on March 20 his intention to retire this summer.

Goodell, 47, started his NFL career in 1982 as an administrative intern in the league office in New York. After spending the 1983 season as an intern with the New York Jets, Goodell returned to the league office in 1984 as an assistant in the public relations department. In 1987, he was appointed assistant to the president of the American Football Conference, Lamar Hunt, by then-Commissioner Rozelle.

Under Paul Tagliabue, Goodell managed a wide array of football and business operations in senior executive roles before being named executive vice president and chief operating officer by Tagliabue in December of 2001.

As chief operating officer, Goodell was responsible for the league's football operations and officiating departments in addition to supervising all league business functions. He served as president of NFL Ventures, which oversees the NFL's business units. His business responsibilities included league media properties, marketing and sales, consumer products, international, stadium development, events, and strategic planning.

Goodell has been instrumental in many key league accomplishments, including expansion, realignment, and stadium development. Most recently, he directed the dramatic transformation and growth of the NFL's business units, played a lead role in the launch of the NFL Network, and was a key member of the negotiating teams that produced the NFL's new television agreements and extended Collective Bargaining Agreement with the NFL Players Association.

Goodell's other achievements are equally wide ranging.

In football operations, he helped lead the 1994 initiative for rules changes to improve offensive production; initiated the creation of a senior football operations position in the league office; oversaw the administration of the instant replay system; restructured the officiating department; and helped negotiate the agreement with the NFL Referees Association in 2001.

On international business, he developed and managed the American Bowl series of international preseason games in the 1990s; created the NFL International division in 1994; and developed an improved business model for the NFL Europe League.

Goodell managed the expansion process during the 1990s that led to the addition of four new NFL teams; led the initiative to create the NFL Internet Network business model that integrated club-operated sites with NFL.com; oversaw the league's role in stadium construction; strengthened the team of executive talent in the league office; and helped the NFL manage several unique challenges such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina.

Roger Goodell was born in Jamestown, New York, about an hour west of Buffalo, on February 19, 1959, the third of five sons of Charles and Jean Goodell.

The late Charles Goodell represented his western New York District in the United States Congress from 1959-68. In 1968, he was appointed by then-New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller to serve the final two years of Robert Kennedy's term in the U.S. Senate following Kennedy's assassination.

The Goodell family moved to Bronxville, New York, in 1971, where Roger graduated from high school. A three-sport star for Bronxville High School in football, basketball, and baseball, Goodell captained all three teams as a senior and was named the athlete of the year at Bronxville High.

Goodell was recruited by several colleges to play football as a defensive back. He attended Washington & Jefferson College in Washington, Pennsylvania, and expected to play football there. But after suffering a knee injury while running prior to his freshman year, he decided to forego playing football to focus on academics.

He graduated magna cum laude from Washington & Jefferson in 1981 with a degree in economics and received the school's Walter Hudson Baker Prize for excellence in economics.

In high school, Goodell, who remembers sleeping with an NFL "Duke" football when he six years old, decided that his goal was to work for the NFL and perhaps someday become commissioner. Upon graduating from Washington and Jefferson, he began a letter-writing campaign to land a job in the NFL.

He wrote a total of 40 letters, starting with Commissioner Pete Rozelle and including one to every NFL team. In the summer of 1981, Rozelle instructed NFL Executive Director Don Weiss to interview Goodell. After one interview and several more letters from Goodell, Weiss offered Goodell a three-month internship in the NFL office that began in September of 1982 shortly before the start of a nine-week NFL players' strike.

The following year, Goodell worked for the New York Jets as an intern in public relations and administration. Following that season, he was offered a position on the New York Jets coaching staff, but decided to return to the NFL office in 1984 as an assistant in the public relations department.

Goodell serves on the boards of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City, and Action for Healthy Kids. He is also an officer of NFL Charities, the league's charitable foundation.

Roger and his wife Jane live in the New York City area with their twin daughters.

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