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## Sports Leagues: Challenges to Enter, Maintain, and Remain

Jeffrey S. Moorad Sports Law Journal

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THE 2023 JEFFREY S. MOORAD SYMPOSIUM:  
SPORTS LEAGUES: CHALLENGES TO ENTER,  
MAINTAIN AND REMAIN

INTRODUCTIONS

**Dean Mark Alexander:** Good afternoon. Good afternoon, everybody. Good afternoon. For those who don't know me my name is Mark Alexander. I am the Arthur J. Kania Dean here at Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law. It is a great honor to be in that position and an honor to be able to welcome you here today to what we believe is at least the eleventh Moorad Sports Law Symposium.

I'm really also excited because this is a single moment, a big day in the world of sports law every year where we have the opportunity to talk about the industry, to talk about practices, to talk about trends and to ground it all in the study of law that we engage in here, but also the real world experiences of those who come to talk with us about how does this study that we do work with the actual practice of negotiations, building teams, building a stadium, whatever the topic may be. And of course, today Sports Leagues and their challenges.

So every year it's a great conversation that helps move us all forward. It is all possible because a number of years ago Jeff Moorad from the class of '81 had the extraordinary generosity to commit to funding this program. A gift for which I am always grateful, Jeff. We've had a lot of time to talk about the school, and Jeff has a love for our school, understanding what it did for him and what it can do for all the students as they go forward. And because of the gift we've been able to have the Moorad Sports Law Center that makes us the premier school in the country for sports law. You can measure it any way you want but when people talk about sports law they talk about the Moorad Center and I'm grateful to Jeff for everything he's done in that regard.

I also want to thank Morgan Lewis, the firm actually that Jeff is affiliated with and his classmate, Jami Mckeeon who runs the firm and so many others at the firm who are sponsoring today. And above all I want to thank all of you for being here. It is truly the people who make this possible. Every day we have the opportunity to talk about the law and none of that really matters if we just sit there in an academic bubble. So the fact that you're here, the fact

that we have these tremendous guests here makes it possible for us to have a really rich conversation today.

So thanks to everyone for being here and I'm very pleased to be able to welcome next the man I just spoke about who is not only an alum but I am really proud to count him as my friend, Jeff Moorad.

**Jeff Moorad:** Thanks Dean. I'm a wanderer as opposed to a lectern guy.

It's amazing to me when I went to law school here many years ago. By the way it wasn't exactly here, it was in the old building across the way. But essentially at my time at Villanova Law I couldn't find an entertainment law class let alone a sports law class and now we have a program in sports law which is pretty extraordinary and I think that everyone involved with it is proud of it. I'm certainly proud to have my name attached to it. And particularly proud of all the students that I meet every year when I come to this symposium. So I know all of you are here for what? CLE credit. Well a lot of you are and we don't blame you for that, we appreciate you being here. And thank you for attending today.

But really this is about a school which has allowed itself to become a player in sports law and I don't mean that as a pun at all, I mean it because I'm really serious about the commitment that Villanova University School of Law made to educate young would-be, prospective lawyers in this discipline which used to not even be a discipline. It was a dream of mine many years ago even though I was here without the ability to learn about sports. I learned enough about the basic principles of law that I became convinced that they would apply to an area of sports and I forged my way into that business.

And today, this program allows many of our young students to do that in a much more organized way and certainly a way that we believe builds a foundation for them that allows them to them go out in the world and make their marks. I'm extraordinarily proud of all of them. I got to meet many of the Moorad fellows today which was terrific and I congratulate all of them on their involvement. I also want to thank all of Morgan Lewis as the Dean mentioned a firm that I'm affiliated with. I'm actually the proud chairman of the sports industry practice for Morgan Lewis. And today I have one of my co-chairs at that practice, Andrew Rocks, another Villanova law alum who's here attending- now he's not here

for CLE credit I know. He's here because he's interested and passionate about sports law.

But thank you to Andrew, thank you to Rich Aldrich who I also see sitting next to him. Rumor is that Steve Wall is in attendance, I haven't seen him yet but we really appreciate all of you being here. This should be a fascinating set of discussions about the industry and we look forward to all of you maybe learning a little about Villanova and a little about the sports industry today. So thank you for your attendance.

Lastly, I want to introduce the leader of the Moorad center, Andrew Brandt who is someone that I have known for many years. Like me, he started out as a young lawyer representing athletes. And eventually moved into management with a club. And we shared that career path and when Dean John Gotanda and I, years ago, were contemplating an executive director for the Moorad center somebody said "hey by the way there's a guy Andrew Brandt who's teaching at Penn." And I said "Wait a minute I know Andrew Brandt, I didn't even know he was back in Philadelphia." Turns out he was living about three miles from the law school and we reached out to Andrew and twelve years later the rest is history. So it's my pleasure to bring up Andrew Brandt. And Andrew thank you for everything you do to make this center so successful.

**Andrew Brandt:** Thanks so much. Thanks Jeff, and yes, I married into the Philadelphia region. My wife is here, my father in law is a graduate of this wonderful school. Thanks Dean Alexander, thanks Jeff, thanks to Morgan Lewis. And thanks for everyone being back here today. We're at a different time and that hasn't deterred anyone from coming here. It's an afternoon symposium for Sports Law this year. We always try to bring you the best and brightest, the best speakers on cutting edge topics. This year, you'll see my football background heavily with a lot of well known football presence within these panels. It also talks about new leagues in sports and collective bargaining issues in sports. All the best that we try to bring every year to make sure this is a destination site on the sports law calendar.

The program's doing well. The program is always looking to be the top, the standard of excellence for sports education law, business, thought, policy. We have a program with our fellows that are all here today. They're doing a lot of work that's even behind the scenes. And a couple of them, four of them, will be up here moderating some of the panels so it won't be all me, you won't have to

hear from me all day. We're going to expose them to this audience as well, and expose you to some very interesting topics starting right now.

Our first guest is going to be a one on one chat, a one on two because I'll have the symposium editor for the Moorad Sports Journal up here with me who has a relation to our special guest. The first LGBTQ+ NFL Player is with us today. He's from Westchester. We'll sit down and talk to him. Just finished his season with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Carl Nassib. We'll talk to Carl right now.

Q&A WITH CARL NASSIB, 7-YEAR NFL VETERAN & FIRST LGBTQ+  
NFL PLAYER

**Andrew Brandt:** Up here with me I want you to say hello to Grace Polisano. Grace is our Symposium editor. Grace has organized this great day for us so a lot of what you see here today was organized by Grace. And Grace, I'm going to let you start and explain how you know this guy.

**Grace Polisano:** Hi everyone, thank you so much for coming. Like Professor Brandt said I am the Symposium Editor here for the Sports Law journal and Carl is my first cousin. So my mom and his mom. . . I know you want to talk a little bit about this, but we are first cousins and they are sisters.

**Carl Nassib:** Both of our moms played volleyball here. Grace and I were unfortunately not lucky enough to get offers to come play sports at Villanova but we're not holding that against anybody here. But I'm very very happy to be here, this is exciting and I love talking sports. I love talking life and everything in between. And I hope to make this a great experience and to have some fun. This is really great.

**Grace Polisano:** Absolutely. So to get started, like Professor Brandt said, Carl is from Westchester Pennsylvania. So Carl you grew up in Villanova's back yard, you attended Malvern prep. Can you talk a little more about your experience there and your football experience there since you did not start one game at Malvern Prep.

**Carl Nassib:** Yes, yes I know, yep. So we both went to Inter-Ac schools, I went to Malvern Prep. Any friars in here? Not one, interesting. What was interesting about my time at Malvern was I played three different sports, I had the best time but I ended up never starting one single game at Malvern and I guess that's pretty inter-

esting. To never start and then somehow make it to a power five conference school and I did walk on and that was a great experience there as well. But I really had the best support system to get me through kind of a tough ride on the football team. My brother played football at Malvern, my dad played football at Malvern, my younger brother played football there. So we just really enjoyed the culture and the tradition. And one thing that I really appreciated was the community of the Inter-Ac and just the town and there was something different about it that I really can't explain but you don't find it everywhere.

And even though it wasn't the most successful high school football career anybody's ever had I did finish it really strong. Is there anybody here from St. Joe's Prep here? Any prep guys? Nope! Oh my gosh. Anyway so my last game as a high school athlete, I had three sacks against St. Joe's prep and that was like the only thing that got me into college so thank you to St. Joe's Prep for making me be here today.

**Andrew:** From that storied career at Malvern you go to Penn State, you just mentioned it. Walk on at Penn State to an All-American. Tell us about that.

**Carl:** Yeah, I played five years at Penn State and I had three different head coaches four different defensive coordinators and there was a lot of turnover there but what I did that I think benefitted me the most was I surrounded myself with the best people. I surrounded myself with the walk-ons, we called ourselves Walk On U and we would hold up the U any time any of us did anything remotely impressive at practice you know what I mean. And looking back it's a little cringey but they were the most hard working individuals and most humble people that I could find. We were doing push ups in the dorm room every night. We were really just kind of grinding though that walk on lifestyle where we were sneaking into dining halls because the scholarship kids got it for free back when NIL wasn't a thing we were really really pinching pennies. But the number one thing that I believe that took me from being a walk on to achieving all the goals that I really set for myself was surrounding myself with the best and most hardworking people.

**ANDREW:** And take us a little more into that walk on culture. You're out there, you're never going to play, is that right?

**Carl:** what's that?

**Andrew:** Were you ever going to play?

**Carl:** I thought so.

**Andrew:** I mean you have to have some great fortitude to endure that level of practice every day with no guarantees.

**Carl:** Yeah absolutely. I one time told my head coach that I wanted to play in the NFL, it was after my sophomore season. I think I was 19 and I said “hey coach I really want to play football in the NFL.” He was an NFL head coach at one time and he said “let me stop you right there” and I said “ok” And he said “for you to play in the NFL is ludicrous get the f out of my office.” So I kept all those goals to myself moving forward but I never let that kind of stuff get in my way. I never really listened to people and I’ve always had this, at some points delusional, optimism. So I always thought that I would play and make it and like I said before my dad and my brothers always believed in me too and when your inner circle believes you in the outside noise doesn’t really factor in.

**Andrew:** Penn State to the pros. How did it happen?

**Carl:** I don’t know if lucky is the right word but I was lucky enough to get drafted to the Browns in 2016 and we went 1-31 my first two years and I don’t know if anybody has gone 0-16 in something before. But I’ve had some real highs and real lows in my, I played seven years in the NFL. And playing in Cleveland I made some of the best friends but that was definitely one of the more challenging times in my life. When you get branded like a loser it’s really hard to wash that out and in the NFL they want people who win. They want people who know success and they know what it feels like. So starting off when you get drafted you have no control over who picks you. So I was lucky enough to get drafted in the third round but then had to endure two years of being a national embarrassment.

Fast forward, I played in Tampa for two years and those were honestly the two best years in my NFL career. I had so much fun. My teammates were amazing. I ended up being captain my fourth year in the NFL. And it’s just a constant grind and it’s a constant competition every single day. It’s almost like a lifestyle. I tell people it’s a lifestyle being an NFL player because even in the off season you still got to maintain staying in shape, maintain your skill. It’s not like riding a bike, you have to continue to get better every day.

Because these young guys man coming out of college every year they're just faster and stronger. They're coming for your job.

It's been a long, quick seven years. I was just talking to Mr. Tuck back there about how quickly it goes by. But's it's been a blessing playing for seven years for sure.

**Grace:** Yeah, so talking a lot about your career at Tampa Bay. I went to your game this year against the Saints and you had a huge game, a game winning sack. Do you want to talk a little bit about the atmosphere in Tampa but also compared to the atmosphere at Penn State?

**Carl:** That was a fun game. That was a Monday night game. One of my best friends who's Valedictorian at Notre Dame calls me at 5pm on a Monday and is like "hey man what's up." I'm like "oh I have a game right now." I know not too many people were worried about it, that was an electric game. I hate the Saints, you know what I mean. I hated Sean Payne and I think he's in Denver right now. But I never liked him.

**Andrew:** Why?

**Carl:** I don't. . because he beat us up my first two years in Tampa. Going into that stadium in New Orleans was tough and he beat us up. And he always had fourteen packages. I mean being a defender going against it, the game plan for him is having to know fourteen different packages. So I never liked Sean Payne and that was an electric game. It was awesome because both my sisters were there, grace was there with her sister Katherine and that was almost the level of Penn State.

I don't know if anyone's ever been to a Penn State Football game or even a Penn State white out but that is the most electric environment I've ever been in, I've ever played in. And the passion that I guess is maybe stronger in college sports. It's definitely strong at Penn State and in the Big Ten and I always tell people I've never felt that type of electricity in the NFL in any game. But like compared to Penn State. . .

**Grace:** Let's transition to one of your most incredible-

**Andrew:** Can I ask more about Tampa? I'm going to ask the fan boy question. So the Brady thing- did you guys know it was the last year.

**Carl:** I ha no idea. I uh



**Andrew:** What are you talking about? Last year?

**Carl:** Yeah I don't know I had no idea. I was just worrying about myself and keeping myself employed.

**Grace:** Ok so now we're actually going to transition. So one of your most incredible accomplishments has been becoming one of the first out gay players in the NFL. How rewarding has it been to represent the community on such a large stage?

**Carl:** One of the big things that I was nervous about when I was going to come out was that I had done all these years of working to become an NFL player and I was worried that it would be the only thing that I would be remembered for. And that my years as a walk on, going through all those trials and tribulations, making it to the NFL, making it though Cleveland, getting a second contract- I was worried it was all I would be remembered for. But almost two years later it has been the most rewarding blessing ever. I mean people come up to me al the time, people come up to my dad, my mom and just say that a couple people made their life a little bit easier.

I was in Chipotle last week and I said "hey I just watched your video before I came out to my mom." I was like "dude are you going to make me cry in Chipotle right now?" So it has been the greatest experience, I feel so lucky that so many brave, amazing people in my community have come before me and for me to have an opportunity to carry that torch has really turned out to be one of my greatest accomplishments for sure.

**Andrew:** you mentioned the vide and we all remember what was it, two years ago?

**Carl:** almost

**Andrew:** Almost two years ago. What was the decision behind that forum for your announcement versus any other way? Or social media versus. . .a different way? What was behind the video?

**Carl:** I wanted people to see my face and hear it from me. I think a lot of people make big announcements from their notes or something but I just felt like it would be more powerful because well, I'm wearing a helmet all the time. I don't think people know what most NFL players look like on a daily basis so I wanted to make a video. I wanted to speak from the heart. I wanted to be quick. People's attention spans are like \*snaps\* that nowadays. And I didn't' want to

make a huge deal. I didn't want to make this huge spectacle of it. I wanted it to be just a matter of fact. I wanted it to be normalized and the reaction that I got from it was ten out of ten, so supportive. I tell people all the time I feel like I've had more love and support poured into me than anybody that's ever lived. It's been amazing and I'm very happy I did it the way that I did, the timing.

**Grace:** And in the video you talked about your partnership with the Trevor project and you've been partnered with the Trevor Project since then. Could you talk a little about what the Trevor Project is, what they do and why you chose them?

**Carl:** Again I wanted to not make it a big deal. I wanted to not make it about me and I knew it would garner a lot of attention and I wanted to steer that attention to a cause I was really passionate about. A close friend of mine has been involved with the Trevor Project for like eight years and he told me about it probably two months before I posted the video and I'd never even heard of it. I thought this was a great opportunity to shed some light on a great cause. They provide the top notch resources for LGBTQ kids who are in danger of suicide and they offer amazing insights into the research behind that and they're amazing people doing awesome work and I'm just happy that I can continue that conversation. And I'm always, I ask for this question because I'm always trying to tell more and more people about what they do and the incredible message that they have. It's been great.

I just had a call with their creative director two days ago. I'm becoming friends with all of them. And if you don't know anything about them go to their website and learn more about how you can help a little LGBTQ kid who's trying to figure it out.

**Andrew:** you said the reaction was ten out of ten positive. When you went back to the locker room how was it? And was there any negativity?

**Carl:** This is a common question. Football players often get branded as some sort of unintelligent, out of touch individual, but I was met with the most support and the most respect. I had proven myself as a football player with multiple years in the NFL before that. So it was an overall amazing experience thank you.

**Grace:** To transition again. To speak about making a difference do you want to tell everyone about your company Rayze and what you've been doing with that?

**Carl:** Sure. So I was volunteering in Tampa Bay about four years ago and I volunteered at this juvenile delinquency center. And when I went there it was set up by the Buccaneers. They do everything for us and make it super easy. And it was very sad because there were these kids, about twelve thirteen years old in jail cells and a lot of them were there because they were just running away from a violent home environment. So the experience was very very moving and the owner of the Buccaneers was there and she's done an amazing job keeping that relationship going.

But the thing that stuck out to me the most was that it was half a mile from our facility. I drove by it every day for two years and I never knew it was there. It was half a mile from a team of millionaires and a family of billionaires. So I was like "this can't keep happening." I thought there needs to be an app where you can go on and see any nonprofit depending on what you're interested in, depending on how you want to give back. So about a month later, I'm not a very creative person so I thought about how do you raise money and raise people's awareness. I thought of a name called Rayze- R-a-y-z-e. And we're essentially becoming the LinkedIn of philanthropy. We're allowing people to go through their employer, go through their friends to find amazing ways to give back.

I work with the most incredible people. I just had breakfast with the United Way of Chester County yesterday. The nonprofit industry is in a very antiquated state. Ever year there's less and less donors in America. Millennials don't write checks and they don't carry cash so there's a massive need for the philanthropy industry to really innovate and modernize and that's what we're trying to do. And it's honestly been one of the most rewarding things ever. You hear everybody's story you hear how passionate these people are. They go to work caring about other people and that's the best part. Look for us, it's the best, it's really really fun.

**Grace:** Awesome. So you just finished your seventh year in the NFL. can you talk a little about your highest high and you talk a little about your lowest low being in Cleveland, being a loser.

**Carl:** Easy answer, easy.

**Grace:** Let's talk about your highest high.

**Andrew:** There's some people from Cleveland in here.

**Carl:** There's some people from Cleveland? I'm so sorry. No Cleveland's a great place. I feel like I don't even need this microphone. But Cleveland's a great place. So that was definitely the most challenging. I think maybe the most the highest high, I think was. . . yeah I think I talked about it already, was becoming a captain. Yeah I think that was like really freaking awesome. To walk on the field every Sunday with my guys, that was definitely the high.

**Andrew:** You are known for a clip from Hard Knocks, which I think a lot of these people have seen, explaining compound interest to your teammates.

**Carl:** Yeah that was an interesting clip, yeah.

**Andrew:** For those who haven't seen it tell us about a bit if you would.

**Carl:** I was doing my best with very limited knowledge trying to teach my teammates about saving money, about making your money work for you, about the power of compound interest, I think you called it the eighth wonder of the world or something like that. I have a degree in biology. I know a lot of lawyers and financial people are probably going to laugh at me but a little information goes a long way and I've been advocating for financial wellness for especially football players and all athletes and working with a company Financial Finesse to bring tools to college students actually so they can navigate the NIL era just a little bit better. I think it would be very beneficial to move that learning curve back four years.

I think that we make mistakes, well I made mistakes financially coming out of college. I signed a bunch of trading cards, never knew that they didn't take taxes out of a 1099 and so the next year I owed 60 grand in taxes like "where the hell did this come from?" so it permeates through people that you think know about finances and it's something I'm very passionate about and I think that athletes if they become financially savvy, if they work hard to educate themselves and to take advantage of the many resources that they have, I think they become role models for more than just their athletics. And I think they become role models for pursuing success that isn't super superficial. Super superficial.

I've continued that conversation. It's something that wasn't just like a funny clip. It's something I really, I see so many guys and

they come to me in whispers. And they say “hey, can you help me with my credit?” I say “I don’t know how to fix your credit.” And I get coaches coming to me asking “what’s the difference between whole and term life insurance?” And I’m like “man you’ve got to read a book.” It’s a conversation that I’m having way too often and it’s something that I hope changes very soon and I think that I’m very lucky to have been in that video because it’s really opened some cool doors to me.

**Andrew:** How was the Hard Knocks with cameras everywhere?

**Carl:** It was so annoying. It was so annoying, yeah. Were you ever a part of Hard Knocks?

**Andrew:** No at the Packers they would ask us every year and before I could get the words out they were like “no, never.”

**Carl:** I didn’t even have a choice, I don’t know why we were like one in fifteen the year before. And like 44th first round picks, so I don’t know why they picked us but it was definitely annoying and hearing your voice on TV you just sound terrible. And I did not enjoy it.

**Grace:** I remember facetiming you and you were eating chipotle and they walked in and you were “Can I just have a minute?”

**Carl:** She tells me stories I don’t even remember! So many stories that we have and I like never remember them. That’s a good one though.

**Grace:** That was a good one.

**Carl:** I’m always eating chipotle, a little plug for Chipotle. I had it for dinner last night.

**Andrew:** And by the way I think the most important thing the fifty students here want to know are the secrets of Grace here.

**Carl:** Grace is the freaking best. Give a round of applause for Grace Polisano. It was actually just going to be me and Mr. Brandt here and then I was texting her and I was like Grace let’s do it together and let’s get fire pics and have a great time. So Grace is amazing, wicked smart, wicked smaht and just she thinks I’m hilarious so that’s always great. So I’m really thankful that you asked me to be here, appreciate you.

**Grace:** I think that closes everything for today. Thank you so much for coming Carl.

**Carl:** Guys, thank you so much for having me this was really nice. Thanks so much.

PANEL I: CHALLENGES OF CURRENT AND FORMER PLAYERS

**Kevin Hopkins**, Vice President, Golf, Excel Sports Management

**Justin Tuck**, Managing Director of Private Wealth Management, Goldman Sachs and former All-Pro New York Giants defensive lineman and Super Bowl champion

**Ross Tucker**, Co-Founder, RT Media, NFL Game Analyst and Former NFL Player  
ANDREW BRANDT: Carl was great huh? That was great to hear, beautiful. Really impressive from Carl and we're going to continue the sort of former player theme here with a couple special guests that, two of which are also a newbie, two of which have been here before, repeat visitors. They get extra points on their card. I want to introduce to you names you should know, they've been here before again, Kevin Hopkins is here, he's with Excel management, he's representing some of the top golfers in the world. Kevin is an extreme friend of the Moorad center. He's on our board, he's a graduate of Villanova, not the law school but Villanova. He's been a good friend, speaks to our class all the time, has gotten to know our students. And one of our recent alums is working with him at Excel. Welcome Kevin Hopkins to the stage.

Justin Tuck is here. Justin's been here before. Justin I'm sorry it's a Philly audience, but whatever. New York Giants, ok there's some fans. Part of the New York Giants for multiple Superbowls and of course a big shot of another firm in New York called Goldman Sachs. He is a shining example of success on the field and post career, welcome Justin Tuck once again, thank you.

And one of my closest friends is here, Ross Tucker. Ross you know, all of you Philly people know from VIP, well maybe not from your playing career. From all his multi media efforts some of which include myself, I'm lucky to be on with Ross many times a year, many times a month almost. Ross is a well known figure who does his podcast every day and is someone that has I think really thoughtful and insightful takes on football and sports. I'm always impressed when I listen to Ross at his unique perspective on the industry. Welcome Ross.

I wanted to have this panel, this sort of look at what I notice so much in my career which is sort of the post career, which is what happens I call it when the music stops. When no longer the routine of being a player, when no longer the routine of the paycheck as a player, no longer the routine of the schedule and trying to find your way post career even if finances are not a big issue at that point. So I wanted to have these guys talk about it and I'll start with you Ross and we'll go down the line in terms of what did you look at when, as I say those words, the music stopped.

**Ross Tucker:** Well first of all thank you for having me Andrew. My situation is, I think unique. Certainly different than Justin which, by the way I'm blown away that Justin had the career he had, made all the money on the field that he did and is still doing a job like Goldman Sachs. Not many guys make that kind of transition, it's unbelievably impressive. But because I was an undrafted free agent, I kind of looked at every year as it could be my last year, so I had an internship every offseason. Merrill Lynch, when I played for the Cowboys I interned with Roger Staubach's commercial real estate company the Staubach company. I was telling Justin I actually got my Series Seven in '66 securities licenses when I played for the Bills. I kind of knew every year could be the last year so I was always planning for this and it's funny because when you're a player you're a little bit nervous the organization will think "what is he doing?" Because twice a week I put on like a suit and tie and drove downtown, wherever it was, and let me tell you I think that should be mandatory for all players because it is unbelievable motivation to keep playing football as long as you possibly can.

A suit and tie in an office- no offense to all the people wearing suit and ties and all the law students, you're going to be in an office the rest of your life, no big deal. But it's not nearly as nice as playing. So I think it was very motivating. Justin knows, most of the guys in the offseason, all they do is lift weights. Most of them like playing videogames or whatever they're doing and I just knew football was going to end. The thing I tell people now is, even Justin played eleven years, I played seven. Even if you had an unbelievable career and played ten years, you're 32. What are you going to do with the next fifty years of your life?

To answer your question Andrew I was kind of always preparing for that and yet I still found it really difficult. And it's funny because I always hear these people, these guys that retire and they say "football is just something I do, it's not who I am" and they want

to go out of their way to tell you all these other interests they have. That's not me. I know I went to a good school, I know I did the internships. I liked being a football player. I liked that people said "there's Ross Tucker the football player." So for me it was the loss of identity. Since I was in sixth grade that's how I thought of myself. I mean my wife still makes fun of me, you know high school and college I had a chain with my number on it. She still laughs at me about that right? So that was my identity and then I hurt my neck against the Ravens. I asked the Washington spine doctor what he thought and he said "I bruised my spinal cord." I herniated c-5, 5-6 in my neck, bruised my spinal cord. I said "What do you think?" He said "I think you're 28 and you went to Princeton, you should get a real job." Which, by the way, I saw him recently and I was like "I still haven't gotten a real job dude, still haven't." which I like.

But I really struggled, Andrew and I was as prepared as anybody could possibly be. I had already started a business, I was starting my media career and I still struggled with the identity part of it. And so what I did was I just went crazy with my diet and losing weight and I went from like 312 August 28th to 248 by Christmas. And I got in a bunch of arguments with my wife because I would have like two chicken tenders on the George Foreman grill for dinner. She'd be like "just go to bed, just go to bed." But it was tough, it was difficult even though I was pretty prepared for that eventuality.

**Andrew:** Justin?

**Justin Tuck:** Same question? I've been blessed, since a young age, to be surrounded by people who had been somewhat successful in sports, you know. I have cousins that played in the league, I have cousins that played MLB, I have friends that played in the NBA. So I had a knowledge, at least a little bit of a knowledge, around what it was like before I got into the leagues. And what a transition might look like. And how some of their mistakes or their successes led me to not, you know, have to repeat. So to me I look at the NFL, even thought it was a dream of mine to play in the NFL as a kid, I also looked at it as the NFL stands for "not for long" no matter if you're a first round pick, you're a free agent coming in. you're always one play away from not being able to play, right? That neck injury could have happened day one, that neck injury could have happened in year 15 but you're always one play away so I always wanted to be prepared for that one play. And I laughed because you talked about internships. I did the same thing.



Being in New York City and god blessing us to win, we were the hottest commodity that was in the city. Everyone wanted to talk to us, everyone wanted to be around us so I used that to my advantage. I was going to private equity shops, hedge funds, real estate groups, and asking whoever the man or woman in charge “can I take you to lunch?” and at that time you flash a Superbowl ring in people’s face and they say “Can I take you to lunch? Can we take *you* to lunch?” And I would use that to build relationships. Ask them questions about how they got started and what they were doing because at that time I really didn’t know what I wanted to do I was very curious about a lot of different things.

And from that it truly allowed me. . . my first piece of advice have a board of directors no matter who you are. Have people around you in a lot of different places in your life that can give you advice about a lot of different things. That allowed me to build my board of directors. I have people in tech and real estate, in financial services, in anything you name that I’m interested in I have very powerful or very successful people in my board of directors that have led me to kind of where I am today and I can piggyback off of them and ask them questions about what they see for me.

Because a lot of times when I look in the mirror I just see a kid from Kelton, Alabama that grew up on a pig farm and got recruited by Alabama by accident- that’s a true story by the way. And it’s easy for me to have this imposter syndrome about what I’m doing in life. But when I talked to some of the people that I’ve built these relationships with they can see things or see opportunities in me that I don’t necessarily see for myself so that has led me to be in some ways I guess better prepared for the transition. But I agree with Ross, you’re never really prepared until you step into whatever it is you’re going to do next. Because we play football all our lives as kids we were preparing for the NFL so think about it I had a runway of less than you know 16 years of football almost before I even got to the NFL. You know I went to Goldman after maybe two years of even studying finance. I was not prepared. Thought I was. You go to a place like Wharton and think “oh this is easy” and you get smacked in the face. And that’s part of it. No matter what you do in life you should be prepared to deal with the smack in the face. I was a really good football player and my first game was against a guy named Leonard Davis. I was smacked in the face. Had Michael Strahan at OTC?? On the sideline laughing at me. But it’s what you do with that smack. You’re going to either try to push forward in something you believe you’re capable of doing or you’re going to

fail. And for me, again, having people around me that believed in me and truly pushed me to believe in myself, that allowed me to make that transition a little bit smoother than what it would have been if I had to do it on my own.

**Andrew:** Kevin, you see it all, you see it from the young age when you recruit people like from Stanford those great golfers you have all the way through the Michelle Wie that are way past their playing career. You've seen it from all ends.

**Kevin Hopkins:** Yeah it's interesting. I work in golf, which has a considerably longer life span than football right? You'll see next week at the Masters, Bernard Langers going to T it up, Freddy Couple's going to T it up. Guys in their sixties and seventies. Gary Players gonna hit the opening T shot with Tom Watson, in their 80s. if you take care of yourself on the golf side you can play for a really long time, you can make good money playing for a really long time. So it's funny from a golf perspective. You look at, even when we recruit we can recruit teenagers, but we're not just talking about this is what your next two years, three years, five years is going to look like in your life. We do a full lifespan. If you turn out to be the player that you think you're going to be, there's a full career here. you can work until you're seventy or eight years old if you want to playing the sport that you love. So it is interesting. We've had to deal with many different clients across the board.

I'll speak specifically to golf. It's tough when you see the game go in the other direction and I think a lot of these players need to come to that realization of "alright I can't play at this level, at the very top, for the rest of my life." And that could happen as early as their 30s. And so some of them, you know golf, in most cases, is you kill what you eat. There are cuts that you need to make and you're going to make your money on the weekend by playing. If you're not doing that it can be a really tough lifestyle and a tough life. So as we deal with players and clients who have to go through that, what else is there?

And I'll give a good example of a client of mine named Trevor Immelmann. Trevor won the Masters in 2008, he was the rookie of the year on the PGA tour. Really good young player, had the world ahead of him. Battled though a couple of injuries and his game wasn't where it needed to be as early as kind of his young 30s and mid 30s and he started to think about broadcasting. He's a good looking South African guy, he's got a smooth accent, really articu-

late. And it was one of those things for him where it was like “ok I’m going to keep paying I’m going to keep chasing that dream because I always want to hold trophies and I always want to be a Masters champion and wear that jacket.” But he knew deep down that there was another life for him on that and this past year he’s been elevated, he’s going to be sitting in the 18th Hour on CBS next weekend sitting next to Jim Nance. He’s now been the President’s Cup captain last year of the international team. So those are things that you think about. Every client is different. I can tell you I wish we had guys like this, many of the agents at our firm wish we had clients like this who have a vision and an understanding of what’s next. Because a lot of guys don’t think that way.

And then working on the female side of sports, you also have to consider ok do you want to have a family, do you want to start a family? Michelle Wie is a good example of that, of somebody who she’s now a young mother, but her playing days are behind her and she realizes that and she knows that. So what does her business look like? Now her business is better than it ever has been.

It is an interesting world we live at from an agency perspective and that goes across the board. I’m lucky enough to work in golf where I know that there are many careers but there are also players that we now recruit. It could be former basketball players who may not have ever had great careers but we know that they can be media stars, that they can be involved in the business in some other aspect. So we think about it in kind of a 360 manner and it is an interesting world for sure.

**Andrew:** On the money side we heard Carl talk about his compounding interest lecture to his fellow players that was on Hard Knocks. Justin now you’re actually managing other people’s money so tell us about your experiences. I know managing the Packers it was tough to get players to listen to discussions about even matching 401ks or even taking their money over longer periods of time. I’m sure you experienced that, and you obviously transitioned to somewhere much different than that.

**Justin:** Me and Ross was actually talking about something by the stage earlier about the inner field basically having 200 percent matching of the 401ks and how many guys we saw didn’t take advantage of that. Athletes are tough. We know it all and we have this vision even though like I said earlier, I just lived every play like it could be my last. Most athletes aren’t like that. Everyone who comes

in the league thinks they're going to play for 15 years and have a hall of fame career and make hundreds of millions of dollars, so on and so forth and they should think that but when I think about the mistakes that are the main reason I got into finance and wanted to have a career in finance.

Because I didn't see a lot of people who looked like me, had the experience I had that could be representation for a lot of athletes and entertainers. If you think like I think you get tired of looking at ESPN doing documentaries about broke and all the other things about athletes and entertainers and how their lives shape out five years after they leave their careers. How many of you guys know that 80% of athletes that retire five years out are either broke, divorced. That's an easy, well I believe that's an easy fix. If you've got more people who understand athletes, their day to day and how to truly interact and communicate with them I think you'll start to see a little bit more of that education being consumed. And being consumed in a way where like Tucker said, you should have mandatory things that allow these men to go out and experience what it really really looks like to be in the real world, right? What it really really looks like in the real world.

Because, honestly, football is a game. I looked at it as a game, I never looked at it as a job. Every time I walked through those doors I had a smile on my face because I was doing exactly what I was doing in the backyard when I was six years old throwing a football to myself. To me that was always, Monday that was our day off but Tuesday through Sunday that was a game for me. And now I wish I could go back and play that game. Even though I'm having a pretty good ride here at Goldman Sachs it's different. This is real bullets; this is not a game. People's lives are being affected on the financial side based on decisions that I made. That's a lot of pressure you think sacking Tom Brady in the Super Bowl is pressure, I'll take that any day.

And transitioning into what I get to see on a day-to-day basis and trying to convey that to some of these athletes. It's frustrating and I know you know because a lot of them don't like to listen no matter how experienced you are in something else they still have a I don't know, athletes just have a mentality that they're going to figure it out on their own. For some reason most of our guys want to reinvent the wheel when the wheel has already been invented and sharpened and rubberized and everything else you could think about from that perspective. So it's a daily battle. I get the opportunity to kind of, hopefully, be a light to what it could be and how to

put more of an education to these guys' minds. And I appreciate having the opportunity to do it every day.

**Ross:** And to add onto what Justin is saying, first of all I would pay money to play in a game again but not NFL or college. Like if I'm going to play high school so I can really kill some kids. I don't feel like getting hurt again in the NFL. You know the one thing because I know right now what a lot of you are thinking. You're thinking "well why don't the teams or the NFL or the NFL PA, why don't they do more to educate these guys or help these guys while they're players?" They do. They do! I did like an MBA certificate program at Harvard in '04 or 5 and shortly after I retired, I did one at Wharton. My broadcasting career kind of got started because the NFL had a broadcasting bootcamp.

They have these programs, and they have all kinds of people that they bring in, but Justin and I were joking. I remember a player for the Patriots, and they bring in an estate lawyer, right? And anybody can go it's after practice on Wednesday or whatever. So I go in and the six guys that are there. . . first of all I made the minimum pretty much every year, so I didn't have an estate to be worried about, but I still kind of wanted to hear what was going on. But the other guys there it was like Tom Brady, Matt Light. It was probably the six guys that needed it the least, you know?

These programs are self-selecting and it's the same type of you know the reason why Justin is who he is is because he's from Alabama and chose to go to Notre Dame instead of Alabama or Auburn or any of the FCC Schools. He wanted more, he looked at the big picture, he looked at the forty-year picture. And unless they make it mandatory. And here's the thing we were even laughing. Even if they did make that stuff mandatory. You are talking about guys in their 20s, that most of whom have been kind of idolized since they were fifteen years old. They have people that do anything for them.

And so I was the moderator, I don't know if you know this Andrew for like seven years before they moved it to internal teams. I was the moderator at the NFL rookie's symposium. And so it's just unbelievable. There's certain guys that sit in the front row and they are like this. And they're taking notes and they're hanging on every word. And there's other guys, there's one guy in particular turned his chair around the opposite way and had like a towel and just went like this. But he had to be there, it was mandatory. So I don't know how you fix it. And you know what's funny too? I'm from

Redding an hour West, actually Wyomissing, and you know when I was a player my buddies would say to me “you know what are those guys really like, what are they really like man? Are they stupid?” And what I’d say to them is like “first of all no they are not stupid.” Pro football is way too complicated to be able to play at a high level without a certain level of intelligence. The issue is twofold. Number one they are uneducated in those type of matters. Financial matters, interviews, internships, meeting people, they’re upbringing is such that no one really ever gave them hints on how to do that. The other thing I said to my friends was “I know you, I know you’re parents and if I gave you five millions dollars when you were 22 you would have blown it. You would have blown int in Atlantic City, those guys are better than you are!” So there’s no like book, there’s no idiot’s guide to being 23 years old, rich and famous. I’m actually surprised that it doesn’t go poorly more often. I mean it’s an experiment that’s really bound to fail a certain amount of time.

**Justin:** I don’t want to beat a dead horse here Andrew I know you’ve got a lot of questions you want to ask but you get that question a lot about how athletes are, can they comprehend. You heard Ryan talk about Sean Payton and having fourteen packages. You know every package comes with about a hundred pages that you’ve got to learn from Monday to Wednesday. Like playing Aaron Rodgers, you know how much studying I have to do about what he wants to do on 38 when the ball is on the 33-yard line on the left hash with 32 minutes left in the game. And they have trips left, they motion Aaron Jones out to create 3 by 2 empty package and we’re in a nickel package. What is my obligation change? And then I got none of that left in left tackle or right tackle, right in, sometimes I play the Jack. I also got to know what the linebacker’s doing in there because if his role changed, I might have to feel for him if we’re in the fire zone.

**Ross:** And it changes within a split second. Everything changes while there’s 80,000 people yelling and the guy across from you is 6’3”, 338 and wants to kill you. So that’s a different type of intelligence, I don’t care what you guys got on your LSAT ok, that’s a different type of intelligence.

**Justin:** And he talk about change like that. You ever heard Payton Manning say “blue-80, blue-80,” say whatever purple orange green Omaha. All that means something. And I if I don’t know at least a little of what it means they’re going to put up 50 points and the

Giants are going to be trying to draft a left end to get my ass out of there and I'm back in Kelton, Alabama feeding pigs. So from that perspective yes, we know how to do that because we've been talked at all our lives for guys who played this game. Just like in golf, you know, Tiger knows exactly how hard he needs to hit a seven iron in a left and right ten mile per hour wind to carry this that and the third. There's so many other things I could talk about complicated because I'm actually pretty good at golf by the way.

Anyway I want to harp on this a bit, it's not about a level of intelligence, it's about what they deem as important. My dad never made more than 40,000 dollars a year. I got five sisters and a brother, it was nine of us in the household. We never wanted anything. So why do I care if I just made five million dollars. I lived off forty thousand all my life. So we don't have and I say "we." Most athletes coming from where we come from don't have a respect for money because now you're 21 years old and you're making it like that. You don't look at the end goal you don't look at the fact that this could be over tomorrow, you don't look at the taxes, you don't look at the fact that you're trying to keep up with the Jones. You don't look at the fact that a Ferrari soon as you drove it off the lot went down about ten percent. You don't look at any of that. You don't look at the fact that if you invest in blah blah and it goes down you're probably not going to get that money back if you sell out of it. You don't understand any of that.

And when you bring in people that haven't had your experience, to talk to you about that guess what you're going to do, you're going to turn your chair around put your towel over you and you're going to fall asleep in the symposium. So you're getting a glimpse and a little bit about why I do what I do. And I'll brag for a second. I don't need to work. That's not because I have so much money or I have all these things. No because I'm a kid from Kelton Alabama that, honestly, if my wife wasn't born on the Main Line and she loved New Jersey, New York and the education up here was so much more better. . . and I just said more better, so I apologize. If the education wasn't so much better than what it is where I'm from I'd be in Kelton, Alabama. Fade to black. The only thing you would know of Justin Tuck is that he played football and I would be somewhere with my family doing absolutely nothing but sitting on a porch with a rocking chair and some sweet tea. Sweet tea that might have something else in it but we'll talk about that later.

**Ross:** I thought you were going to say you had to work because your wife grew up on the main line and there's certain things she likes!

**Justin:** If you know my wife I was the guy that was buying all this expensive stuff and she was the one taking it back. I'll give an example. I signed my first deal and I bought her a certain car. I went to work, I came back that car had been returned and she was driving a Volvo. Nothing wrong with a Volvo but it's a lot cheaper than a Ferrari. True story. And I got very blessed to have a woman who didn't care about all that, she actually taught me more about the value of money. So that's another thing I tell athletes. Make sure you know who your partner is. That's the most important decision that I've ever made. And you're videoing this so Andrew, make sure you send it to Lauren, but I wasn't saying this to get brownie points. I promise you the best decision of my life was who I decided to live the rest of my life with, and she's allowed me and helped me to not make a lot of the dumb mistakes that some of the other suitors might have you know. So Andrew ask another question. You know me I come from a household of preachers I'll keep talking.

**Andrew:** I'll tweet that out for you, give you some cred with your wife. This is fascinating. Kevin, Ross said something interesting that "who's teaching, is it the NFL PAS, is it the NFL, are there people helping?" I get the question a lot as you do "what about the agents?" What are the agents doing for these players coming in. Obviously, we know what they're doing during their careers, but what about post career?

**Kevin:** I think that we have a responsibility to our clients. So that they understand what's on the horizon. And I think it's also on us, right? I think there's a lot of players, whatever field you're in, that may not want to admit that your game might be going in a different direction and may not be on the same trajectory as you wanted it to be. It's on us to give them as many resources as they can right, whether it's somebody like a Justin to take care of their money, to make sure that they've got a nest egg for whenever the time where it's needed.

But it is, Carl talked about the people that surround them. That really is what it's about. It's incredible to see. There are some agencies and agents that I see out there who don't think that way. And don't necessarily care what the long-term impacts. I mean you can look at what's going on in the PGA tour versus LIV and some of these guys who have made short-term decisions that will have long-



term consequences on what they're doing and how they're going to be able to live their lives. Without having maybe the full book of knowledge that they need to make an informed decision. So I do think that agents and agencies, and I don't know what your guys' experiences were with the agents that you may have worked with but I can tell you that I don't think it's the number one priority for most representatives to be thinking long-term because you're always thinking about "what's the next contract, how am I going to set it up?" But one day there's not going to be a next contract and you need to think about that.

**Ross:** Just two things on the agents side because I'm sure some of the law school students might be interested in that aspect of it. I don't know Justin but I remember having guys tell me I talk to my agent every week." I remember thinking I hardly ever talk to my agent, but I don't want to talk to him every week. I just signed a three-year contract with the Bills what am I going to talk to him about next week. I never really understood that. And what's funny is that one of my jobs when I was a player, when I was an intern for Merrill-Lynch I was interning for Kurt Schultz who actually played ten years in the NFL and he wanted to try to get players as clients so I was calling agents- which by the way talk about like leveraging, agents were so happy that a player was calling them so they called me back right away like "hey Ross, I thought you just had a new contract." And I said "yeah I'm calling because I'm interning and I'm wondering if you need a financial advisor."

**Ross:** But what was funny was most of them didn't want to touch it. Most agents didn't want to touch the financial advisor part of it. They didn't even want to give advice or give a name because they wanted their three percent and they saw it as "that could only come back to haunt me. I recommend someone it doesn't go well and then I lose my client." So they went two ways. They either didn't want anything to do with it, no interest, or they wanted to know what their cut would be if they referred, what their referral fee would be. So I thought that was interesting, there was no in between.

**Kevin:** Agents man!

**Ross:** It was either no interest or what do I get.

**Kevin:** What I would say to that, and I always, is at least from my perspective with my clients I always try to take a clear separation between church and state with regards to their finances. I try to make them the most money I can off of the golf course, but once they have that. . . I've worked now for eighteen years with many different financial advisors, people that I find myself trusting and all I can do at that point is connect them with people who I know they've done a good job for past clients. But what I don't want to do is, because there are plenty of people who just funnel their players to the same people for whatever reason they do it. Whether it's because they're getting kickbacks or because it's good, bad or ugly. On my side, I want my players to build a relationship with someone that they trust, with someone who hopefully will do a great job managing their net worth. So I hear you on that front and I do try to keep a clear separation on my end.

**Justin:** Listen I only had one agent my entire career. I trust him, he's been there through thick and thin with me. Now I'm managing money for a living and I'm pretty damn good at it. And he still won't introduce me to any of his players. That's just to let you know. What I told him was at the end of the day I just want to be in the room. So give him five different advisors. Tell him there's the guy from Morgan Stanley here's the guy from JP Morgan here's the guy from Goldman Sachs, here's the guy from wherever. And if I can't beat those other four people I don't deserve the job. Don't recommend me, just put me in the room. Same thing that I would say in a dog fight, you got Michael Strahan, OCM over here and me. Coach Skaggs, just put me in the play. If I can't beat them to the quarterback then I'm not going to get the sack. And the same thing I do with my client. I get asked all the time "Justin I need a lawyer, Justin I need a whoever." FCC actually deems that we have to do this but I would do it anyway. I give them five different lawyers and let those five people say "hey I'll help you and I'll give you advice on what I think is right for your situation." But here's five people I've seen do this job well and I want you to be the guy or the girl who makes the decision on who you go with.

**Andrew:** in our final moment I want to get just quick thought from each of you on the health and safety issue. Ross, we talked about this before. The NFL has been through lawsuits, we had the concussion movie with Will Smith. Popularity and profitability just continues to grow despite that. Do you see a lingering impact as a former player on the health and safety issue with head injuries, with brain

trauma? There's been so much in the news about that in recent years. Obviously, I know you haven't experienced it because I know how sharp you are, but is this something that still is an issue and a real threat to the continued profitability of football?

**Ross:** That's kind of a loaded question. What I think is interesting is I remember what year or years it was where it was the hot topic but it feels like it's really died down. I mean I don't hear people talking about it much anymore. One thing that frustrates me is my daughters are nine and eleven and so I have my buddies or my family members, they'll ask me about playing tackle football and it feels like most people I talk to fall into two categories which is like they've read some headlines and I would never let my son play football, I would never let my son play football." Right? Or, and I have buddies that do very well, they're well educated. They've been letting their sons play football since first grade and they asked me one time what I thought. I told them. They never asked me about it again. I'm ok with whatever decision someone makes as long as they're actually educated on it.

I do a lot of research into it, I'm really good friends with a mutual friend of Andrew and I, Chris Nowinski who played at Harvard when I was at Princeton. He's the head of the concussion legacy foundation. It is still very much a very real thing. The best way to look at it is almost like smoking cigarettes. So it's the volume of hits to the head over time. And just like anything else there are people that can smoke a pack a day and nothing ever happens to them and there's people who smoke less than that and they get lung cancer. There's a lot of factors that go into that. What they do know is that the longer you play, the more hits to the head, the greater chance that you'll have cognitive issues later. Which is why what I tell people now is "play flag football. . . or golf."

But flag football is awesome, I mean the NFL had, flag football is like the fastest growing sport in the country, that and pickleball, but flag football you can wear like Bears or Eagles uniforms. These kids even like these big chubby kids like I was, they can throw the ball and catch it and you get to love the game without having the threat of the hit to the head or the violence part of it and then you can play tackle football in seventh grade, eighth grade, ninth grade whenever you want. Most people are only going to play through high school so you're talking five, six years. I think it's very unlikely that you'll have long-term cognitive issues playing only five years of football.

And unlike golf or tennis, football is such a height, weight, speed, aggressiveness sport that you're not like falling behind. Like anybody that tries to play lacrosse in ninth grade, that might be tough. Or even baseball because the other kids have been playing so long. I know plenty of people that didn't start playing football until tenth grade eleventh grade and they came out and just started wrecking people because they look like Justin and they can go and do that. So you're not really falling behind. I do think it's an issue, Andrew, for the NFL not from a viewership standpoint but from a participation standpoint. Tackle football numbers, youth and even high school continue to go down. I think they're being offset a little bit by the flag football numbers.

But isn't it funny that it has no impact whatsoever on the viewing habits of people? Like the same people that say to me "I would never let my son play football" say "you coming over to watch the Eagles game with me?" It doesn't bother them when it's other people, it's just not their kid.

**Justin:** I probably come at this a little differently. I agree one hundred percent with him but I just talk to people differently. I speak very truthful and honest with people. Football is a contact sport. It is a difficult sport. If your kid plays football, he or she will get hit. Let's start there.

Alright so if that's a fact then how will I mitigate the likelihood of my kid having these issues? Make sure they're taught how to play the game the right way. For example, you know how like in high school football everybody wants to invite the decal falling off their helmet, their helmet wants to be scratched up? I was the complete opposite. I would go to the field house and bang my helmet on the concrete floor because I was the captain and a linebacker and I had to have that on my helmet because that's what it's supposed to look like. I never wanted to hit anybody with my head because one I started in ninth grade I had some education around it was probably not that smart for me running a four-four running into somebody else running a four-four to hit them with my head. That's probably like being in a car wreck.

**Ross:** Did you really run a four-four?

**Justin:** I ran a four-four-eight?

**Ross:** Oh my gosh? Well I blocked people at kind of for seven years.

**Justin:** But I tell people that ask me that question all the time, all these parents. I'm like "listen." Luckily, I think the NFL is doing a great job one of changing rules and putting rules in place to get the head a little bit out of the game.

Now when I first started playing, you'd come across a middle it was glorified, the whole jacked up or knocked out or whatever that ESPN clipped section was. That was glorified. Now if you come across a middle and you get hit you know for a fact you're going to have a fed-ex envelope sitting on your bench on Wednesday that's going to cost you one hundred thousand dollars. You start doing that to guys that kind of changes some of the momentum but it's difficult because at the age of six, Pop Warner, you're taught or not taught is a better way of saying it, not taught how to tackle the right way. So all these kids have seen all these clips of guys you know Friday Night Lights or whatever else they watch of how to tackle and the first thing they do is try to knock a kid out with their head and that's hard to unteach after ten years of doing it that way.

So I would love to see Roger, me and Roger have talked about this "why don't we won the entire slough?" We own the NFL, we own college, we own high school we own Pop Warner and we own flag football in the perspective of how these kids are taught how to play the game and then I think you'll start to see more of an education on how to use your pads. Because guess what? Really blessed, the position I played I was blessed to never have a documented concussion. Because I never hit anybody with my head. Now I have shoulder issues because guess what those other pads, I was trying my best to knock you out with those. But I'd rather have a shoulder issue than a head issue any day. That's the way I tell kids when they ask me that question, that's how I phrase it to them.

**Andrew:** Final words Kevin? Anyone hit in the head with a club.

**Kevin:** I was the starting quarterback on my high school team and we went one and nineteen in my last two years so I felt like Carl Nassib when he was playing for my Cleveland Brown, so.

**Justin:** I'm sure your forearm is pretty sweet though.

**Kevin:** No, I suck at golf so welcome to the working world boys.

**Andrew:** We could go all day but we've got to get the next panel up here. Thanks to Kevin and Justin and Ross, appreciate this!

## PANEL 2: EMERGING LEAGUES

Kristen Bandos, Senior Director of Partnership Activation, Premier Lacrosse League

**Reagan Carey**, Commissioner, Premier Hockey Federation

**Jonathan Israel**, Partner, Foley & Lardner LLP, Former In-House Counsel for NBA, and Advisor for Major League Rugby

**Kelsey Trainor**, Vice President of Business and Legal Affairs, Gaming Society

**Andrew:** Welcome back. What a great day so far. We're going to shift gears a little bit and talk about sort of a different type of league than what we've talked about with NFL. More the emerging leagues that are coming up through sports that have such great stories to sell, to tell and such emerging businesses in their space. For this I'm going to turn it over to a couple of our student fellows that have been assisting me the past couple years. I want to give them their stage and they will introduce the panel which includes Jeff Moorad. Welcome to my student leaders, Luke Pacifici and Jacqueline Borrelli. Let's give them a warm welcome.

**Luke Pacifici:** Alright, thank you Professor Brandt. I'm Luke Pacifici and we're so excited to be moderating your emerging leagues panel today. I know we have a great group of panelists up here with us and we want to thank them for their time as well as all of you for being with here in presence today. To get us going here with the emerging leagues panel the idea behind this panel is we want to discuss the challenges that emerging leagues face when first establishing themselves in the United States sports landscape. Obviously we know some of the big leagues out there, the NFL the MLB, NBA those types of leagues, but there are other leagues out there that are trying to assert themselves in the sports landscape so we're going to discuss how they do that whether it's through unique organization, technology or perhaps the sport itself. So we'll get that going here.

**Jacqueline Borrelli:** up here we have Reagan Carey, Kelsey Trainor, the newest addition, Jeff Moorad, John Israel and Kristen Bandos. Can each of you provide a short background about yourself explaining how you got involved in sports and emerging leagues.

**Kristen Bandos:** Sure, I can jump in. Nice to see you all, Kristen Bandos. I oversee our partnerships team on the management side at the Premier Lacrosse League. Heading into my third season with the PLL. Prior to that I was with the 76ers for three years also managing partnerships there. And my first gig in sports was in college athletics down at Georgetown where I went to undergrad as well as played Lacrosse down there. So I didn't ever think I'd be working in the professional lacrosse space. PLL was founded back in 2018. It was founded after I left school but I have been in the partnerships world for the past six, seven years or so. Again, I really oversee the management of our PLL partnerships and look forward to discussing more today.

**John Israel:** Hi folks my name is John Israel. I'm a partner at the law firm of Foley and Lardner. I'm based in New York and I'm also the co-chair of our sports and entertainment group. Which is a national multidisciplinary sports law group that pretty much does everything in the industry. For part of my career, about almost eight years I was an in house lawyer at the NBA where I had the good fortune of working with a lot of great lawyers but on a lot of great projects including the actual launch of the G-League which was then known as the D-League. So I put a lot of time and effort into the building of that league and here we are twenty years later and it's going strong and a great story in an emerging sports. Of course the WNBA had launched several years before that so had an opportunity to work on some of the interesting issues related to its sort of launch and then growth. As I returned to private practice I worked with a number of leagues also that are outside the larger sports realm and helping them get off the ground including Major League Rugby. I'm so happy to share some of the legal and business perspectives that seem to touch on these niche sports. I'm happy to be here, thanks. I

**Jeff Moorad:** Thanks, I'm Jeff Moorad. I'm probably the least qualified to be on this panel, but I'm going to try my best to explain why I'm here. So actually we have a Premier Lacrosse League connection at Morgan Lewis. We do a bit of representation for the PLL, proud of that. And also Mike Grable spoke in my UCLA Anderson business school class this last year, the CEO of the PLL and a lot of respect for what you're doing over there for sure. Andrew Brandt asked me to be on this panel and I said "Andrew, what do I know about emerging leagues?" He said "Well, you're involved in Formula One and the X Games." I said "yeah, but Formula One has

been the second most popular sport in the world if you look at world rankings for forty years and the X Games is a 25 year brand.” I said “but you know what, hang on. You may know more than I do about this because I think your instincts are right.”

The fact is, Formula One were involved because we control the McLaren racing team in Formula One. And the true is Formula One has emerged, indeed, in the US, in the last several years. Largely a function of the drive to survive series on Netflix, but the fact is I suppose we could consider Formula One an emerging if not emerged sport now in the US although it had been dominant globally for many years. It’s a more unique sport in the US and, frankly, more and more of us as Americans are learning about the sport.

X Games, an interesting twist as well. We acquired the X Games just last year from the Walt Disney Company and ESPN and what we quickly realized is that we had acquired 25 year old startup. And what I mean by that is it’s an extraordinarily well known name in action sports but the fact is, X Games had never existed as a business outside ESPN. So our challenge is to create a model, and our view is that it should be a league of its own and frankly have more than just a winter event in Aspen and summer events in the skate world but have multiple events around the world.

So I suppose Andrew Brandt knew more than I did about why I was asked to be here and proud to be here. Thanks for all of you for participating as well.

**Kelsey Trainor:** Kelsey Trainor, I am in house counsel for a sports betting media startup called The Gaming Society. It was cofounded by Kevin Garnet formerly of the Boston Celtics. Prior to that I worked on television and film for the television show Blue Bloods. I’m also the founder of a brand called Invest in Women and I advocate for women in the women in sports space.

**Reagan Carey:** Thanks, I’m Reagan Carey commissioner of the PHF, the Premier Hockey Federation. I started my career actually wanting to be all of you. I wanted to go to law school and that was before I got exposed to professional sports and the front office of professional sports. And I happened to have the opportunity to that the summer before I graduated so I deferred law school and went on that course and had the opportunity to learn from a great number of mentors and people on the way. But starting in the NHL, NBA a bit and then went to USA Hockey to run our interna-



tional teams and Olympic teams and now have the opportunity to lead the professional women's hockey league.

**Luke:** Great, well to kick things off with the first question I want to point this one at Reagan and John, specifically and we're going to get to partnerships later so there will be plenty of time for that. But when you are first establishing a league how and where do you decide to focus your efforts when first starting off?

**Reagan:** Well, I think in my case we really had the opportunity to understand the market and understand the sport and you really have to figure out where the need is. And that was a bit obvious to us there wasn't women's professional ice hockey in a way that paid women, that was broadcast and exposed the game so for us it just really being a student of your area and really understanding what the needs are and being able to put your focus on that and move the needle in a significant way as quickly as you can.

**John:** Yeah, I don't know if there's a specific thing that you have to focus on. There are probably many things you need to focus on. One is the money to get something started right, the interest level from an operational perspective. As the lawyer who tries to also be the business person when you're in that room, focusing on how you set up a league, how you're going to focus on governance and other issues like that become critical components of, not just the legal side of things, but how you're going to operate, how you're going to maintain control as you launch a league. It's a lot different when you're sitting in the NDA and you've got the NBA behind you when you're starting the D-League and the WNBA. It's a lot different when you're a women's hockey league and trying to get, essentially, a grassroots effort off the ground. So, finding the investors, the interested folks out there. Identifying your target markets and then understanding the costs and the kinds of things that are going to be in front of you as you go forward.

**Luke:** And when you really don't have much precedent for some of the newer sports. Obviously, hockey they do have precedent with the NHL for example, but there are others sports out there like let's say soccer. You have MLS like we don't follow the regular structure that European soccer might. How do you decide whether you want to try to diversify yourself into a different type of league structure or try to follow what has, frankly, worked in the United States?

**John:** Well, I guess I'll go again. The European soccer, which I love, is an interesting model but not something that you're going to likely see in the US. People are going to want to drop themselves out of leagues and opportunities. That is something that is not likely to ever change because of the investment models and how leagues are set up. But at the same time, is there opportunity even in. . .you've got several layers of soccer or football, Jeff as we said, in the US seeking to establish their own parameters and opportunity and success within that structure. So again, depending on what your vision is, you don't have to be MLS, you don't have to be the Premier League but you might have a market for a sport that's already existing here and establish it in the right kinds of places. I'll say one more thing. When the D-League started, it was the Commissioner Stern's vision that we would launch in military towns. At the time we had like six or seven teams, that was the target market. It didn't ultimately go so well, I think, and the league had to shift a bit, but trying to identify where you could get the traction, where you could find fan interest. That's the premium.

**Jacqueline:** So, speaking of fans, we know that they're so important. How do you build a fanbase and create brand identity for an emerging league and what strategies have you found to be most effective? Anyone can answer this question.

**Kelsey:** I'm going to start. I don't work at a sports league, but I do work with some athletes and teams and leagues on branding. In women's sports specifically, it's as of right now, it is all athlete focused, right? When you think about it, almost every women's sports league is an emerging league. They're all newer. So what's been around? The US, the national teams. You look at women's soccer. Where's the exposure then? It's been on the world stage and people know Alex Morgan. They know Carly Lloyd. They don't totally know the NWSL. So understanding that history, how you market the league with those athletes in mind but then strategically bringing up, telling the stories of other athletes. And also operationalizing the league itself. The NWSL underwent a reckoning in the past few years. A lot of toxic work environments, abuse, etc. but they were under this purview of US Soccer. They didn't have their kind of own operational structure and if you do that, and I use the PHF as a great example of really taking the time to operationalize these emerging leagues for women because you're not just protecting the athletes and the staff, but you're protecting the league itself for the long term.

**Kristen:** And I think from our standpoint, when Mike and Paul co-founded the league back in 2018, doing it in a single entity model in a tour-based structure we knew was going to be a different approach to what the sport of lacrosse had seen, and we wanted to identify what those key markets were. We know the lacrosse hot beds on the East coast, and we know there's other markets scattered throughout the US but how can we develop a model that allows us to test and learn. To find those new fans and drive to some non-traditional markets so that when we're building out of tour going into the season five in a few weeks, we know where those fans are and building out those team identities along the way.

**Reagan:** I would just add that the community aspect, you know you need everybody involved. It can't just be the handful of people in a league office or a team office, the players, the sponsors everybody has to be really well educated on what you stand for so they can also be part of that effort. And to your point, making sure that the professionalism is there so that we can do those things really well but it takes resources to do branding and fan involvement really well so making sure you're clear about what those assets are so that people can get on board and help you faster than you would on your own.

**Jeff:** And one of the challenges we have at X Games which we quickly learned as we were preparing for our first event under our stewardship. The Winter Games in Aspen in January is to find the right lane between digital and linear. So that for years the X Games had really been a linear product. It had been shown for 20 plus years on ESPN and ABC. You know live and then for hours and hours on repeat broadcast and yet we believe that, and we believed when we did the acquisition, that the future of the X Games was really about social. It was about digital. And to create a digital platform that was meaningful in a short time was impossible so what we did was we focused on the social side and trying to appeal to the demographic, we'll call it 12- to 25-year-olds that are particularly passionate about action sports. And we, on a non-exclusive basis, went to YouTube, Twitch, and Caffeine, which is owned by Fox and all three of them jumped at the opportunity to produce, or rather to show or to broadcast if you will the X Games from the winter. So in terms of cultivating the audience our focus has been "alright, who is our ultimate audience and how do we back into that?" And it's not on linear TV. So that we're locked in as Rich Aldrich knows well, he negotiated our deal for us at Morgan Lewis, we're locked into ESPN for two years on the linear side. We have a right to stay

for three more, and we may but we're going to particularly focus on the ability to do whatever we want. Which is our right on the digital side because we think that's the future of that business and ultimately that league as we construct it.

**Luke:** So now we're touching on partnerships and affiliations. How important is that to an emerging league? And obviously let's start out with Kristen and Kelsey here.

**Kelsey:** I mean, for women's sports right, these media rights deals are the game changing thing. And I think it's interesting that comparison to the X Games. The X Games, that's a brand that people know. For so long it's on ESPN. You never stumble upon women's sports, right? So you're never just scrolling on your TV, on cable and you turn on an NWSL game or WNBA game. We're starting to get there and to me one of the most important parts of that is by having these linear rights deals with obviously some streaming component to it. But that's how you're going to grow. Obviously the money that comes with that is great for the leagues but the visibility of it to me for partnerships. You need to get women's sports on TV and in a place where people can find it, you don't have to go to Paramount Plus and start searching ten different layers just to watch Alex Morgan, one of the greatest player in the world, play soccer.

**Kristen:** Yeah similar sentiment I think. The previous field lacrosse struggled with the media rights opportunities and the exposure the sport was getting and didn't want to make it accessible to people. People aren't just stumbling on lacrosse on broadcast, so I think on our standpoint partnerships from a media rights standpoint was big. We just finished up our first year with ESPN. And then on my standpoint on the corporate partnerships side of things we knew for an emerging league to function revenue generation is key and sustainable revenue generation. So on the sponsorship side it's those traditional blue chip brands. Gatorade Ticketmaster, Champion, Cashapp, that bring legitimacy to our brand, bring revenue. And then from a single entity standpoint we're able to incorporate those partnerships across our team IP, our team IP, our player IP. So we're now able to elevate our players' brands with those sponsorship deals. That's only bringing more exposure to the PLL and to the sport so fundamentally important for the success of the league and we're hoping to see continued growth there.

**Luke:** So when you're deciding who to choose for a specific media rights deal, what are some of those decision factors that come into play?

**Kristen:** Sure, so shameless plug, go watch Fate of the Sport on Hulu or ESPN Plus. Michael Paul did a fantastic job making a documentary on the foundational days of the founding of the PLL. I think from our standpoint it's a balance of the linear exposure. What time slots we're getting, the number of exposures we're getting each season and then the streaming platform. So with our ESPN partnership not only do we get those two pieces but it's also the standing exposure on ESPN. Having Michael Paul be on Sports Center, having our plays on Sports Center Top Ten. The resources and network we're getting from being on that and then the other leagues that are on ESPN. It's really been a network that we're building on the back end from a front office standpoint and we're excited to see the continued growth of our sport being on broadcast.

**Luke:** Very cool.

**Reagan:** I'll just add that knowing where you need to go with your league. We have kind of the opposite problem. We're on ESPN, we have linear games but we also need to reach a broader audience and be more accessible in real time and it is difficult to find games on all these streaming platforms so we had an agreement with Twitch and in the last year we didn't finding that balance and figuring out how to do all those things well at the same time I think is particularly important for us. We spend a lot of time in the off season figuring that out and making sure we stay on top of it because a year goes by a lot changes in a year right now in that area so for us to be able to stay on top of it. And also content creation and just really understanding what is that story you're trying to tell because we have one shot over the course of the season to really reinforce a message and that branding and exposure that has to be really aligned to be effective given all the ways we're trying to do it.

**Luke:** And so you're searching for let's say a specific partnership but you're an emerging league that doesn't necessarily have a level of popularity that might be desirable to some of these partnerships yet what are some of your big selling points that say "yeah, you should show us," on your streaming platform for example. What are some of those selling points?

**Reagan:** There's a ton, but I won't hog the PHF time. One of the things I think particularly with emerging leagues is access and the accessibility of the players, the ability for fans to really be there to meet these players, to know them and to support them in a more meaningful way. That accessibility factor is really big for us but I'll share the time.

**Kristen:** Yeah, I think to Reagan's point our effort as well is the story telling component of it. I think that was probably the biggest challenge coming from a big four at the NBA with the Sixers I don't really have to tell people who the Sixers are or the brand or the history. Then coming over to the PLL it's what story we are telling about the sport. It's the oldest sport in North America. It's a Native American sport, it's got incredible heritage to it and we need to make sure we're telling those stories to brands to have that involvement. And back to the single entity nature, of it. We have the accessibility and the assets to make a really comprehensive partnership that might not be accessible in the traditional league and that's really our difference creator, our value proposition.

**Reagan:** I'll just add on that the movement part of it just feels really special and you're connected to something bigger than yourself you really feel that every ticket bought makes a difference for a league. And I think sponsors have that same impact they can see where their dollars go immediately and they can see the needle move in real time and they feel very connected to the mission in that sense. They want to have that comradery in a movement and something that matters to people and certainly an emerging league is the place to be.

**Jeff:** I actually have a story about Formula One as it relates to getting on air, getting a product out, and I'll never forget the story. I've heard it from both sides from the Liberty Media/Formula One side and also from the ESPN side. When Liberty Media first bought Formula One six years ago, they went to all the different broadcast US nobody wanted it. They literally had to convince ESPN to take the league and to broadcast it for nothing. They said, "look we don't care about a rights fee." We can all relate as it relates to merging sports. In this case you had a sport that was immensely popular around the globe but as I said in my opening remarks, was truly emerging in the US. And ESPN wasn't even convinced they'd have an audience. So they took the Sky Sports feed, Liberty gave it to

them for free, and they put it up. And their ratings went through the roof.

And there was a funny moment when early in the ten year they broke for commercial during a pitstop, or during a red flag, sorry the race was stopped and they broke for a commercial and the fans went crazy. And they got, in fact, Burt Magnus the president of ESPN told us that he probably got the worst hate mail over that one act than anything he'd ever done. So they met as a production team and said "what should we do?" We have nothing invested in this, we at least thought we were going to be able to sell ads. And they did an internal meeting and decided that they'd better show the sport in its purest form, the way they get it from Sky in the UK so they went without commercials. So if you watch a Formula One race on ESPN you'll note there are no commercials and that's purposeful. Today, once that free deal ran out, they entered into a new deal which pays about 90 million a year to Formula One for the broadcast of that property. So there really is a happy end of the story, but if we can all get there. Hopefully we get there for X-Games.

**Jacqueline:** Switching gears a little bit, and John and Reagan this question is more for you- how do you work with established leagues and governing bodies to ensure that your league is able to operate effectively within the larger sports ecosystem?

**John:** Look as I mentioned before it helps when your emerging league is part of a larger league, that's for sure. And I don't know if there's an answer to building those relationships. I think Reagan probably can talk a little bit about how they combine up and work with the NHL because I'm sure there's a lot of synergy there. I'd go back to operational issues in the world of league and team and how teams are working together, community based. But I- my experience with the NBA is very different. I think the challenges are understanding the synergy between yeah an NHL and an emerging women's league. How each one can really take advantage of the other. There are clearly opportunities to market across those two platforms together in ways that I think must create a lot of great opportunity.

**Reagan:** Definitely that rising tide mentality of if you have success, the sport grows and there's more people watching. You broaden the fanbase. So I've found the more we communicate the more people want to help in making sure that in our case we need to understand the international Ice Hockey Federation and their

scheduling and world championships. And we need to understand the NHL, we don't want to compete with the NHL, we want to be partners with the NHL. We need to understand college hockey is huge in women's hockey and making sure all those moving parts have a chance to feed into our decision making. And the more we do that and the more we're teammates the further we're going to get so I think the communication is hard sometimes in emerging leagues because there's so much to do and everybody's wearing so many hats but if you can kind of keep that consistency and people can figure out how to help you do what you're doing there's a lot more people out there that are willing to do that than if you kind of keep your head down and are doing it in a silo. So just that communication is key.

**John:** Yeah, I would also add in the world of sports at least on the professional level it's in terms of executives and teams and leagues, it's a relatively small world and I think there is a lot of opportunity for learning from experience with the big leagues and connecting with people and I assume you see it all the time. People are there to help. I think people who've spent time in the industry are willing to help others that are building these emerging leagues and I think there's a lot of opportunity there beyond just the business building.

**Reagan:** Yeah, it's making sure you're not making the same mistakes is a really big part of it and learning from that. But even our front office reflects, I think, our understanding of that. We've got people who have experience with the international game people who have experience with the WNBA and the NHL and you put all that background together and it really helps you move faster.

**Jacqueline:** And Jeff, you talked a little bit about your involvement in X Games. Can you talk about how you find investors in cities to create or run teams?

**Jeff:** So, good question. When we first got involved we sat down with one of our partners who's Tony Hawk, the famous skateboarder, and we said "tell us what an athlete's perspective is about X Games." And he said "you know what the boarding world wants is more competitions." So we said "that's what we think makes sense too, but tell us how you would conceptualize that." And he said "I'd love the model where there were call it four regular season events and then a Superbowl maybe somewhere on the skate side in Southern California." And he said, similarly "I would think we



could build four events in snow and then a Superbowl at Aspen or somewhere like Aspen.” I said “that’s actually interesting, what do you think about global?” He said “I think that it’d be great to do a couple global events and a couple domestic events for each of skate and snow. And we said “that our model.”

So that’s exactly the model that we’re building out slowly but surely. Don’t look for it tomorrow but look for it in a year or two. And the fact is that we prefer that we own those events ourselves. So we think of ourselves, again, not to offend Liberty Media, but we think of ourselves as more of a Formula One mode where it’s our responsibility to go into a venue to establish the event, run it, maintain it, execute it properly. And then go to the next one so it’s more of an F-1 model where we see the league being, essentially the ownership of the IP and we go out to these various venues and put on these events whether it be globally or whether it be domestically. So we don’t know that we’ll end up with owners of individual teams as much of a league ownership of the model.

**John:** I’d just throw in the team sport concept here and follow on. This goes back to the original question, Luke, which is what is the most important thing. I mean, finding the right operators and owners if you’re a single entity finding the right operators. And we’ve seen it in the NWSL and how there’s this turnover now and a cultural change to find owners that are committed to the project. It’s really critical if you don’t have the right partners that can work together, you’re going to have one kind of competition among teams tends to tear the league apart, depending on whatever your economic system and governance system is. But it also will tear the league office apart in a certain way if you don’t have the right kind of central strength to manage those owner-operators as you’re trying to emerge, and I think that is a real struggle for emerging teams. Finding the right operators and owners who are committed to the project, that will take a uniform set of rules and live by them so the league can thrive and grow. And that’s not always easy when you are looking for people who want to put money in sports and buy teams or buy an ownership piece or whatever. So it’s a real challenge.

**Luke:** And I think another aspect of that that I wonder if any of you could talk about is finding the right venue to host any of your leagues, any of your sports. Finding a city or location that has the venue and logistical support to put on an event.

**Kristen:** Yeah I can touch on that from a tour aspect. It's a constant challenge of balancing the best markets with the best venues that we can put the best product out onto the field and the most fan centric experience. So we play at a variety of different venues, smaller college venues to Gillette Stadium. And obviously the experience with Gillette even if we have 15,000 people in that stadium is going to feel different than if we have 3,000 packed in the stadium. So from a fan standpoint that's always something we're thinking about. Then it's logistically I've got to truck all the stuff to the new venue each and every week and have a load in time that's dependent on the venue we're working with. So there's an operational aspect of it as well to figure out how to most successfully do the tour because there's obviously expenses to get our things across the country so I think it's a combination of those two and something we're fortunate to test and learn as we go through. And we're going to be testing out some new venues and markets this year and hopefully those will be on the tour going forward.

**Kelsey:** I think that's another thing in any emerging league but women's sports in particular. There's not many, there's very little stadium or arena that is built for women's sports, right? They're always a second thought in most of them and that's a huge disadvantage. Now you're starting to see I think Kansas City, and I think in the NWSL, a few other teams, Angel City is looking to do that in LA—that's a massive, massive benefit to be able to have. And so you're fighting against so many teams. I know The Spirit played down in DC, they also have to compete with MLS and I know the XFL now. So you can't get the schedules you want, you can't host the games when you would want to. You're also playing hundreds of thousands of dollars per game to play in those places.

I think for emerging leagues the ability to know your fanbase. You maybe don't need a twenty-thousand-person stadium, you need a ten-thousand-person stadium for an NWSL team to start. Understanding that it's going to take a lot of money to find and build those arenas, but I think that's a game changing thing if you are an emerging league, specifically women's sports, to have that, have a place that you call home and that it's yours.

**Reagan:** I'll just totally echo that, it's very difficult. And for us that's a big challenge. And you want to keep growing, so likely you're going to have to move every few years if you're a successful league because you're starting small and then you want to have bigger venues and bigger opportunities. So just that in and of itself is a chal-

lence. But our championship game we hosted in Arizona. We are mostly an East Coast thing with a little Minnesota sprinkled in and Canada so that makes no sense if you're just looking at it specifically as why would you go out there. We worked with an NHL team and it comes back to people and people wanting to help you. The Arizona Coyotes were just so excited to be able to host this and it was a privilege to them to be able to be part of what we're doing and they have a great volunteer infrastructure. So you have to know you're going to have to lean on everybody in the community to get more fans out there it can't just be like those front office groups. So as much as the venues are a challenge those communities always make a difference so that was a great experience for us.

**Luke:** I know we're running a little bit low on time but I do want to ask one more quick question if you all would just give a little short summary on this, particularly I know Reagan you just came off a successful season, so I wonder how each of you would define your metrics for success in an emerging league, how you evaluate those metrics and continue to grow from that point.

**Reagan:** I mean for us, I'm sure like everybody we've got a ton of metrics and goals we want to meet but it comes down to the players and for us to be able to build a home, that's what we're here to do is build the best home for women's professional ice hockey and we need their feedback to understand if we're doing that well. We can't get too off-track thinking about all these other things we want it to feel special, an honor, a privilege to do all the work they're doing to be able to play there. Which translates to fans feeling that and sponsors feeling that so our metric will be those player surveys to see did it feel better, did they feel connected, did they feel part of it and do they want to come back. They're the stakeholders.

**Kelsey:** so I have an answer that is maybe not popular but it's not necessarily the metrics you want to follow but to me the one you don't want to hang your hat on if you're an emerging league is revenue, the money aspect to us.

**Reagan:** can you come and talk to some of our –

Kelsey: Because you look, the NBA wasn't making money when it first started, the NFL. When you are starting a sports league the goal is the long term, the goal is longevity, to build an infrastructure where you are the NBA at 75 years old. The WNBA at 25 years old is in better condition than the NBA was at 25 years old. So I

think that's something important and glad to come talk to some of those sponsors to really understanding that. It's probably the community, the fans, how many tickets you're selling, metrics on social media. But I would encourage emerging leagues and sponsors to not focus, to start, on the revenue because it will come but you do have to build that community, and you do need to operationalize.

**Jeff:** it's a great question, and I was just sitting here thinking about how I was asked that question for many years. I ran two different Major League Baseball teams for ten years and that question was asked every year at the beginning of the season. How do you define success? It was always winning, right? Privately, I thought about running an efficient business but I couldn't say that because I learned my lesson early, that doesn't make the fans happy. But what I did learn is that everyone wants to win when you're in team sports and when you're running a team, a particular club.

In the different types of sports and the roles that I have today I guess as I reflected on it. . . you know Formula One of all things, it's activating the US. So this year we're adding a third race in the US, in Las Vegas after many years in Austin and then Miami coming online last year. So the fact is that executing and activating properly in the US is the real goal on the Formula One side.

X Games we're early. Even though we have a 25 year old business, remember, it's still a startup and we're just trying to build a foundation for success at this point. For us, that means putting in, into place all the right pieces that ultimately we can grow from.

**John:** I don't want to sound cynical but "are we still operating this year?' But I mean, I think there's a history. You have seen leagues come and go because it is such a challenge. So while that's a pretty low bar I suppose it is being realistic. It's like set yourself the right ambitions but with a realistic perspective about what you can achieve. Set those goals, get the team together. Meaning all the teams on the same playing field, so to speak, so they're working together towards that same goal. Are you adding a team the next year? Are you able to grow your league? Those are huge things compared to the "we're not operating this year because we don't have the money or the means to do it." And so I think you just have to be realistic and come in with a not so pie in the sky, but with really high deals and the right people working on the same thing and hopefully you just keep it growing.

**Kristen:** Yeah on my side the PLL's mission is to be trailblazing the future of professional sports that's player led and fan focused. So all of our success metrics are going to be really funneling into those two pieces. Obviously sponsorship and revenue and broadcast media rights all commit to that, but it's the player surveys, it's the fan surveys. What's our NPS score, what was the sentiment on social? And how are we continuing annually to check in on those to make sure we're growing each year and adjusting as needed to make sure those two key pieces are top of mind.

**Luke:** Great, well unfortunately that is all we have time for for this panel. We're going to take a short break here before the next panel that is going to be on CBAs and discipline.

**Jacqueline:** and we want to say thank you to all our panelists today for talking about their experiences in the emerging league sphere. Please give a round of applause to Reagan, Kristen, John, Kelsey and Jeff!

#### PANEL 3: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT AND DISCIPLINE

Len DeLuca, Founder, Len DeLuca & Associates, LLC and Assistant Adjunct Professor, NYU Leonard N. Stern School of Business

**Charles Grantham**, Director of the Center for Sport Management and Faculty Associate, Seton Hall University

**Jack Sexton '19**, Associate Counsel, Major League Baseball Players Association

**Andrew Brandt:** We're going to begin again with a panel led by our student leaders. I wanted to have us delve into some of the collective bargaining issues that have been at the forefront in recent years. Especially the discipline issue, health and safety as we talked about on our earlier panel. But these are the lawyers behind it and I'm going to let our student leaders introduce them but we're honored here to have one of the great leaders for players' rights, NBA especially, the NBA players' Association. He's here, Charles Grantham.

And we also are proud to have a recent graduate here, works for the Major League Baseball Players Association, Jack Sexton. We're just so proud to have this panel together. I'm going to turn it over to our student leaders again to handle this panel. These two guys have helped me. . . not two guys, one guy and one woman have

helped me so much over the last two years. I'll turn it over to Dante Camilli and Emily Rollo.

**Emily Rollo:** Thank you professor Brandt. First we're going to give a brief introduction to our panelists here. First to my right we have Jack Sexton, he's the Villanova Law grad the University of Michigan baseball alum. He's the associate council of baseball operations at the MLB Players Association, where he represents players in their arbitration hearings for their contracts, which is what he was busy doing over the last few months ahead of the 2023 MLB season.

In the middle we have Charles Grantham, currently the director for the center for sport management at Seton Hall University's school of Business. Prior to getting involved in academia Mr. Grantham served as the NBA Player's Association first executive vice president and played a pivotal role in the advancement of the NBA as Professor Brandt mentioned. He helped negotiate the first collective bargaining agreement in 1983 and was an architect of the industry's first revenue sharing and salary cap business models in the 1980s.

And finally we have Len DeLuca, he's the founder of Len DeLuca and associates and is an assistant adjunct professor at the NYU Leonard and Stern School of Business. After receiving his JD from Boston College he worked as a programming executive for both CBS Sports and ESPN from 1979 until 2010. He was responsible for first fifteen NCAA Men's Basketball Championships, the first full coverage of the NCAA Women's Basketball Championships and the WNBA on ESPN and much more.

I'll turn it over to Dante to get it started.

**Dante Camilli:** Yeah, thank you all for being here and thank you to our wonderful panelists. I'm really excited to have everyone hear from you guys here today. We want to start with Charles and talking about the first CBA in 1983 and how that collective bargaining process went and how that has evolved into what we see today, Jack most recently having the CBA last year with Baseball. Charles?

**Charles Grantham:** Hello. Well first of all let me say I'm not a lawyer. Ok so we talk about a lot of lawyers in this room, but I am not. I'm a non-lawyer so I want everybody to understand that because when I start talking about salary caps and revenue sharing I get a little emotional because I'm a labor guy.

And I want you to know the foundation of revenue sharing and salary cap in basketball way back when- 1980, 1983. The NBA was

not so fantastic at that time. As a matter of fact, the NBA finals of 1980- Philadelphia 76ers and the Los Angeles Lakers, Julius Irving in Philadelphia, Magic Johnson- was shown tape delay. Can you imagine that? 2023, can you imagine the NBA finals shown tape delay? That was shortly after the merger in '76 so we had four teams that were not doing well financially but paid a heavy price to get into the league at that merger. By 1980 with TV ratings down the perception that seventy percent or more of the NBA players were using cocaine. And the fact that we were a predominantly black league trying to sell to a majority white audience didn't sit well with Madison Avenue. So promotions, marketing, individual name image and likeness- practically nonexistent.

So when the NBA and David Stern came and start talking about a revenue sharing salary cap the first thing we did in talking to the players was if we had four teams that are about to go out of business that's sixty jobs. Would you consider a restraint on salaries? To maintain those sixty in those four teams. And almost to a man the players said "yes, we would do that." So this concept of revenue sharing and salary cap was born at that time but that deal which became more mature in '88, particularly '88 to '94, laid the foundation for salary caps in the NHL, salary caps in Football, and a continuous salary cap at the NCAA level. Room, board, books, tuition, the cost of attendance- that's the hardest cap in sports.

But back to basketball and our revenue sharing concept. You should know that that first deal with 53 percent of the defined revenue was designated to players' salaries and benefits. So that 53 percent was a floor not a ceiling. So I used to say even at that point that a salary cap was illusionary, that there was no hard cap here, soft cap. And a matter of fact, teams were spending 60, 65 percent. So for those years for me, '88 to '94 we had what I considered an excellent working relationships accommodating working together, but since '94, '95, '96. . . it's now 2023. Rookie wage scale. Restraint. Also created conflict to some degree with the agents because you were now scaling the rookies that they had been making fees off. Luxury tax. So if you went over and beyond they were looking for that ceiling, finally got the ceiling in the escrow. That escrow was ten percent. Which meant that at the end of the year if we exceeded the cap, if we exceeded that 53 percent, we take it out of that fund.

So the effect of those changes is a hard cap. And so the question of how do I see this current bargaining agreement, this collective bargaining agreement? Certainly not competitive but more of

concession bargaining that's occurred over these last 23, 24 years. So when I look at this deal and what could it be. Well the NBA decided on a one and done. They took it because at that time at the bargaining table they could. This would be the ideal time to give it back should they decide to do that. We'll see.

But, we also look forward to what, if you're sitting in ownership at this point, you're looking to a new television deal. You've watched the NFL; you've watched what a ten year collective bargaining agreement and ten year labor peace can get you at the bargaining table for television rights. 100 billion? I'm sure the NBA is looking at something around 75. So I would suggest or see that they would get this long term, perhaps, agreement in order to get a new television deal with the promise also of league expansion. To Seattle and probably Vegas.

Now I'm sure all of you recognize there was a time when Vegas was absolutely hands off. Nobody wanted Vegas. And the gaming potential revenue for gaming, still being figured out. I'm sure there's some deals but we haven't maximized that source of revenue yet, that's in the cards. So given the fact that over time the players have lost somewhere between eight and ten percent with the manipulation of the definition of shared revenue going to BRII?? That will continue unless the players decide not to work which is highly unlikely given the average salary is probably approaching seven million dollars. So the idea of work stoppage at this time across all of the pro sports is probably unlikely.

And one of the things that we had at that time as a tool was this thing called decertification. And we could threaten decertification at that time because it had not been adjudicated to the point that it is now, that time and circumstance can essentially determine that labor exemption to the anti trust law.

So as I look to see at this time and think about a salary cap and why we entered the salary cap. And I look at hockey and football and their salary caps. They entered into it for an entirely different reason. There were not football teams that were going out of business when they introduced the cap. I remember talking to Gene Upshaw saying "Charlie we need some lawyers." I said "Well ???? Is representing us. A hard salary cap? No."

Hockey, salary cap. Escrow system. More than ten percent, matter of fact it's unlimited. So when we look at these agreements going forward, I can see that the length of time, ten years, eight years. All as a predicate for the national television deal that will set all kinds of records in basketball.



**Dante:** Thank you. Jack, Charles just mentioned the idea of time and circumstance playing such a role when you're negotiating and when you're at the negotiation table. How did that come into play last year with your collective bargaining negotiations and how did that impact what kind of deal we saw that came to fruition?

**Jack Sexton:** Sure. Time obviously was a huge piece of everything. Because of when we started negotiations and when spring training starts, there was like a bizarre amount of time between when the final deal would expire- December, I think December 2nd- and when spring training could actually start. So the threat of missing games and missing paychecks, while it was real, wasn't necessarily something that was right on the tip of players' thoughts and feelings. So there was a little bit of time between the expiration of our agreement and finally the ending of the lockout. That was time that MLB kind of decided to weaponize and to say, which is really no surprise, let's push this as close as we possibly can to make players fearful that they're actually going to miss paychecks and when we do that we think we will be in a better position to actually get what we want in terms of collective bargaining. So in terms of time and circumstance and position these are all things that really all management are experts of mastering and manipulating and just using in good business term, there's no, you know, bad faith or foul play it's just this is good business and good business by these people. So time and circumstance especially in collective bargaining agreements is really everything.

**Dante:** How about as baseball is not a salary capped sport, I doubt it was ever introduced at any point in these negotiations but why arb has been such a sticking point and why that arbitration has been a cornerstone of how baseball is run as a business.

**Jack:** Yeah so salary arbitration is something that was fought for I think in like the early '70s. Lots of games, lots of paychecks were missed and this was a core covenant a core right that players really fought for. So it's really nothing that we've ever considered seriously getting rid of, not that I'd speak on behalf of everybody at the union, but it's a fundamental right to players. And really just the ability for a player to look his employer in the eye and say "based on my performance I think my fair salary is X." And then having the opportunity to go in front of a labor panel and discuss why they believe that they've earned what they have truly earned. So really it's as simple as the concept of the right to go to your employer and

to prove that you are who you said you were, you produce what you said you did and the fair market salary for that is what you proposed.

Sometimes it can be a bit of an acrimonious process, a lot of the times it's not and a lot of people like to focus on the fact that maybe fifteen or sixteen cases will go to a hearing every year, but in reality a 170 of them settle so it's a bit of a skewed percentage. But the non-cap system has always been fundamental in baseball, the salary arbitration system has always been fundamental in baseball and it's really just about players having the ability in a non capped system to earn whatever their fair market value is.

**Dante:** We saw the addition of the pre-arb pool in the last CBA. How big of a sticking point is that and do you think you'll continue to push back and add for more money for those guys with less service time as the only time you can really earn is after six years or five years if you're a super two.

**Jack:** Yeah for sure it was a big point in terms of fairness. You have players like Aaron Judge and Mookie Betts, all these young players making such a name for themselves and making so much money for their organizations and they're earning league minimum salaries. So the fact that the club had complete control over their contract status until they hit six years of major league service, until they're free agents. This bonus pool was just a slight addition to allow them to earn kind of something, basically, a completely merit based accomplishment saying "I, Aaron Judge set the rookie home run record. There is value in that. There is value in that to the league, there is value in that to the Yankees. I deserve something in terms of compensation above a player who maybe didn't play as well who is just a rookie with a basic rookie contract." So that is something that was very hard fought for the players and the Players Association. It was a great win from our perspective but still that's a far way away from fairness, you know a few hundred thousand dollars in terms of some players making 30 plus million dollars a year. You know players really should earn whatever they can command on the open market.

**Dante:** Thank you. And to pivot now to player discipline which has been a focal point of our presentation today and the Brandt report. Charles, you mentioned in the 1980s the drug program and bringing that up in the negotiations and how that's implemented and

enforced and also your role in the Players' Association, protecting the players on that end.

**Charles:** Well, during that era, in establishing a drug policy, it was important that the players cooperated and it was not unilaterally imposed. We spent a long time discussing rights in the collective bargaining, no let's keep it outside of collective bargaining. Let's create a policy but more importantly let's create a program. Let's create a program to educate all of the players and if they voluntarily come forward they do not lose their compensation but we will take care of the medication, we will take care of their recovery. And it was that type of outlook about drugs as a disease, cocaine use as a disease, that I believe went a long way to changing the perception at that time about NBA Basketball.

It was a difficult task because we were getting so much negative press. When the LA Times says that 70 percent of your players are using cocaine, that's a problem, ok. So we had to reverse that. And at the same time we were also trying to do what? We were trying to interest those of individual entrepreneurs that had millions that were willing to invest in teams. So the idea of the salary cap and revenue sharing, and a drug policy that made sense to help the NBA prosper and franchise values, television revenues, attendance etc. all came back.

**Dante:** Yeah pivoting off of television revenues, Len would you like to weigh in on that?

**Len DeLuca:** Oh yeah. And beyond the great job that Charlie did and Professor Grantham and I go back to when the NBA was on CBS from 1973 to 1990. I was in college in 1973. And the change for the NBA at that time is very much tied to what he did in terms of straightening out the players, but also television. He is absolutely correct. Gary Bettman, the late David Stern, Adam Silver, Russ Greenwich all hate the fact that, unless you were in Philadelphia where you could see it live, all Los Angeles on any game in May during May sweeps (something I won't explain to you, it was an old thing in network television) you couldn't see that game.

And suddenly in two years the NBA was live. And it's largely because of television and largely because of Magic and Bird and something that they did in 1979. To this minute the highest rated and shared game in the history of basketball in the 24 point, 30 rating, 39 share of Indiana State and Michigan State on March 26th, 1979. That was the NCAA Final Four. That game propelled

CBS to really- Kevin O'Malley at the time, Neil Pilsen- to really get involved and go after the NCAA tournament. Why did that help him? Because now suddenly the NCAA and the NBA, on CBS, enabled CBS to schedule the games in the finals live in June. And now everything came back and from 1982, because of the great work of Magic and Bird in creating the Road to the Final Four and CBS outbidding NBC in '82, and creating that great Magic/Bird rivalry of the 80's, and setting up the Pistons for the end of the 80s. Ultimately 1990 it goes to NBC and Michael.

But all of that started from an incredible attraction of television, which was the attraction of Dick Enberg, Billy Packard, Al McGuire doing that game back in 1979 and then that propelling CBS to go after the NCAA and create an NCAA/NBA double. Where I remember in the late 80s it was wonderful to have Hughie Brown, Billy Cunningham joining Billy Packard and our college analysts in doing the regional finals. And it was great. And everything moved up from there.

So television had a very big piece in propelling basketball into being the hottest sport, arguably, in the 80s, even in front of the NFL.

**Emily:** When you just mention there was you know an attraction to television right? And I think we've seen that heightened attraction in these women's basketball games that have been going on recently, right? I think these viewer numbers are skyrocketing more than they have in recent years and we were just talking back there before this and you were saying the game of six games this weekend is I think tonight, Iowa and South Carolina, the women's games. I don't want to get into the stickiness of the NCAA too much right now.

**Len:** Please let me.

**Emily:** So maybe you can. But with the NCAA's deal with ESPN, which includes women's March Madness which is going to expire next year, do you think these big broadcasting agencies will be excited to try to get a new deal with the NCAA in a sense because of the women's or do you think they're concerned with any of the uncertainties in the NCAA right now? With NIL and the employee status.

**Len:** Okay I'm going to answer your first question which is will there be interest in the women's basketball championship? Yes. For

multiple areas. How the NCAA championship got to all 68 games, 67 games on ESPN is a story of the NCAA women's leaders wanting to have their own network. We were on CBS, together, with the men's and women's, all the way from 1982 to 1995. The highest rated women's basketball game to this minute is the 5.0 1995 Yukon Rebecca Lobo undefeated championship game on CBS. And the reason that the NCAA people wanted to get, the NCAA women's group wanted to get away is that they could not get the airtime, total attention on an over the air broadcast so they made their way to ESPN. Then finally John Wildhack and I- John was the other senior vice president of programming who, interesting enough, is the athletic director of Syracuse University today, maybe you've heard of them. And we've all looked at what was going on with the women's basketball tournament and said "let's make it grow and put it out there." There's a great report that our friend Ed Decher wrote that says "hey they really are worth 111 million a year, they're only getting a fraction of that." The first yield that we did, we paid two dollars of every three dollars; we paid 160 million, I know that's nothing, for multiple years out of 240 million because the NCAA was interested in buying 80 million dollars of guaranteed promotion, which we don't do. We don't guarantee promotion to the NFL, no network will do that but it was so important to them they took income in kind.

Fast forward today- Iowa/South Carolina and Miami/Yukon. Why is nobody talking about Mimi? Iowa/South Carolina and Miami/Yukon are the two games I'm looking forward to the most for this weekend, but understand now, as we go forward because of the multiple platforms, because of the fact that all of you have become revolutionaries, because you discarded the cable package and RSNs are going up on fire as we speak and you want to watch what you want to watch when you want, except sports. Which is programmed live. So now what you're going to see coming next, I believe with the NCAA on the incumbent ESPN going for it strongly on multiple platforms, and you will see our friend Marie Donahue former ESPN business affairs person and now the vice president of sports video for Amazon come at it. And remember, amazon always plays by different rules because they're a membership company. They are not a network, so they don't have this thing called preemptive impact that the rest of us have to live with. They can add things. So there's a lot of discussions to go on but I think the advent of Women's National Championship the same way. And I did tennis and created all four slams on ESPN, then we get back the French.

Women's tennis carried men's tennis for a long time before Roger and Nadal and Djokovic came to the front. You're going to see very active bidding because of the multiple platforms.

**Emily:** Thank you, yeah. And what about I guess there's a lot of talk around conference realignment now too and we could go into that for a while as well, but how is that going to affect these media deals?

**Len:** Ugh, wow. The big. . . Charlie and I were talking about it and our students, and there's a couple out there from Seton Hall who have learned from Charlie and suffered through me over the years, are absolutely. . . it comes down to, in basketball, the reason that the NCAA still exists is the deal that we did at CBS way back when, in '89, for a billion dollars. And a billion dollars got us seven full final fours, full tournaments, all 63 games 1991 to 1997. You know how much a billion will get you in the NCAA starting next year? One tournament. You do the keggers- we have business and law students here. Has the kegger gone seven times in terms of what a dollar is worth? That is what the basketball tournament has done and that's why the NCAA still exists. Because of all of that money.

But the realignment. The geographically unsound Pacific Twelve, which is now the Pacific Six, and the Big Ten with UCLA and USC and Rutgers and Maryland, makes your head come off, are all a function of football. Be happy you're not. I tried to get Villanova to come into Big East football in 1994, you can look it up, and I wanted that because we did the deal to create the SEC on CBS and the Big East on CBS on 1994 and I wanted by Trey Keepsie to get Villanova to play at the big level but you wouldn't go there. Be happy because now football is what has driven, because it's the only discretionary dollars, because it's the denominator. Now there's 69 schools, 69 schools participating in the Big Five conferences and that's what it's about. And the college football player that comes up is going to be enormous and all the usual suspects will be there because Justin Tuck was here, Nasib was here in all of that. Behind pro football, the second most popular sport in this country is college football, not MLB, not soccer, not even March Madness.

So that's what I think is going to happen. I think that college football will continue to squeeze and make people try to get to those conferences. And the Boston Colleges and the Vanderbilts who sit on the bottom of the ACC, or SEC in some sports are going to be very happy to keep on contributing and competing because they're at the discretionary piece.

**Dante:** And to tie that all back in to collective bargaining all of that revenue that comes from the TV deals and Charles, if you want to weigh in on this as well, why is it that college athletes can't see that money and what is the avenue moving forward to get them access to that money?

**Charles:** Uh do we really want to talk about this?

Dante: Yes! Len does.

Charles: Define gross revenue, revenue sharing. Does Michigan look like a professional sports franchise in football? Yes. Does it look like a professional sports franchise in basketball? Yes. The other sixty eight schools in the Power Five conferences utilizing the what? Portal, the transfer portal. Utilizing what? Name image and likeness. Do they talk about the name, image and likeness that they charge the networks? Are they willing to share that with the student athlete? I don't want to go back to 1990. Road of peace at that point after seven or eight years of dealing with revenue sharing and salary caps. And I said "look we figured out the model, it works. Why can't we do it in college?"

Is it time to give athletes a chair? I said yes. That was in 1990.

**Len:** And right after you got a billion dollar deal

**Charles:** and when I look at today that "okay, so at the player level we give them somewhere between 50 and 55 percent, and I look at the Power Five conferences and recognize that their budget for name, image, and likeness and cost of attendance is somewhere between seven and ten percent of the revenue generated. You want to talk about exploitation? You know when I played basketball in college out here at Cheney- room, board, books tuition- that was a great exchange. We didn't have 20,000 people in stands. Our football program wasn't generating 50,000 people in television revenue. It is time, it is overtime to share revenue with the student athletes.

And I proposed in 1990 a trust fund that they could not access until they got their degree or if you should decide, because that's clearly in your domain you could say that they will not share that revenue until they're 30 years old. Why? Well when we put a pre pension plan together because I was concerned about athletes between the time that they stop playing and the time that they drew their pension.

**Len:** You should explain you did that?

**Charles:** That pre pension concept was based on an insurance plan because they were so young, an insurance trust was the best alternative. Because if we designated a percentage to go into that fund over a four-five-year period the pre pension plan would pay for itself.

**Len:** So why did the agents stop you in the NBA from having that afterwards because now you're going to get to why it doesn't occur in college.

**Charles:** Well the agents didn't want to do it because it took money off the cap to do that and they didn't share any of the revenue but that has nothing to do with universities who are able to pay a college football coach 94 million dollars over ten years. I'm sorry, that's a little bit much, that's a little bit disproportionate. And if I could do that, if I could pay Power Five conferences millions of dollars for football and basketball, these two revenues earning sports. . . Analytics is big in sports right now. We could figure it out. That a football player is going to get a trust fund worth X; that a tennis player and a baseball player because they don't generate revenue is going to get Y. It's time. It's time.

So whether it's Austin who's laid the groundwork. And I'm hopeful that my friend Jeffrey Kessler will have another lawsuit in the pipeline to force them to share revenue.

**Len:** Now let me ask you and you guys can jump in any time. Jack, let me ask you what we've been talking about. College is now an unmitigated free agent right now with the transfer portal. Isn't it funny that even Marvin Miller, when you gut in '75 with Major League Baseball, gut the right to do free agency from the decision, from the arbitrator's decision gave the six years of that break. Do you look back and think to college there's no six year break rookie salary now. Those fifteen kids who just played for Kansas State in the garden last week are brand new. Those ten kids. . . take a look at what the NIL is for the University of Miami against UConn coming up this weekend. You look back and say "Marvin Miller gave too much?"

**Jack:** You will never catch me saying a bad word about Marvin Miller so you don't have to worry about that. But you know there's always been that concern and that question. If you allow everybody to be a free agent maybe after one year or so you will completely flood the market and that will inherently drive salaries down, drive



opportunities down if every single player at the same college now has the opportunity to transfer after one year what is a team, what is a core organization, what is any degree of stability? I happen to be for it but in terms of baseball the union will always be fighting continually to allow players to be free agents sooner. That's no surprise to anybody and that's hopefully something we will continue to make progress doing. But Marvin Miller probably had a nice compromise in mind when he came to that six-year number.

**Charles:** There is an endless supply of labor.

**Emily:** Thank you guys. Unfortunately we are out of time. We probably could have done a whole panel or whole symposium on this sort of thing. So let's give our panelists a warm thank you.

CLOSING: INTERVIEW WITH HOWIE ROSEMAN, EXECUTIVE VICE  
PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER, PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

**Andrew Brandt:** Welcome back and those of you who stayed all afternoon we really appreciate it, all the great panels. Supporting what we do here, so much of it is our students as you've seen coming up here. Speaking to them I neglected to mention earlier but on your way in, on your way out we have what's called the Brandt report. We take a look every year at a major issue in sports. One year it was sports betting, name image likeness. This year we looked at discipline in sports. We call it Unsportsmanlike Conduct. So make sure you take a copy on your way out of our students' research into this great topic. They did a great job. It's a resource for anyone interested in this topic- sports law students, professionals etc.

Our final interview is with a longtime friend of mine who you guys may have heard of, Philly sports fans, coming off what a wonderful season. Let's give a welcome to the NFL's executive of the year of 2022 Howie Roseman. Welcome my friend.

**Howie Roseman:** Thanks for having me.

**Andrew:** We've known each other a long time. You're not a Philly guy, so tell us about your story, how you ended up here way back with Joe Banner and all the letters you've written that's a story out there, but I'll let you tell it.

**Howie:** Yeah, I think like anything in life your passion should control your destiny and for me my passion was always football. Unfor-

tunately, I was 119-pound wrestler in high school so I was not able to play at a high level, but I had this passion for building teams and valuing talent and putting it all together with the salary cap. So I really just kind of went in the direction of my dreams and I went on sort of a letter writing campaign starting in high school and then I went to the University of Florida and Fordham law school and finally got my foot in the door with an internship with the Eagles. In an industry where people don't really stay in one place, I was able to kind of move up and get different jobs all through the same organization. So, I've been there ever since and obviously a big part of that is we've got to win and for me it's special, it's a special run. And I don't feel like it's close to being over fortunately.

**Andrew:** you mention it I was in one place you know for almost ten years, Green Bay but it's so rare in this industry to see someone persevere in one organization for so long. It's such a volatile industry not only for players but management. Any secrets to how you've had such longevity with the Eagles through different coaches, different management? How do you explain that?

**Howie:** Well I think the first thing if you have to show you have some sort of institutional knowledge and for me I was very fortunate to get in and be exposed to every different area of the business. And I think a lot of times people think about general managers and they think of just scouting, which is a big part of what we do obviously we've got to acquire talent and get players, but I think the other part of it is I think Washington maybe even today is going to sell for 6 million dollars. So these jobs you're really the CEO of a six billion dollar company so being able to understand the business aspect of it, understand that the owners' job is to win games and also to win money and making good business decisions on your players and understanding resource allocation in terms of you have a limited number of resources whether it's in terms of cap dollars, cash that you can spend on your team or draft picks. And everyone's playing with basically the same amount of those so how you allocate those, how you build your team, how you hire people and staff. Kind of any advantage you can get and so I've been fortunate to be around a lot of good people. A lot of good coaches, a lot of good front office staff and I think that the key for me is surrounding yourself with really good people and people who can continue to make you better and challenge you. And we've had a lot of them in Philly.

**Andrew:** When you grew up, you mentioned a little bit, when you were writing the letters, but as a kid- and welcome, your oldest son is here, good to have him- as a kid were you interested in this side of sports? I mean a lot of kids are just the stats and the great players and the fantasy, whatever, but were you interested in kind of the business side of sports even as a young guy?

**Howie:** Well, I think when you say the business side to me it probably means something different than it does to other people. The business side of sports is negotiating contracts and putting the team together and using the resources. And the business side of sports for other people may be the marketing side, it may be being the CFO so there's different aspects of the business side of sports, but I love putting teams together. I love putting teams together not only on the field but off the field. If we have an area in our organization that needs improvement, I love trying to find the best people and a couple years ago our injure rate was terrible. We won the Super Bowl in '17 but lost a lot of key players and that kind of turned over in '18 and '19 and we had to fix it, so we bought in a whole new performance staff, training staff, doctors and this year we had 22 starters playing in the Super Bowl which is kind of unique. So, I'm proud of that group right there and I feel like putting that team together was important in some ways, just as important as some of the players on the field.

**Andrew:** Let's talk about your evolution. I remember you and I growing up together in the salary cap world negotiating contracts, kind of what you guys know as salary cap guru, contract negotiator nerd, whatever it may be. You transitioned; you went to more of the personnel side. And I knew always, knowing you, that was a passion of yours, but I also know that you faced resistance. Kind of for people who watched the movie money ball, this resistance from the old guard, the old-line scouts, who is this money guy or business guy coming in to try to do our job. I know you were affected by that, and you pushed through it, I watched you. Talk about that.

**Howie:** Yeah, I think when you have a different background and people see that, they want to protect their jobs and the NFL is probably the last league that had this culture of just scouts really getting these jobs. And so, understandably, they didn't want this whole new kind of growth of people who could take these GM jobs because they're hard to get. And so, I understood that and I understood that there were certain things that I had to do to overcome that you

know. I think for me, obviously, our owner Jeffrey Lurie, Joe Banner and Andy Reid were huge for me, and I remember Andy Reid saying to me “you’ve got to go on the road and you’ve got to stay in these motels and these bad hotels and these bad cities and you got to go scout players if you want to be my GM.” And I was calling “why do I got to do this, why do I have to stay in Motel 6? I can watch the guys on tape.” And what I realized from him was how important the relationships were and how important it is to be on school campuses and get a sense of these coaches and letting them trust you so you can get good information from them. How important it is for your scouts to see that you have done that and understand that being away from their family is important to you because I had to be away from mine.

And so, I think for me going through that, sort of pledging through it, it made it maybe a little bit easier. But at the same time no one wants to see you be successful. I think that’s the reality for everyone to understand is that you’ve got to push through the negativity, you’ve got to push through. . . it’s very easy for people to say no to you all the time and I didn’t really take that. Just like this one right here, I heard her trying to get a job and she said she wasn’t going to take no and I thought “a person built from the same cloth I am.” Part of it is figuring out the determination and passion you have and being able to push through the negativity you are inevitably going to face if you want to be successful.

**Andrew:** Shoutout Jacqueline. Any stories of that? I mean without names where scouts kind of look at you and say “what are you doing? What are you doing on our turf?” Because we know how territorial that is.

**Howie:** naturally I think you have that, and you have that through the media and I just try not to pay attention to it. I knew at the end of the day none of that mattered, that the most important thing was trying to get credibility in my building so I could help my team win. Having those allies that I had in our building, people who are tremendously successful and believed in me was really important. And then I grew up with a bunch of guys in the NFL who were all kind of the same age and who I think seven of us became GMs or assistant GMs so now I kind of had that support to internally. I was lucky to be surrounded by, as I am now, great people and I think that’s the key to anything you do in life, the people you surround yourself with.

**Andrew:** You've had success and you've not had success. It's sort of this life of ups and downs and you've had recent success and you had Super Bowl championship and then a down and now you're back up.

**Howie:** I would take exception with that. I think we've had tremendous success and we've made, the past five or six years we had one down year. We made the playoffs since I've been GM eight of twelve years, won the division five times so I don't feel like we've had tremendous failure I think what we've had is adversity. And I think there's a difference between failure and adversity. Adversity makes you stronger, adversity is the thing that you need to have greatness in my opinion. And so, I think we've had some adversity. I feel like one of the reasons I'm able to stay in Philly is because we have had tremendous success as an organization since I've been there and luckily since I've been the GM. Adversity is ok. Sometimes adversity, it humbles you, it puts you back on path and so we've had that a couple times here in the last twelve years- 2012, 2015 and then again in 2020. We make excuses for all of those you know Covid, coaching change, that stuff.

**Andrew:** I was going to say how do you not become complacent with all your success?

**Howie:** Yeah, I think it's funny because I always felt like once, if ever, we won a Super Bowl it would be hard to get motivated and I remember thinking Bill Belichick and Saban we have guys who work with both and you know they win the Super Bowl and two days later you get your ass back in the office and we got to get going and I'm going "fricking assholes, these guys. Just can't they enjoy the moment?"

And I have a guy who was our vice president of player personnel Joe Douglas, he's the GM of the Jets now, and I remember him saying to me- he had won a Super Bowl in Baltimore- I remember him saying to me "wait 'til you win." And I said "yeah, you can take over the team, I'm going to be on a month-long bender. You won't see me for a month, I'm going to be so excited." And we won the Super Bowl in Minnesota, we came back Monday night and Tuesday I was driving in the office a little later, it was probably like 9 o'clock and I called him and was like "where you at?" And he was like "I'm at breakfast I'll be in at like 11" and I said "you better get your ass in, we're going to get our ass kicked, we're a month behind everyone." And he goes "what happened to the month-long

bender?” And I said, “the feeling of winning, the feeling of the confetti falling on your head and knowing you’re the best at something, it’s addicting.”

And I think once you feel it you understand that maybe just making the playoffs isn’t enough even though maybe you felt that way before. So, for me personally, incredible motivation, incredibly competitive at this point. Wish you could take your foot off the gas a little bit, but I think that it’s fun, it’s fun to win. And it’s fun to win with people you care about, and I think we have that right now and we had a huge disappointment not winning that game, and I think it drives you a little bit.

**Andrew:** I think there was disappointment in this room. On the bright side, 2017 I’ll never forget you standing up in front of that art gallery and saying, “is this heaven?” They want a round of applause. That was quite a moment and I remember Jason Kelsey mentioning you as someone who took a lot of bullets, took a lot of arrows coming up, that had to be a moment for you. Not only you saying it but also hearing Jason.

**Howie:** Yeah, I think that the players on your team are like fingers on your hand. I stand up in front of our team every year Andrew and say “we selected each and every one of you. You are not here because you were allocated like you were in NFL Europe.” I think that all those guys are there because they have some sort of trait that we find appealing and so you get to pick those guys and so when they go on to do something you’re incredibly proud.

When Jason got up there, in his mummer suit, after about 45 beers and he mentioned my name I did not know which way he was going so I was really more anxious to know where he was going in front of 7 million people than I was hanging on every word. But just to have those relationships with your players, and it’s hard because we’re in the business of letting those guys go and just like we talked about before we have to say no to our players a lot. I think they respect the honesty and I think they respect it when you’re up front with them.

Jason too, we just did his podcast this week together. I mean he’s one of these guys that he would be successful doing whatever he wanted. Incredibly smart and persistent guy, determined guy.

**Andrew:** You talked about letting guys go. You know in Green Bay I was there when we moved on from Brett Farve. They’re doing it now with Aaron. You said goodbye to Donovan McNabb and so

many others. I mean that's got to be hard. Obviously Jason's coming back, Fletcher's coming back, Brandon's coming back but one day they're not going to come back.

**Howie:** Yeah we had to say goodbye to a lot of guys this offseason and there's hard feelings from those guys. "Why not me? Why aren't you paying me? Why don't you want me back?" And some of these guys they feel like they played, they gave their heart and soul to the team how do you not bring them back. And those are difficult discussions and they don't get any easier. And you talk about it, obviously we have this group of guys that have been there a long time. I think what's unique about our team is four of our captains are home grown guys that we drafted, Brandon Graham in 2010, Jason Kelsey in 2011, Fletcher Cox in 2012, and Lane Johnson 2013 and they're our Captains. Two Offensive linemen, two defensive linemen. Those guys really center our team, pun intended I guess. And I think that, for us, just thinking about how we're going to replace those guys is constantly on my mind because they're very hard guys to replace- the work ethic, the talent, obviously the leadership. So as we go into this next month and this draft where we have the tenth pick, which we didn't earn, we did not earn the tenth pick.

**Andrew:** I get it!

**Howie:** I think you kind of think about that. You kind balance talent versus intangibles and ideally you get guys with both. That's really hard to find those guys. And it's almost like a seesaw, you don't want to be too on balance.

**Andrew:** We talked about Donovan, sort of the quarterback situation has always been, it's an obvious point, that's the key to success in football. But you have really prioritized that. I remember not only Donovan but Kevin Cobb and Michael Vick. And I know it's kind of a sore subject but I think it's instructive. You put so much resources into the drafting and extension of Carson Wentz and it didn't work out and that must have been a hard situation for you personally and professionally. That was so much investment into that player and he did so well for so long. . .

**Howie:** Yeah I think there's two parts of that question right? One the quarterback position in the NFL it might be the most important position of any position in all of sports, certainly in my opinion, and

they're really hard to find. They're unique guys. I saw a stat yesterday that even of the first round quarterbacks, I think one has gone on to win the Super Bowl on the team that they're drafted with. And so we've always also benefited by the backup quarterback position in Philly. The backup quarterbacks have been guys who led us to division titles, led us to a Super Bowl championship. We know how long the season is, how hard it is to stay healthy through the course of the season and that's such an important position that we've always prioritized not only the quarterback position but we like to say "the second quarterback" as opposed to the backup, at least that's my selling point to backup quarterbacks.

I think that you could have a heck of a team and if you don't have a quarterback you're not going to win. And the flipside is if you have a great quarterback and your team is just pretty good he can elevate it and a lot of these guys, we'll see a lot of these quarterbacks whether it's Tom or Aaron either retiring or leaving their team. It puts a lot of pressure on the team, we'll kind of see how that works out.

I think in terms of Carson, again I'm probably living in my own world so maybe it's not reality, but I don't view Carson as not having worked out. We drafted Carson in 2016. In 2017 he probably was the MVP, led us to 11 and 1 and wouldn't have gotten a home field advantage without him. He comes back the next year, in '18 and played well enough to get us to the playoffs and then Nick kind of took the baton and played in the playoffs again and then came back in '19 and we won the division. And then I think from there, Carson had some injury issues that he kind of went through and so I don't necessarily know if it was the same player that we kind of drafted and we all know that this game is physical, it's hard it takes its toll on you. Then, we had to make the decision to kind of move on here in 2021 which I think, I thought was going to be mutually beneficial. I thought him and Andy going back with Frank would really work out and those picks we needed to kind of clean up our cap and our situation here in Philly. And then Jalyn kind of had that first year where made the playoffs and then obviously phenomenal this year. I think for us it ended up working out. We ended up having him play for us, play well in the years he was there and then getting picks that we used to get Devonte and AJ Brown and this tenth pick in this draft that I referenced before.

**Andrew:** Well that tenth pick in the draft I think was made possible by your negotiating savvy. I don't want to get you in trouble, but it



just seems like you bring this background to general management you say is much more than scouting and that's clear. I think your negotiating and business background has really been a value add for the Philadelphia Eagles. I think it's a competitive edge, Howie and I don't say that just because we're friends. I think that you have been able to use trades and negotiations of contracts to the team's advantage and as we head into this period now with a young quarterback that will someday, someday soon or not so soon, be extended with a massive contract- not breaking any news here.

**Howie:** No.

**Andrew:** You're going to have to build around that and there is this challenge that teams have, as I know, with top tier quarterbacks on the pay scale continuing to be a Super Bowl contending team and I know that's something you're facing.

**Howie:** Yeah, frankly our two Super Bowl teams were with quarterbacks on rookie deals so I embrace that challenge that one day, as you said, maybe soon maybe far far away we'll have Jalen on a long term contract and he's the right guy to do that with. I mean, incredible guy; incredible work ethic, talent and just everything you look for representative of our football team. And so we gotta do it a different way and the challenge of never having done it that way and gone to a Super Bowl, and certainly not winning a Super Bowl that way, it's another thing that kind of motivates me. It's just "how do we put it together and how do we do something differently?" And that's what we have to do. At the end of the day the league is built like a bell curve. They really want everyone in the middle of the bell curve and to get to the top of that bell curve you have to take some chances that maybe put you at risk of falling on the other side of that bell curve. But otherwise you're going to be 9 and 8, you're going to be in the middle of it like the league wants you to be based on parity, based on where they have you pick. So finding those ways to do it, those challenges, I think that's part of the exciting part of it.

**Andrew:** I mean Jalen, I'm not saying anything new, he seems like the perfect guy. He seems to have a temperament that's amazing. Doesn't seem to get too high or too low, he speaks well, he has the team's heart in his soul it seems. I mean he's like perfect. How did you get this guy in the second round?

**Howie:** Are you trying to negotiate his contract because I'm not really comfortable. . .

**Andrew:** He's got a five-year guarantee and. . .

**Howie:** Yeah, I think that one of the things with Jalen, we talked about it a little, about adversity and Jalen had adversity. He came to the University of Alabama, four star recruit, started as a true freshman, took them to the national championship game, was the FCC offensive player of the year as a true freshman. Then goes his sophomore year and gets benched in the national championship game and Tua comes in replaces him. The next year he doesn't play you know until the National Championship Game and he goes to the National Championship Game and Tua gets hurt and he wins the National Championship. The he transfers to Oklahoma and he gets better as a passer. And for us we saw that this was a guy who had tremendous determination, tremendous leadership ability, but a lot of time people talk about Jalen's intangibles. He's an incredibly talented guy. He's an incredibly talented passer, obviously athlete and leader and so for us you go back to that decision and having Carson. We had passion about Jalen Hurts and we felt like there was a point at the end of the second round and he was there and how we felt about him but the most important position in sports, how do you take a different guy at a different position. Even if Carson was playing at an MVP level this guy was going to play in the preseason, you had tremendous insurance and maybe at some point you flip them. We had success in doing that with Coach Reid and you guys were doing that In Green Bay. Quarterbacks are hard to find so if you had one you really liked and you're talking about guys in the second round maybe a solid starting safety or a linebacker, is that going to flip your team if you really needed it? And for us it was a hard pick, only because of the noise around it. It wasn't a hard pick because of the player or the person.

**Andrew;** The noise meaning like what I dealt with In Green Bay taking Aaron Rodgers when we had Brett Farve? That kind of noise?

**Howie:** With all due respect, Andrew, Green Bay may have three reporters, we have about 7 million in Philadelphia so I'm not sure it's apples to apples. Appreciate you though.

**Andrew:** This room is full of them. We're about three weeks away from the draft and last year at this time you guys pounced on a

receiver in Tennessee AJ Brown. There was a contract situation going on in Tennessee. You obviously had to be eyes and ears aware of that, you had to figure out when would be the right time. The contract was part of it, that seemed like a complicated deal to happen in those moments on draft night so I'm assuming it happened over the weeks prior to it.

**Howie:** Yeah, I think there were some conversations prior to the draft and then during draft we kicked up a little bit. We really didn't agree to the deal until really Wednesday morning. And then we basically had 36 hours to get a deal done and didn't get the deal done until we had traded up, taken Jordan Davis, and then we were on the clock again at 18. Obviously I had to finish the deal before 18 so really just pushing, trying in both directions, going back and forth trying to do those deals. And it was fun, it was exciting only because we got the deal done. I could imagine just that leaking and not getting AJ Brown because we didn't get a contract done and having to answer those questions here. So very appreciative that we were able to get the contract done and the trade done and AJ is a heck of a player and obviously his relationship with our quarterback is special and unique which makes it even more fun.

**Andrew:** As we look forward, well let me ask you, and our questions sort of big picture here. You just mentioned the Washington Commanders may go for 6 billion dollars. The league seems pretty healthy. All the metrics are good, the TV contract goes out ten years, 100 billion dollars, the player contract, labor deal goes out ten years. From a macro perspective where do you see the biggest challenges league wide going forward?

**Howie:** Pandemic

**Andrew:** Another one?

**Howie:** No! I remember feeling pretty good going into 2020 where we were from a cap perspective and then we had that and I think if you ask kind of. . obviously when you have all those contracts in place and you're able to put together models, especially when you're talking about paying a quarterback. So you ask "what can the rug come out from?" It's just the unknown, the unprecedented and I think we've seen that happen so you have to have your guard up for it a little bit.

**Andrew:** Question about the Eagles going forward. You're going to have your quarterback in place, maybe today or tomorrow, six months a year whatever it is. You've got a franchise tag, so you've got two years left. You mentioned some of the guys you brought back, so it seems to me again you've got this young team, but you've got these veterans, leaders. You've taken advantage of trades with AJ, you've got a sort of mix and match team. You look at some teams on the league like the Bears sort of growing upwards, some teams are sort of veteran heavy, but you have a nice mix.

**Howie:** Yeah I think it's important that you have a nice mix. It's important to have some veteran leadership to show young players the right way to work. I think it's also important that you have this young culture. You take our defensive line in a room where we have Josh Webb who's 26 years old, Hasan Reddick who's 26 and then you have Brandon Graham who's really leading it. You have our offense line and you have Kelsey and Lane in that room, you know we've got a left tackle who has a great story from Australia, who's 25. We've got a 25-year-old left guard and our right guard was our second round draft pick last year. On offense we're basically young, Devonte Smith, AJ Brown, Dallas Goddard, Jalen Hurts, these are all young guys. So you mix and match it a little bit and I think over time you start to integrate more and more young players and I think it's a really important next two years for us.

Obviously, we have the two first round picks this year which is huge, and we already have 12 picks in next year's draft. It's kind of unique that you're sitting here and you're going "well the 2024 draft is a huge draft for us." But it is, because if we do what we're saying here and pay our quarterback we are going to need young labor, and cheap labor. And so we're not going to go 12 for 12 so getting more lottery tickets, getting more picks will be huge for us to develop those guys. And player development is a huge part.

I think the NFL is unique because it's the only place in the world where people expect you- well I've never worked anywhere else, but I suspect if you went into a law firm, maybe Jeff can help us with his law firm. If you go into a law firm and you're a first-year associate, right? Am i Saying that right? You're a first-year associate, no one is expecting you to be unbelievable. These rookies come in and if they're not unbelievable right away, bust. You're a first-time head coach and you're not good right away? Fired. So it's just very different standards in sports and certainly in the NFL. There's no

patience for that, there's no on the job training. You have to be good right away.

**Andrew:** You mentioned the coach, I remember you hired Nick Siri-ani a couple years ago, unknown, complete unknown. What drew you to him?

**Howie:** He just had this personality about him that you felt, one you felt like when you're sitting in front of him and he's talking to you about football and he's talking to you about how he coached, and schemes and he would get up and demonstrate, you felt like you were learning. He was teaching and he was a really good teacher. It also felt like he had the ability to hold people accountable which I think in this day and age has gone a little bit by the wayside. I think that holding people accountable sometimes is viewed as a negative even though I think it's the right way to run a sports team. And people understanding the expectations and when they don't live up to the standards that you've set, understanding that there are consequences for those. I think if you don't do that then it's really hard to keep everyone in line. You know he had an incredible personality, an incredible offensive mind. He was somebody that we felt like we knew because we knew Frank Wright so well? So these are hard. It's like marrying someone after a three hour first date and basically who's doing that. That would be psychopathic. But that's how we have to hire people in this so you kind of go with people that you trust and I think for us we were kind of burned one time before on a coach and I think whether it was with Doug or Nick we felt like we knew these guys and we knew who they were and what they were bringing to the table. And I think that gives you a chance of success and obviously coach Peterson who you know really well brought us a world championship and Nick in his second year got us to the Super Bowl as well.

**Andrew:** And you did so well this year you lost both your coordinators.

**Howie:** I know, price of success. And then you've got to spend the time after the Super Bowl finding new coordinators and trying to keep your team together. It's not enough that we didn't win a championship, now we have to go rebuild our roster and coaching staff.

**Andrew:** let's console him a little about not winning that championship. What a great year the Eagles had; what an incredible year.

**Howie:** A good year to be fair, a great year would be a championship year.

**Andrew:** Whatever that bit below grade is. And speaking of which, we're talking about coaches I have to ask how was it being there with Coach Reid?

**Howie:** Being under Coach Reid?

**Andrew:** No being in the Super Bowl against Coach Reid.

**Howie:** I remember watching the championship game and being like "man I'd love to play against coach, how special would that be. Us, our relationship with him and the Kelsey's." And then we got to the weekend, and I was like "Am I out of my mind? I want to play this great quarterback and great coach?" So be careful what you wish for.

And I think just seeing him, and I saw him after the game, and I felt like I owed it to him to congratulate him as hard as I was. He deserves everything. He's elite and I think part of me goes "he's been coaching, maybe top three coach of all time. He's been coaching 25 years as a head coach, and he just got a second world championship." It made me feel personally a little bit better for myself.

But it's hard and then you have to go back to Arizona, we had an NFL meetings this week in Arizona and it's like PTSD. Everywhere I go I'm reminded of it.

**Andrew:** As we close, what about your future? How long are you going to do this, and how long are you going to do this here? I assume, only here.

**Howie:** I have no idea of either of those two things. I love what I do and I love competing and so I would say that there's no part of me that wants to do anything else right now at this time though your teaching gig looks really good. No one's also offered me anything so I don't know if I have many options, I better keep doing what I do. I think that it's very fortunate to have these opportunities and I think that the most fortunate part is that I get to take care of my staff. I get to have people around me that, as long as I have a job they have a job and their families get to stay here and I think that's the part for me that's special. It's that I know that if we do well that not only does it affect me but I'll probably be alright. You know I've been doing this long enough, but our equipment guy and his family and our assistant equipment guy and our video guys and our scouts and their families don't have to move. Because you've seen, these

jobs are transient and families got to pick up and move and change schools and find new friends. And I feel like that's my responsibility to keep them out of that and that's motivation for me.

**Andrew:** And you mentioned the seven millions reporters in this fan base that's so passionate and I experience that in Wisconsin as well. You love it though, don't you? I mean you complain, but you love it because you don't want to be a place where there's not that passion.

**Howie:** I mean you keep comparing Green Bay to Philly and I don't really think that's freaking close

**Andrew:** it's the only game in town. . .

**Howie:** But you know I think you've got to be on you're a-game at all times. I was in Arizona, and I had to do a media session, which I wasn't really looking forward to and it's fricking 75 and sunny out, and I'm like wearing my sunglasses and I got a big smile on my face. And the first question is like "do you think Jalen Hurts wants to sign an extension with the Eagles?" And it's like "where is that even coming from?" You know the guy's working out at our facility. It's just you kind of got to push it to the side and understand that everyone is trying to get content and if everything is sunshine and rainbows, they're not going to get a lot of clicks on their articles so I understand that. And then our fans, the passion that our fans have to me is incredible. That's just a positive. I don't know that I would be happy being in a media market where the stadium was 75% full and you had a lot of fans from visiting teams. I mean we go on the road we're like fricking rockstars. You know we got people at our hotel; we got twenty percent of the stadiums. The sweetest sound to me is when we're on the road and there's less than five minutes left, and you start hearing that Eagles chant. I mean that is a special, special thing and so I take pride in it. Obviously, it's easy to get defensive. Maybe I did a little bit, but I think it just puts that chip on your shoulder and there's kind of a prove it mentality every year. And again you can't get content.

**Andrew:** We had the whole crowd chanting "go Pat go"

**Howie:** Yeah, your fans did travel, I hear.

**Andrew:** This was wonderful. Let's give it up for NFL Executive of the Year, Eagles general manager, Howie Roseman.