

Roger Goodell comments on Colin Kaepernick

BY CINDY BOREN
THE WASHINGTON POST

Offering his first public comments since Colin Kaepernick began his national anthem protest, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell stressed that he supports the right to protest, even in a league in which patriotism plays such a visible role, but that he disagrees personally with Kaepernick.

Goodell, who has maintained a low profile this off-season, was asked Wednesday about the decision by the San Francisco 49ers quarterback to remain seated during the playing of “The Star-Spangled Banner” to raise awareness of racial

injustice in the United States.

“I support our players when they want to see change in society, and we don’t live in a perfect society,” he told The Associated Press on Wednesday. “We live in an imperfect society. On the other hand, we believe very strongly in patriotism in the NFL. I personally believe very strongly in that.”

Since his protest sparked a national debate, Kaepernick has seen fans burn his jersey — and then watched as it became the best-seller in the NFL’s online shop. Kaepernick, who says he intends to continue his protest, will get his chance

Monday night when the 49ers open the season.

“I’m going to continue to stand with the people that are being oppressed,” Kaepernick told reporters Sunday. “To me, this is something that has to change. When there’s significant change, and I feel like that flag represents what it’s supposed to represent and this country is representing people the way that it’s supposed to, I’ll stand.”

With the first week of the



Goodell

NFL season looming, it is not yet clear whether Kaepernick’s message will resonate with others players. His teammate, Eric Reid, has promised to, as has Jeremy Lane of the Seattle Seahawks. Goodell said the league encourages players to be respectful, even as they speak out about changing society.

“I think it’s important to have respect for our country, for our flag, for the people who make our country better; for law enforcement,



Kaepernick

and for our military who are out fighting for our freedoms and our ideals,” Goodell said.

“These are all important things for us, and that moment is a very important moment. So, I don’t necessarily agree with what he is doing. We encourage our players to be respectful in that time and I like to think of it as a moment where we can unite as a country. And that’s what we need more, and that’s what I think football does — it unites our country. So I would like to see us focusing on our similarities and trying to bring people together.”

Kaepernick’s protest has devoured news cycles in the

week leading up to Week 1 of the new season — and it’s not easy to overshadow the nation’s most popular sport.

“Players have a platform, and it’s his right to do that. We encourage them to be respectful and it’s important for them to do that,” Goodell said.

“I think it’s important if they see things they want to change in society, and clearly we have things that can get better in society, and we should get better. But we have to choose respectful ways of doing that so that we can achieve the outcomes we ultimately want and do it with the values and ideals that make our country great.”

Woods intends to make return next month

BY MARK LAMPORT-STOKES
REUTERS

Tiger Woods announced on Wednesday that he hopes to make his competitive return to golf next month, beginning with the PGA Tour’s Safeway Open in Napa, California, after spending more than a year on the sidelines.

The 14-time major winner also said, depending on “my continued progress and recovery”, that he intends to compete at the Turkish Airlines Open in November and the Tiger Woods Foundation-run Hero World Challenge in December.

Woods, the greatest player of his generation and arguably of all time, has not played competitive golf since the Wyndham Championship in late August 2015 and has been recovering from multiple back surgeries.

“My rehabilitation is to the point where I’m comfortable making plans, but I still have work to do,” Woods said in a statement posted on his website.

“Whether I can play depends on my continued progress and recovery. My

hope is to have my game ready to go.”

The Safeway Open, the season-opening event on the 2016-17 PGA Tour, will be played from Oct. 13-16 at Silverado Resort and Spa in Napa.

Woods missed all four majors in a calendar year for the first time in 2016, and made just 11 tournament appearances in 2015.

BLIGHTED BY INJURIES

Since the end of 2013, the former world number one has competed in only 18 events on the PGA Tour while being blighted by injuries and poor form, recording just one top-10 during that period along with six missed cuts and three withdrawals.

“It was difficult missing tournaments that are important to me, but this time I was smart about my recovery and didn’t rush it,” said Woods, who will celebrate his 41st birthday in December.

“It was great spending time with my children Sam and Charlie, and also working on a lot of projects including golf-course design, the upcoming 20th anniversary of my foundation and my book about the 1997 Masters.

NFL

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11. ON THE RISE.

The NFL is the place where you can be awful one year and great the next. A few candidates for turnaround seasons: Raiders, Jaguars, Ravens, Buccaneers.

12. A BENGALS PLAY-OFF WIN?

Cincy has been a model of consistency in getting to the playoffs, but Marvin Lewis now has six one-and-done postseason exits on his resume.

13. BROCK TO THE RESCUE!

Or so the Texans hope. They paid Oswieiler \$18M a year to be the man in Houston, so the former Broncos understudy has plenty to prove for a team that may be a quarterback away from Super Bowl contention.

14. DAK TO THE RESCUE!

Or so the Cowboys hope. With Tony Romo out for as long as 10 weeks, it’s rookie Dak Prescott who gets the call. And if he can’t play like he did in the preseason, Mark Sanchez may get the call.

15. BREAKOUT SEASON FOR JAMEIS WINSTON?

The Buccaneers quarterback showed some flashes last season, but with plenty of players making a big jump from Year 1 to Year 2, this could what the Bucs have been hoping for.

16. AARON PACKS A PUNCH.

Aaron Rodgers is still at the tippy top of his game, which means the Packers can have their way in the NFC North. And maybe then some. Rodgers is thinking Super Bowl big this year, and we like his chances.

Buchholz shines in win over Padres

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

SAN DIEGO — Clay Buchholz returned to Boston’s rotation Tuesday night in San Diego and gave the Red Sox playoff hopes a major boost, holding the Padres to one run in 6 2/3 innings as Boston defeated the Padres 5-1 to move into a tie with Toronto for the American League East lead.

Back-to-back home runs by Jackie Bradley Jr. and Chris Young in the fourth broke up a scoreless game and gave Buchholz all the support he needed in his first start since Aug. 23.

Boston’s win, coupled with Toronto’s loss at New York, leaves the Red Sox and Blue Jays tied with 77-61 records as they prepare to meet in a three-game series this weekend in Toronto. Baltimore trails the A.L. East co-leaders by one game.

Buchholz, who had made three, one-inning relief appearances since his last start, gave up eight hits and no walks with six strikeouts to improve to 6-10. The only run he allowed came on a solo home run by Ryan Schimpf in the bottom of the fourth after Bradley and Young had powered the Red Sox to a 3-0 lead in the top of the inning.

“You have to give Clay a tremendous amount of credit for the mental preparation and being ready to go,” said Boston manager John Farrell of Buchholz, who has gone to a no-windup delivery and changed his arm angle in recent weeks.

“Along the way, he’s figured some things out ... he’s been extremely consistent, no walks again tonight. You can’t give Clay enough credit for the role he’s been put into, some of it by his own doing early on.

MAJOR LEAGUES



JAKE ROTH | USA TODAY

Boston Red Sox fans cheer as starting pitcher Clay Buchholz comes out of the game during the seventh inning against the San Diego Padres at Petco Park on Tuesday night. Boston won 5-1.

said Buchholz, who needed only 89 pitches to complete 6 2/3 innings. “Good times, bad times, I still feel like I can pitch and help this team. Regardless of the role, whenever my name is called I try to go out and give our team the best chance to win that I can.”

The Bradley-Young back-to-back homers was the fifth set of back-to-back homers by the Red Sox this season.

Padres starter Paul Clemens (2-5) suffered the loss as he failed to complete five innings for the fourth time in eight starts as a Padre. Clemens was charged with five runs on nine hits, including the back-to-back homers, in

four plus innings.

The game was scoreless when Boston’s Sandy Leon opened the fourth by beating the Padres’ shift with a perfect bunt to third bringing Padres pitching coach Darren Balsley to the mound to talk to Clemens.

“I took my foot off the gas pedal after that bunt,” Clemens admitted. “The bunt set the tone for that inning.”


Clemens’ velocity also played a role. It dropped from 94-95 in the first three innings to 90 tops in the fourth.

Bradley followed Leon’s bunt by lining a 2-and-1 fastball from Clemens 399 feet

into the right-field stands. Young, who homered as a pinch-hitter Monday for the Red Sox’s only run in a 2-1 loss to the Padres, followed with a 344-foot drive to left on a 1-and-0 fastball.

“I don’t think I gave us a great chance to win,” said Clemens. “It’s not good. I was happy early, then I put myself in a bad spot.”

Rookie second baseman Schimpf got the Padres on the board in the bottom of the fourth with a 388-foot home run to right off Buchholz. Schimpf was hitless in 16 at-bats — including 10 strikeouts — when he hit his 17th homer in just 206 at-bats.




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