

NBC Sports Group Media Conference

Thursday, September 1, 2022

Maria Taylor
Tony Dungy
Jason Garrett
Chris Simms
Matthew Berry
Sam Flood

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everybody, and thank you for joining us today for our Football Night in America conference call to preview the 2022 NFL season.

Football Night returns for its 17th season and is the most-watched studio show in sports. Joining us on our call today is, and I'm going to start with those who have some new roles, our new lead host is Maria Taylor.

Maria of course was cohost last year, but now takes over for Mike Tirico, who transitioned to the Sunday Night Football booth.

We've got three-time Super Bowl winner and former head coach of the Dallas Cowboys, Jason Garrett, who made his debut with NBC Sports calling our USFL games along with Jac Collinsworth this past spring.

That duo will also call our Notre Dame football games this season, and any questions about Notre Dame are welcome on this call.

We have Fantasy Football expert Matthew Berry who joined NBC Sports last month and makes his Football Night debut this season. Matthew also hosts a daily show on Peacock, and will host a two-hour Peacock exclusive program on Sunday mornings at 11:00 a.m. every week of the season.

Our returning analysts, Hall of Fame head coach Tony Dungy, who is entering his 14th season on Football Night, which is longer than his 13-year head coaching career.



Unfortunately Rodney Harrison was scheduled to join but cannot make it today.

We also have a former NFL quarterback Chris Simms who continues to produce daily NFL content for NBC Sports across its numerous platforms.

We will also be joined by NBC Sports executive Sam Flood.

Filling out the Football Night roster, although they are not on this call, is Jac Collinsworth, who co-hosts the show at the site of the game each week, and our NFL insider Mike Florio.

Let's begin with comments from our executive producer, Sam Flood.

SAM FLOOD: Thanks for joining us today. We're really excited about the season. Sitting next to Tony, having been with him for 14 years now is amazing to think about, and he's got the new lead in Maria.

Can't be more excited to see her in this chair. She had a lot of runs at it the back end of last season. Showed the world how she's going to be. So it's a really exciting new start.

And to have Jason who did such an amazing job on the USFL, we knew after one game we wanted him to be part of the team going forward, so we're really pleased that that's all come together.

And then over the summer the Matthew Berry addition was a fun, big add, a new space, and the daily show has been a home run.

The Sunday show is going to be a home run, as well, on Football Night. A big-time touchdown for us.

So we're excited across the board, and let's get it going. I'll get out of the way now and give it to the host with the most.

MARIA TAYLOR: Thanks, Sam. Appreciate it. We are so excited to start a new season of Football Night in America. I am honored, blessed, and so happy to be able to work with these guys and just be the point guard. I'm here to dish out assists.



We've got the veteran in Coach. Been here 14 years. We've got a rookie in Jason Garrett. And we've got Chris Simms. We have a lot of fun, though. I think this is going to be a season where you see a family getting to talk about football on TV every single Sunday.

We're also really blessed that we were able to kind of have a little run at it at the Hall of Fame game. We promised Jason there would not be a rain delay every single game and that he wouldn't have to fill for 45 minutes. But it was still a fun start to see how all of the pieces come together.

And then adding in Matthew Berry and the Fantasy Football aspect is just incredible to have. I feel like we have an incredible, dynamic show, and this Football Night in America, really the legend of it continues to live on, and we're just honored to kind of be the flag bearers for it this season.

So we're just trying to keep that boat afloat.

TONY DUNGY: I would echo what Maria said, just excited to open up the year with our new crew members, Matthew and Jason. It's going to be fantastic. We have a sensational schedule every week, great games, and it's going to be fun bringing them to the audience, and we're looking forward to it.

JASON GARRETT: For me, the words that keep coming into my mind are excited and grateful. So excited for this opportunity, and grateful to be sitting in the room with these guys. It is the marquee show maybe in all of television, certainly in football.

Everybody in the league knows that. To have the chance to be a part of it -- everybody at NBC, I'm obviously new at this, I'm a rookie, but everybody has been incredible. They've been so fun to work with. They've been so helpful to me, everybody in this room and beyond.

It's been a fun experience for me. I'm going to learn as I go and try my best to keep up with these guys, but it's been fantastic. I'm grateful for the opportunity.

CHRIS SIMMS: I think I say this every year: It's a dream come true to be on Sunday Night Football. Growing up, being a part of my dad's career and everything, this is just such a marquee platform. We have such a great camaraderie with the group we have here. We always get marquee games, great quarterback storylines that's so exciting.

But more or less I'm just excited to be a part of this group. It is fun. Like Jason Garrett says, we have a lot of fun

watching football through the day. I love hearing Coach Dungy's thoughts.

Maria, she's not a point guard. You're not in basketball. You're a quarterback. But she's amazing leading the charge for us.

And Matthew Berry being a part of the crew has added some life for sure, as well.

So really excited about the year, and just couldn't be happier about NBC and Sunday Night Football in Sunday.

MATTHEW BERRY: It's interesting, Chris said it's a dream come true. I would not say it's a dream come true for me because when I was dreaming the idea that a Fantasy guy could be on Football Night in America didn't seem possible.

So the idea that I'm here is a true pinch-me, insane, crazy moment for me. Very excited. When I left ESPN I was very flattered to get offers, but the minute NBC said, hey, we're interested, I stopped talking to everyone else, because I've watched Football Night in America for years and years and years. It is the show of record.

When I got the opportunity to join this show, it was like, when do you need me? Where do I show up? It was just a no-brainer.

I'm so grateful, and I know that's a word that's been thrown around, but it's a true feeling I think among all of us here, but especially me. I'm so incredibly appreciative of NBC for not only supporting me, but also supporting Fantasy and betting and saying, hey, we understand this is a way that fans engage with the game in a big way, and we want you -- we don't want you to change who you are. Bring what you do, and bring it to Football Night in America.

That support is truly incredible, and everyone here in this room and Rodney and Jac and Mike, as well, have been nothing but welcoming and supportive, and how can we help and how can we make you better.

I wish I had dreamed it because it would be a dream come true. It's incredible to think this is possible.

Q. Matthew, moving over from ESPN, I was curious how you planned on ingratiating yourself to a new audience and introducing yourself to a new audience? I would imagine you'll have many come over from ESPN, but also many will have not been familiar with you. How do you start over without starting completely over?

MATTHEW BERRY: Well, you know what's great is that I



don't have to -- to use the parlance, I don't have to be the star quarterback here. I'm joining an All-Star team, honestly. I think just by the way everyone here, the team, has embraced me, they have such goodwill.

America already loves Maria and Tony and Chris and the entire cast. They've known Jason, obviously, and they're a huge fan of his from all of his coaching.

I feel like just the fact that I'm sitting there with them and the support they've been, I think for people that are unfamiliar with me, they will give me the benefit of the doubt, and then ultimately it will be up to me and my work and analysis to win them over.

But I'm excited for the opportunity, and I think just by being a part of Football Night in America, it gives me a big head start.

Q. Chris, Jason, and Tony, Lamar Jackson and the Ravens' offense have taken some criticism in the past couple years. Obviously there was some talk about Greg Roman and whether 2022 can set up a quarterback for success. As you guys kind of look ahead to the season, what do you want to see from this Ravens' offense and what are you most curious about with the next iteration this team takes, assuming they don't have the injury luck that they had last year?

TONY DUNGY: I'm not one that really follows all that criticism. To me, this is a tough offense to defend. They haven't done it in the playoffs. That's what everybody is criticizing.

I like the way they're going. I think they just get better at what they do and be sharper and be ready to go in January. That's what people are going to judge them on.

JASON GARRETT: I agree with Coach. I'm not aware of that much criticism. I just know they're pretty good, and that guy playing quarterback is pretty good. Clearly the offensive coordinator has done a good job putting him in good positions for a long time because he's been incredibly productive and they've won a lot of games there.

The injury bug hit them big time last year and they struggled down the stretch. Hopefully they'll be more healthy.

But like with every quarterback in this league, they'll continue to grow. And I've said this a lot lately, but Tom Brady is 45; Aaron Rodgers is approaching 40. You think about how long Brees played and Philip Rivers and all these guys. This is a position where guys will continue to grow and evolve.

I said this to Dak Prescott. Dak, you're going to be the quarterback here when you're 40 years old. He's going to be the quarterback there for the next dozen years. I feel the same way about Lamar. They've got to get that contract squared away, but over time these guys will continue to get better and better and better and round out their games.

I'm all for those guys. Coach Harbaugh does an unbelievable job. He's got them around those playoffs and competing for championships every year. I'm all behind those guys. I love Lamar Jackson. He's only going to get better and better.

CHRIS SIMMS: Yeah, I'm one, because I do a daily show with Mike Florio and all that, the criticism bothers me about the Baltimore Ravens. I can't lie. It's over the top. I don't get it. On Lamar Jackson and Greg Roman. It really is. Lamar Jackson, as Jason and Coach Dungy said, is without question one of the better quarterbacks, one of the best quarterbacks in football. He's a weapon.

All he's done when he got on the NFL is gone playoffs, playoffs, MVP, playoffs. I mean, geez, I don't know. You don't win a Super Bowl and you get criticized all of a sudden. Yeah, they've got to be better in the playoffs. They get that.

And then Greg Roman, he's phenomenal. He's really good. He's one of the run game master designers in all of the NFL. Last year, yeah, did they have some issues. Yeah, of course they did, because they had a ton of offensive line and running backs get hurt.

What I like to say to people is what do they think the Chiefs would be if all the receivers got hurt and they had to rely on their run game? I'd go, well, they wouldn't be very good. So they got put into a corner there that is not their MO, but there's enough there with their passing game. I think Lamar maybe tried to make a little too much happen on his own last year, and maybe that led to some lesser-than play than we've seen from him.

But they're one of those teams that is always chippy I think the coaches would agree with. They're tough, they're physical, and I expect them to be heavily in that Super Bowl mix this year and a bounce-back from not making the playoffs last year.

Q. Coach Garrett, this is for you. It's kind of a two-parter. Your good friend Troy Aikman made a great career in the broadcast booth, and one of the things he's done so well is be really honest in his assessment of anything, including the Cowboys.

You're going to be in that position now. Do you think as you start into this venture that's going to be difficult or awkward for you initially?

JASON GARRETT: I don't think so. One of the things I've been talking about with a lot of people who are in this business, is I think you want to analyze football like you would if you were in a coaches' meeting and you want to talk about the good things and identify the things that aren't quite as good.

I don't think you need to do it in a way where you're running people down and beating people up all the time. It seems to me there's a lot of that in this world already.

We do musicals here at NBC. I don't know if you know that. We want to make a positive. We want to make it upbeat. We all love football.

But having said that, that's the approach I took as a coach. You want to be positive. You want to be upbeat. You also have to be honest. You have to be honest with the players, with the coaches about what you need to do to get better.

I think I'll take a similar approach.

Q. You've known Jerry Jones for a long, long time, and there's a lot of perceptions and misperceptions that come with working with him. Was it ever a challenge for you as a coach working for a guy who the marketing guy in him creates a lot of headlines and sometimes perceptions of distractions for a head coach? Was there ever really a challenge, Jason, or is that kind of overblown?

JASON GARRETT: I was so fortunate to be a player in Dallas for eight years and then the offensive coordinator for four and a head coach for nine. Those are some of the best years of my life.

Jerry owned the team for all that. We had tremendous success at different times. Like every organization you have some challenges as you go, but I've said this to people, and sometimes they take it out of context: I've never worked a day in my life in football. What I mean by that is I love it. I love being a player. I love being a coach. Jerry has been a big part of that.

So we got there early, we stayed late, but I really, really treasured my experiences there, and I learned so much from him. He's a brilliant guy. If you get a chance to get to know him and ask the right questions you can really grow as a person, as a coach, certainly in business, as well, I'm sure.

But he's made my life way, way better, and I cherish that experience.

Q. Jason, a couple questions about joining the Notre Dame broadcast team. I know you and Jac were at a practice during preseason camp. I was just curious what were your initial thoughts about Marcus Freeman and the program and the team? And I was also curious if you've talked with Mike Tirico at all about any advice he had for you in terms of being on this Notre Dame broadcast platform?

JASON GARRETT: Well, we actually were there for a couple days. We saw a practice and then we saw a scrimmage, and I could not have been more impressed. First of all, it's ground zero of football, so you go there and you see touchdown Jesus, you see the statues of Rockne. It's a beautiful facility.

There's so much history and tradition that goes with Notre Dame football. If you like football and you're inspired by things in life, that's the place to be. We couldn't be more excited to be a part of this thing.

And then to get a chance to meet Marcus Freeman, been a big admirer of his from afar, but then to see him up close, run that organization, run that program, and run that football team, he is awfully impressive.

He's a young guy, but he's got a presence about him that's really special. The coaches feel that. The players feel that. It's an environment where he challenges players to be their best. They practice hard. They work hard. But it's an environment that everybody wants to be in.

We were talking earlier about doing musicals and football is fun and it's supposed to be fun. He's created that environment there. It's a hardworking group, but they love playing football and they love being part of Notre Dame football.

They've got some young guys they're going to count on this year, so it was fun to see them over the course of those couple days. They've got some veteran guys they can rely on. It's fun to see that group come together.

But I think they're in good hands with Marcus and with their coordinators and with their coaches. They do a fantastic job there, and they're going to have a heck of a challenge this week going into the horseshoe at Ohio State, but it's going to be fun to be a part of that season.

Q. Just curious if you talked to Mike Tirico at all and if he gave you any advice about being on the Notre

Dame platform.

JASON GARRETT: I think the biggest thing he shared was his excitement for it. He's done a lot of things in broadcasting and he talks about that Notre Dame experience with reverence. He said, you're going to love it. If you love football, you're going to love being a part of this thing.

Everything about NBC has been so positive for me so far, and the combination of NBC and Notre Dame, I think it's just going to be really exciting to be a part of it, and Mike certainly conveyed that to me.

Q. Maria, as the host, how do you extract the expertise on various topics from your analysts?

MARIA TAYLOR: Well, as I've been told by Chris Simms, I am not the point guard, I am the quarterback. That means I've got to know which routes my teammates want to run. So when I'm sitting -- that was good, right? When I'm sitting and screening or we're watching games at 1:00, I need to be listening -- I really do take notes if Coach says something interesting or Chris or Jason this year, that I'm just going to write it down in my notes and hope to bring that back up when we get into the studio.

Whatever is the one point that somebody really wants to make, it's my job to make sure we get that out of them. Because a lot of times when you're going in live television there's a lot of things coming at us or there are games ending here and there, so I do have to be the one that kind of remembers, this is the point, though, that we're trying to get to, and kind of directing us to that point.

I do believe that that's my most important job, and I take it really seriously. I also tell the guys, too, I'm just here to make you have fun and feel good about this, so I take pride in that, too, building chemistry and making sure everybody is having a good time, being their best selves.

Q. Tony, Jason, and Chris, in Cleveland I see a lot of people have hope in terms of the fan base that the team can stay relevant while Deshaun Watson is suspended, that in the last six games they can really make a run with him coming back. I'm wondering if it's maybe not that simple, and the fact that he comes back against the Texans on December 4th, that would be 700 days since his last regular season game, and then there's just the idea that four of those last six games are on the road, and when he did play in the preseason a little bit, the rust seemed to be evident. Also there's a crowd booing him and chanting things. I'm just wondering what you guys think about that window, the final six games and the challenges that he

could face, if you think that they're significant hurdles for him or if you think that he's just so talented that that's really not going to be an issue.

TONY DUNGY: Oh, there are certainly going to be hurdles, especially when you haven't played in two years. But to me, the bigger factor is what kind of ball is Cleveland going to be playing. What is the rest of the team doing?

Jacoby Brissett is a good quarterback, and if they can rally around him and be relevant, then they're going to be fine. But Deshaun Watson is not going to be the savior that rallies a poor team or a team that's not functioning. They're not just going to say all of a sudden Deshaun is back and we're going to start winning. What did they do in the first three months of the season?

JASON GARRETT: I agree with Coach. And if you think about the DNA of this team when they've been their best since Kevin Stefanski has taken over, it's about their offensive line and their running game. If we can establish that with Jacoby Brissett as their quarterback, that will take the burden off of him as the quarterback. He's played football, but he hasn't played a ton of football. You don't want him to have to carry the whole load.

So if they can back to playing that physical style of ball featuring those running backs, making their big plays in the play action game and their movement game, if they can do that in the early part of the season, it'll set up well for Deshaun when he does come back in week 11.

But that's a big question. We'll see if they're able to do that.

CHRIS SIMMS: Yeah, it is interesting. The roster is talented, like Coach and Coach Garrett are saying. I got to get used to I got two coaches.

But yeah, it's a lot of things to like. It does start with that offensive line; unbelievable two-headed monster at running back. The defense was top five in football last year. They've got arguably the best pass rusher in football. They run the ball, make a few plays on defense, they could be a pain in the butt.

So that's one of the things that I do question. Like if they were 9-3 and Jacoby Brissett is doing good, I don't know, I'm not crazy, but I'm kind of crazy. I would go, well, maybe let's not upset the apple cart there and just ride it out for this year.

But if they feel like in any way, shape, or form, hey, it's not this year. We're a .500 ball club. We're not doing good. Deshaun Watson has got to play again, get out there and

play football and deal with the booing crowd. Because the booing crowd is going to be there in 2023, too. You might as well get the training wheels off in this experience.

But I'll be interested to see what this Browns team looks like before he gets back.

JASON GARRETT: The one thing I would just add is that I think people are focusing on that Texans game when he comes back, because obviously that's his former team, and we don't expect the Texans to be that great this year.

But look at the schedule that Cleveland has after that. They're at the Bengals, then they play the Ravens, then they play the Saints, then they're at the Commanders, and they're at the Steelers. That's a bunch of really tough defenses right after the Texans that a team is going to have to adjust to with a new quarterback.

Ans so you've got a bunch of divisional games there against teams that we think are going to be pretty good and pretty good defensively.

It's really going to be interesting down the stretch.

Q. Mike McCarthy won 12 games last year, and already there's conversation about he may not be the coach next year. Maybe Sean Peyton is there. Jerry addressed it in the first presser and Mike tried to address it, as well. How do you all feel about having a coach who had this kind of success deal with these types of questions? How do you go about doing it and trying to coach a football team?

TONY DUNGY: You can't worry about that. That's always going to be there, especially in Dallas. Dallas loves drama. It's going to happen. I coached in Tampa and went to the playoffs four times and got fired. So it happens.

But you can't worry about that. You've got to coach the team, and that's what Mike will do. I promise you that's the last thing he concerned about right now.

JASON GARRETT: Agree. Focus on the task at hand, focus on your team and how you can create an environment where they can be their best, and that's really what you have to do in 32 NFL cities. It comes with the job.

We used to say it comes with the dinner, particularly down there in Dallas. There's a lot of attention on that organization. I always felt like it was important as the head coach to be someone who was a steadying figure for everybody in the organization rather than get caught up in all the noise that was going on outside of it.

Your players and coaches need to look to someone who can be a lighthouse for them. Every day you're consistent. You show them the way. You show them the direction. You give them structure. You give them a vision about where you want to go.

I think you need to do that in all NFL cities. I think you need to do it particularly in Dallas, and I think Mike will do that. And I'm betting on the Cowboys this year. I think they'll have a good football team.

CHRIS SIMMS: I echo a lot of the same sentiments certainly. It's the Cowboys. We're always looking and dissecting them maybe more than everybody else. Mike McCarthy is a very good coach. The Cowboys played really good football last year. They got better on the defensive side of the ball.

I think a lot of the times the criticism of Mike McCarthy comes just from, oh, clock management or penalties in a game, and people run with that instead of looking at it and going, wait, the team played well. They did some good things. They're 12-5. Had a chance to come back and beat the 49ers in the playoff game.

So yeah, can they rally off that and continue to grow as a team that way? That's what I look to. They have some really good players, but they lost some really good players this year, too.

So it's not going to be the same squad, and they're a team that I have I guess a hard time getting a feel for how good they could be this year.

Q. Chris, what do you like about the Eagles, and what improvements have you seen from Jalen Hurts?

CHRIS SIMMS: Sure, the Eagles to me, I'm on the record as saying this already, is I think one of the five best rosters in the game. I know that's on paper, but O-line, I think it's arguably the best O-line in the game.

D-line, wow, do they got a lot of big suckers up there who can do a lot of good stuff. They improved the linebacking group with Haason Reddick. The secondary, we know they already had Darius Slay, but then bring in James Bradbury just traded for Chauncey Gardner Johnson.

Two receivers, where if you couple that with the offensive line and the run game and Jalen Hurts' ability to run and then go, whoa, you're going to play one-on-one against Devonta Smith and AJ Brown? I mean, good night.

And then Jalen Hurts has gotten better every year. We just

have to continue to see if he can -- when they get in those games like the playoff game against the Bucs when the run game is taken away, can he just make a handful of those throws that maybe we see some of the top-tier quarterbacks make?

I love his leadership. I love his ability to make plays off schedule. Man, is he some -- you know, he doesn't get affected by the outside noise, and I really think Nick Sirianni and the coaching staff there deserve a lot of credit for what they've done.

So that's why I get excited about the Eagles kind of being a team to watch out for.

Q. Chris, what areas do you see Hurts having to improve on to become an elite quarterback?

CHRIS SIMMS: Right, well, he's a great deep ball thrower. He knows how to take care of the ball, but the big thing to me is like -- well, it's the throws into tight windows, tight coverage, right? Run game is not quite working, it's 3rd and 8. Can he consistently hit the ball in between the linebackers and safeties and hit the bull's eye or the strike zone all the way there?

It's the 20-yard out route. They've taken the run game away, and now can he spin it out there and cut it through the wind like he had in Tampa and throw the ball on the money on target? It's that.

Again, from what I saw in the preseason and even just some practice stuff, he has gotten better. He's a worker, that's for sure. I know it's just the last piece of the puzzle here, and hopefully he can accomplish that and maybe shut people like me who have questioned that aspect of his game up.

Q. Tony, I'm curious your thoughts on the defensive side. You hear and read about Vic Fangio's defensive principles becoming more popular. Do you see that happening, what those might be, and how will offenses counter in the way they attack that type of defense?

TONY DUNGY: That being more popular around the league?

Q. Yes, yes.

TONY DUNGY: Yeah, I think it's a copycat league, and when you have success, people look at it. They study tape and they take the good things and they take the principles from it. Coach Fangio has had success with a number of franchises, a number of different places, and those principles are good.

But the down side to that is people do study it and figure out or try to figure out how to attack it. So you'll see that.

But I always have said, people said the same thing about the Tampa 2 if you want to call it that. It all comes down to personnel and how you do things. And it's not a system that works. A scheme that works is getting players to play, and that's the beauty of coaching. That's what he does well.

So you want to take that, you need to get that, too. Not just the scheme but how it's done and how they play and how they hustle.

Q. Do you have any thoughts on the Buffalo Bills' chances this year, of winning their first Super Bowl trophy?

TONY DUNGY: Like where Buffalo is. I think a lot of it is going to fall on Ken Dorsey and how he manages things. He's taken over for a great offensive coach and he's got to put his stamp on things and keep it going and keep developing Josh Allen, but find a way to run the ball and be balanced in those big games. They're going to have some big games.

I also like the pickup of Von Miller because I think when you're ahead in the fourth quarter of those big games, having a guy who can make that critical play, close the door like he did in the Super Bowl, that's big. I think Von is going to help them in that regard quite a bit, so I like where they are.

Q. Just the importance of pregame shows; right now in the NFL landscape when so many fans are interacting on social media and new platforms, what do you intend to do with Football Night in America to continue its evolution and make it one of the most-watched programs on television?

MARIA TAYLOR: Yeah, thanks for the question. I think if you watch the show, it definitely continues to evolve. Last year Jac and Rodney went on the road and they brought you kind of the hometown fan scene, and that's something that we hadn't had. They were in the neighborhoods.

It was cool to be able to see Rodney interacting with players, and he's literally on the sidelines before kickoff having conversations with guys and getting their mindset for you. That's some of the things you can't get anywhere else that we're able to deliver.

Something else that's just special about our show that you really can't get anywhere else is we're reacting as the

games come in. Sometimes we are getting highlights. There's a game-winning field goal that's happening in the 4:00 game. You're getting instant analysis from Tony Dungy and Jason Garrett.

You're not getting that on Twitter. That's something that I think we take a big responsibility on. We know that we're going to be the first ones to have a discussion about the 4:00 games, and we bring that. We bring that analysis, and we turn the page and we talk about what's coming up next.

So that's really important.

Another thing about the evolution is that we are leaning into, like Matthew Berry said with Fantasy Football and gaming. You want to hear what Matthew Berry has to say about whether or not whoever is playing, Mike Evans or someone, is going to get however many yards.

He's got great analysis and he's been doing this for years, so that's something that we've been able to add.

So I think that we still are the show of record. I believe that we as a pregame show, as all the games come to an end, we are still valued in this landscape, and the shoulder programming that we provide is really something that can't be found anywhere else almost because of where the timing is and because of the specific analysts and expertise that we have on the set.

TONY DUNGY: I can say this, having been here 13 years. One of the things that we have always taken pride in is we try to tell the audience why things happen. A lot of people can show you highlights and tell you what happened and give you the score and that, but being able to see, well, here's why it happened, here's why it's important, here's what this team has to do, we take pride in bringing that.

I'm excited to have Jason with us so we can delve more into that.

Chris talks about quarterback play and what's going on and why offenses are successful. That's been a big part of us, and I think we'll continue to do that.

And maybe Matthew will even tell you why somebody is going to be a big pick tonight or going to do well.

Q. A question mainly for Coach Dungy and Rodney. The Patriots, doesn't seem like they've had the best training camp on offense. That seems to be the word out of camp. Not just the preseason games but the practices. Every day there's been penalties and balls on the ground, and it's just been tough sledding. I'm

wondering, in your experience, does that matter? Is there a correlation between how a team plays in training camp and how they go into the regular season, or is training camp, do we make too much of how things are going in training camp?

TONY DUNGY: No, there absolutely is a correlation to how things go in training camp. I remember my second year as a player in 1978, I called my mother after week 2 of practice and told her to get her Super Bowl tickets ready because our guys were on fire and I could see it and I could tell the difference.

As a coach, you have a pretty good idea of how you're going to be coming out of training camp.

But let me say this about Coach Belichick's team. They're not a team that's going to make mistakes. They're not a team that's going to beat themselves. So what you saw in practice, you're going to see improvement. You're going to see them get better.

I would not write off a Bill Belichick team, certainly not because they're going to be sloppy or not organized or not doing things right. That would be the least of my concerns about a Bill Belichick coached team.

Q. Anyone else have any thoughts on that?

JASON GARRETT: I mean, Rodney is not here so I'll throw my two cents in there. Coach Dungy said a lot. It's hard to question Coach Belichick for sure. To me he's arguably the greatest coach of any sport in American sports history.

But at the same time, I don't know if I've felt this way in a long time about the New England Patriots. It's not easy to replace an offensive mind like Josh McDaniels. Josh McDaniels was a special offensive mind. He knows how to coach quarterbacks. He knows how to coach receivers and the proper -- Coach Dungy and I were talking about proper spacing on plays and those little intricate details.

Even as awesome as Coach Belichick is, that was the area of expertise for Josh McDaniels. So I do think it's a really intriguing thing to watch as we go here, let alone we've got two coaches coaching the offensive side of the ball that haven't really ever done that.

I think if it was anyone but New England we'd go, whoa, I don't see how this works. I don't get that. But I've said that probably five times in the last 15 years about New England, and then I go, well, we're in the AFC championship game and here's New England.

We'll see if they can prove some of us wrong. But this seems to be maybe one of the bigger obstacles to overcome that I can remember in the New England dynasty era.

MATTHEW BERRY: I always go back to we're on to Cincinnati. Every single time somebody wants to throw dirt on the Patriots, they come roaring back. I always look at do you have a quarterback, and I think they do. Right? Is there going to be some growing pains? Sure. But of all the rookie quarterbacks from last year, I thought Mac Jones was by far the best and most polished of all the guys that got the chance to play last year.

You know they're going to play good defense and they've got a quarterback. I thought they made some nice moves in the off-season, as well. There may be some growing pains initially in the season, but I don't know, boy. If I was betting against or with Coach Belichick, I'm always going to take going with Coach Belichick.

TONY DUNGY: Yeah. I don't know how many games they're going to win this year, but I promise you they will not look like a poorly-coached team out there.

Q. What do you think Belichick was thinking this year in going with Patricia and Judge as the two guys as opposed to guys who are more experienced?

CHRIS SIMMS: That's a great question. I don't have an answer for you, but that's also why he's Bill Belichick. I'll echo what Josh McDaniels said a little earlier in the week. Bill is a well-thought-out guy. It's not like he threw darts at a board and was like, you know, I'll go with Judge and Patricia.

There was obviously reasons where -- Patricia and Joe Judge are really good football coaches. Is this their area of expertise? Not specifically. But he obviously has the confidence that they can figure this out, along with him probably spending more time on the offensive side of the ball.

But yeah, I think that's -- Ben, to your question there, I don't have an answer. I think that's why we're all a little bit like, wow, how is this going to turn out for a team that we know is like Coach Dungy has said, so well-coached in so many areas through the last 20 years.

THE MODERATOR: Well, thank you, everyone, for joining us. As a reminder, NBC Sports begins the NFL season with Bills-Rams on NFL kickoff one week from today, and Buccaneers-Cowboys Sunday, September 11. Coverage on NBC, Peacock, and Universo.