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Mike Pereira

Q. Here with my friend Mike Pereira, rules analyst for FOX Sports, FOX NFL Sunday. Rules analyst, what a crazy thing. Before David Hill approached you with this, would you ever have believed there was a job explaining football and officiating to the country? Pretty novel idea.

MIKE PEREIRA: Really not at all. I mean, and the fact is I never thought I would necessarily end up in the media because I really didn't appreciate the media. They would just get on the officials so bad, and half of my battle when I worked with the league was trying to educate the announcers on the rules so at least what they said would be correct. From an official's standpoint, honestly, it was very difficult to get criticized by someone who's never officiated before who doesn't know the rule and is incorrect in his criticism.

Honestly, I never saw myself going into the media, but as I was involved in the NFL, Sam, I realized that part of my job was to work with the media, and so every year I would go out and I would go to the seminars at CBS and ESPN, and I'd go to FOX. FOX would bring me to Los Angeles and they'd sit me in a room, big room in a big square and all the producers and directors and talent were all there, and I'd have to crawl literally under a table to get into the middle of this square. I mean, that's how much respect I got. I didn't even get an open entry into this square. Under the table, and then I would start, and I would go over the new rules and the points of emphasis and then we would get into other issues.

What was amazing to me was is that when I went to ESPN and CBS and NBC, the meetings were short. They were good, but they were half hour. But FOX, David Hill and Ed Gordon, took a real interest in getting their analysts to know the rules, and when they did a survey one time, Sam, they found that fans -- the second most important thing that the fans expected out of the announcers was rules knowledge. And so I'd sit -- I didn't sit, I'd stand in the middle of that square, and I would go for hours, honestly hours.

They were phenomenal -- I would go back and forth with

Troy. Troy used to ride my butt all the time about certain rules and the way that we called things, and then when I decided to leave the NFL and move back to the West, I got a call when it was announced, I got a call from David Hill who said, you're not going to retire. We're going to put something together for you.

Even though he had no idea what it was going to be, he just knew that fans wanted to know the rules, and so since I had been -- I had this really good relationship with him over the years going each year to their seminars, he said, You're coming with us. That's kind of how it all started.

Q. In the prehistoric days before there were rules analysts, were you surprised at how little people actually knew about rules? Would you meet people who should know the rules and that were in the dark?

MIKE PEREIRA: No, it didn't surprise me because if you look at my career, for example -- so I officiated my first game in 1970, and it was a Pop Warner football game in East Palo Alto, California. I didn't even want to. They came to me and said, Do you want to officiate? I said, No. They said, Why? I said, I don't want to. They said the guy who asked me, a guy named Tommy Eichista, who was the timer at San Jose State University who used to run the officiating for this Pop Warner program in East Palo Alto, he said, well, why? I said, I just don't want to, and he said, but your dad is officiating. I said, maybe that's why I don't want to. I said, I've seen him get abused, I've seen him getting yelled at.

He said to me, I was going to Santa Clara at the time. He said, It's \$10 a game. Three games on Sunday, \$30 cash. And I kind of went, well, maybe I do, because I didn't have any money. Some of my Santa Clara buddies had money for beer. I really didn't have any money

Q. So it was \$30 under the table --

MIKE PEREIRA: \$30 cash.

Q. So you started off your career breaking the rules.

MIKE PEREIRA: Correct. Never paid a dime of tax on that money. Never did. But the interesting thing enough was that \$30, that first Sunday, hooked me for life. It hooked me for life.



Q. What was it about doing it?

MIKE PEREIRA: I don't know. I don't know. In some ways I think it became a supreme challenge for me. My dad and I had this really weird relationship, and I never felt like I lived up to what I should in his eyes, you know. We had some tough goes, and I always wanted to be better than him at something, and he officiated on the West Coast, and that first day --

Q. What would he tell you?

MIKE PEREIRA: Well, it stemmed back to an incident when I was 14 years old, and I was playing an American Legion baseball game in Lodi, California, middle of summer, 104 degrees. I'm awful. I was a first baseman. I like dropped two pop-ups and struck out three times and went 0 for 4, and all I wanted was something to drink after the game. 14 years old, and I went to my dad and said, Would you buy me a coke, and he actually looked right at me and said, You're not worth the quarter it takes to buy a coke.

I mean, I was 14. It didn't strike me that much at the time, but then it did. Then all of a sudden I thought, you know, I'm not worth the quarter it took to buy a Coke in my dad's eyes, so I would say by the time I was 16 I started chasing the quarter. I wanted to find something. I wanted to find something that my dad would show his approval of, you know, because I felt like -- I mean, that statement was so powerful to me as I thought about it that, I mean, at 15 I felt like a failure over going 0 for 4 and dropping two pop-ups and striking out three times, and I just wasn't very damn good at anything.

I mean, I was average at best. I wasn't good at school. Never played a down of football. Played baseball. Ended up going to Santa Clara on a baseball scholarship, thank you, Dusty Baker, because he was drafted by Atlanta but he had committed to Santa Clara, but he chose to go to Atlanta instead and it freed up a scholarship. I got one quarter of his scholarship.

But I never felt like -- I never felt like I made the quarter. I never did. Just the strangest damn thing was officiating, and it was that first day in East Palo Alto because I didn't know what I was doing, little kids are running around in circles, parents are on the sideline yelling at me. I have a picture of myself. I looked hideous. I had this long hair sticking out, an old broadcloth striped shirt.

But it was like somebody stuck a syringe in me and filled me with adrenaline. It was like I was looking for something, and it was like as strange as it could be, I found

it with officiating.

When you think about it, I went from Pop Warner and I went up through the high school ranks and the junior college ranks and the small college ranks and then into the PCAA it was called and then Big West Conference and then the WAC, and all the time my dad was involved with this, but he felt I was wasting my time, and I was in some degree because you get so into officiating, my God, you're on the phone with your buddies all the time, with the other officials.

But the day -- before you get in the NFL you have to have psychological tests. You have the FBI that comes out and does background checks on you and walks your neighborhood. You have to go to New York and meet with all the powers to be in New York, and I went through this whole process, and didn't really think I would get in. But I did, in 1996.

So you're talking about 46 years old, so you're talking about, what, 31 years or something after my dad told me I wasn't worth the quarter it took to buy a Coke. And so I got the call from New York that said, We're inviting you in as an official to the NFL.

This is no joke. I asked Jerry Seeman, Can I tell my dad, because he had said, Don't tell anybody. And he said, Yeah, you can tell your dad. So I reached out to him. He was in Stockton playing golf, and I called the golf course, and he wasn't there. I said, have him call me when he gets there. Not an emergency.

Five minutes later he calls me. He said, What's up. I said, I got in. He said, You got in what? I said, Dad, I got in the NFL.

That was the response I got from him. Nothing.

So then he said to me, after 20 seconds of nothing, he said, Well, just let me tell you one thing, son -- I'm an emotional guy, and I was hardly keeping it together because I knew he was going to finally tell me that I was worth the quarter, and after another 20 seconds of silence, he just said, "Just don't screw the 49ers." And he hung up.

Q. Wow.

MIKE PEREIRA: And that night when I saw him, he said to me, When I hung up the phone, I walked to the first tee. His buddies were all there waiting for him. He said, I put my ball on the tee and I hit the longest drive I've ever hit in all my life. And that was the way he told me that I was worth the quarter.

I love the man. I mean, and he passed shortly after I left the NFL. I came back to spend time with him, and three months after I came back to the West Coast after retiring from the NFL, he passed.

But we ended up spending good times together, but if you look back at life -- and I think you get to a point right now, and I had been so lucky with all this football stuff, that I have done every day since 1970 I've been involved in football and officiating, but when you look back in life, it's fascinating to find those things, those things that changed your life. Could be a statement, could be a criticism, could be a person.

I think as you grow older, I keep thinking back about these people who changed my life, who changed my life. People that don't even know they changed my life. A guy who put together a whole campaign and raised money to pay my hospital bills when I got cancer at age 24 without insurance. People that changed your life. I don't know how we got started on this.

What did you ask me? I forgot what you asked me. I'm sorry. Okay, I guess I'm done right now.

Q. Wow. That's really powerful, Mike. We didn't even touch on the cancer at age 24.

MIKE PEREIRA: Yeah, I had -- Lance Armstrong and I had something in common. I had testicular cancer. Came from nowhere, you know, symptoms that I didn't know, young guy at age -- really I think I was 24 then, no insurance, assistant baseball coach at the University of Santa Clara. This thing hits, I went to -- I didn't know what it was. I went to Riverside tournament, Riverside college baseball tournament, I was assistant coaching there, and I knew something was wrong and I went to this doctor in Los Gatos, and he said, Not good. He said, It's testicular cancer. He said, And I'm not prepared to handle this. He was a doctor in Los Gatos, who by the way, I had no insurance, so I think the appointment was like at 10:00, and it lasted for about 45 minutes and he told me to go to O'Connor Hospital. At like 12:15 somebody walked up on my porch and put a bill in my mailbox from his doctor's office, from his doctor's office.

Q. So some people change your life for the better --

MIKE PEREIRA: Yeah, that's true.

Q. Some people change your life --

MIKE PEREIRA: And I went to O'Connor Hospital. Now, mind you, this is '73, '74, and they said, yep, he's right, we're not capable of doing anything about this.

Then a guy, a guy who was actually my dad's boss, a guy got me into Stanford Medical Center. What a difference. You walked in, and they said, Yep, that's what you've got, here's what we're going to do, and then three days later I was on the operating table. And no insurance. How about that?

Short and sweet, I had the surgery done, they removed the testicle. This guy in Stockton raised money to pay my bills. Raised money, and he had a car leasing company, and he sent meals to my house in Los Gatos to feed my wife and I.

So when it was all said and done and it turned out that I had the grade level 2 of the testicular cancer, which means you were probably going to be okay, it was a three-year period you had, and I took 23 hits of radiation into my stomach, and when I could finally play golf again, I went to Stockton where this guy was with my dad, and they had a lunch with all the people that contributed to the money. They all loved my dad. They were my dad's buddies.

How do you sit there when you know these people gave you this money to help get you through this thing?

Then I did the lunch and it was great and then we all went out to play golf. There was about 30 of us. I had a testicle removed but it was the first time I could swing without a great amount of pain.

So these guys, I walked out to the first tee at the Stockton Golf and Credit Card and there's the blue tees, the white tees and the red tees. The blue tees are the championship tees, the white tees are the men's tees, this is again back in '73, and the red tees are the women's tees.

So here's these guys and I walk out to the first tee, and there's a set of gold tees. There's a set of gold tees in between the white tees, the men's tees and the women's tees, and I said, What tees are these, and they said, they're your tees because we don't know what you are anymore now that you lost a testicle. They set up 18 gold tees around the course.

They were phenomenal. They're people that changed my life. They're people that changed my life.

Can we talk football?

Q. If there's a hallmark of your career as an official, it's that you were always in lockstep with the commissioner.

MIKE PEREIRA: Yes, right, really, lockstep.

Q. Tell me about some of the run-ins that you had.

MIKE PEREIRA: You know, Roger Goodell -- I went to the NFL and worked under Paul Tagliabue. He was the commissioner when I started there, and I went back, I was on the field for one year when they were going to expand the officiating department. And so they put together this list of 15 people and they wanted to hire two, and I'm on this list, and I've only been in for one year, and so I'm like, what? I mean, like am I that bad, they want to get me off the field in one year?

But I went through the process with the headhunter, Joe bail I, who you probably know of, been involved with a lot of the league securing people, so I went through, and then I went to New York to meet with Tagliabue, Joel Brown, Neil Austrian, all those people back then, and Roger Goodell. Roger sold me on it. I mean, Roger is the one that convinced me that, yep, I'll leave the field even after one year if I got the job, and when it turns out that they offered me the job and I turned it down because I was -- I was working with my mom and dad in Stockton, they were divorced and I just didn't feel like I could bail out in a month and move to New York so I turned it down, and they all thought I was nuts.

But I got the biggest compliment of my life from them because they called me and said, What would it take, and I said, No, it's not what would it take, it's my folks, and they said, Well, how about if you worked on the field for another year, and I said, You're willing to hold a supervisor position for me for a whole year? Which when they did that, I said, I've got to take it. I had to take it.

It was interesting that Larry Epton was the other one that got the job with me, and Joe Bailey, who is the one that basically pushed for me after I got the job -- you get the job, you know what you get to do? Look at your own personnel file. So I went into my own personnel file and looked at Joe Bailey's reports on me and what he wrote about me. I called him after I read it and said, I hate you, you are an ass. And he goes, What? I said, I read what you wrote about me, and he said, I wrote everything nice about you. I said you were the guy that would be eventually the one to take over from Jerry. I said, I will never speak to you again, and he goes, Why. I said, Because I read your reports, and you said, Ed Hochuli is an attorney in Phoenix. It will take a ton of money to get him. Mike Carey sells ski supplies, very successful company, it'll take a lot of money to get him. Mike Pereira, he silk screens T-shirts, won't take much to get him. I read that, and I went, Jiminy Christmas.

But Roger, while he was the guy that kind of made me think he gets it, we did have this, because he was

headstrong and I was headstrong, and I wrote a book and I talked about a time when he pushed me when he was really vehement about suspending an official, and I said I wouldn't. It wasn't a violent thing. It made it sound like it was violent, but it wasn't. It wasn't necessarily violent.

It's that relationship has been kind of -- I don't think he really wanted me to leave and wanted me to stay, and if I did stay, maybe had stayed with the NFL Network or something and then I jumped ship and went to FOX. You know, it's not the best of relationships. Not the worst but not the best.

Q. You seldom hear, That official made a great call. You hear about bad calls, but for the most part officials in the eyes of fans are to be neither seen nor heard.

MIKE PEREIRA: Right.

Q. You have had in your job to be critical of officials, and these guys are your buddies and your colleagues. Is that difficult? Was that a difficult transition for you?

MIKE PEREIRA: I don't think it was difficult because the one thing that I said to them is that I would just disagree with respect, that you would never use bad words, the words like horrible, blown call, terrible. I would never do that, that I would say I disagreed because, and then I would explain to it. I never would say anything worse than disagree. I think with the exception of once, of one time, I think I've stayed to that. And then I think the other thing with them is that you can -- I kind of mentioned this earlier, but you can accept criticism if it comes from somebody that's done it before, somebody that appreciates the difficulties in the job that they have to do, and while the officials just like the players have a collective bargaining agreement, their bargaining agreement, the officials, they cannot deal with the media. Basically my relationship from them when I left to go to FOX was basically cut, so they couldn't reach out to me and I couldn't reach out to them.

But then again, these were my friends. I mean, these were me -- Tony Corrente was the best man at my wedding and then I'm told I can't talk to the best man at my wedding? And so you found ways sometimes to talk to them. But I think they still respect me.

I was the first. Now they're everywhere. You go to Dean Blandino, who had my job in the NFL, he's doing it now with us at FOX, John Perry is doing it at ESPN, McAulay is doing it with NBC and Mike Carey did it, Gene Steratore is now doing it with CBS.

I think in reality most of the time it paints officiating in a positive light more than a negative light because most of

the time we are truly saying that they're right and not wrong, and some people say, well, you have a bias. I don't have a bias. If I worked for the league, yeah, you could say, okay, yeah, you're biased and they'd probably be right if I worked for the league. I don't have a horse in the race anymore.

Half the officials, I've been out of there since 2009 was my last year. Mostly I don't even know the officials anymore there's been such a turnover.

But in reality, I know the one thing that I'll never forget is that there is nobody other than those of us that have done it that knows how truly good they are and how they don't appreciate the number of decisions that they have to make on the field. They think of a pass interference call one play, one call they've got to make, and maybe it's wrong. But you know, if you look at a game -- and this is no exaggeration. If you look at a game with 150 plays, which is approximately what an NFL game is, I promise you within each of those 150 plays there's 10 decisions that have to be made, whether it's contact with a defender on a receiver or a motion or formation or the five interior linemen, whether they're holding. There's 10 decisions at least. So they've got to make 1,500 decisions a game.

I'm telling you right now, they're right 99 percent of the time. It's a hell of a lot better average than I think I have in anything I do.

But yet they're so underappreciated. It's now all the way down to the very lowest of levels, to Pop Warner football and high school football. There's such a shortage of officials around the country in every sport because the negative talk, the negative things that people say about officiating. Nobody wants to put up with that.

Q. That opens the door for Battlefields to Ballfields and what you're doing there. Your foundation, tell me about that.

MIKE PEREIRA: You know, it all started on a road trip. I take a road trip every year. I drive from Sacramento, California, to Bend, Oregon, to go see friends. About five years ago I was driving to Oregon and I make myself a commitment, once I pass the Sacramento airport I turn off all noise. No books on tape, no radio, no CD, nothing, for six and a half hours, because I just want to listen. I just want to listen to what's going on in my head. I want my head to do the talking and not some other external output.

So I was driving, and I had just met some homeless veterans down here, saddened by it, and I'm thinking about how our veterans are so oftentimes underappreciated kind of like officials. So I'm driving, and then I start thinking

about officiating and how the shortage and then all of a sudden I'm thinking about how do we find more officials, how do we find these officials that have courage, the commitment, the teamwork, all the things I used to look for in good officials.

I'm thinking about the NFL, well, what about these veterans? Did they not have to have courage? Did they not have to have commitment, a mission, teamwork? So I thought about could we put together a foundation that brings veterans into officiating so they could be part of their community again, so they could be role models again. So I'm driving to Oregon, and I'm thinking like, what have I done with my life. Tried to tell people what's a catch? Tried to tell them what's pass interference? What's that mean?

By telling them that, have I left this place in a better place than it was when I got involved? Is that my legacy, which I think we all really want to have a legacy even though so many people deny it?

So I'm thinking about this, I'm thinking, this could be cool. This could be really good. So then I'm thick about, man, if we could get this -- we've got the homeless guys in LA, if we could get them started doing these things. All of a sudden I'm driving from Sacramento and I'm going, uh-oh, geez, I'm going 85 miles an hour when I'm supposed to be going 65 miles an hour because I'm pumped, and then every trip I stop and get gas in Weed, California, so I'm pumping my gas in Weed, California and thinking about this and it's like from somewhere this name came up Battlefields to Ballfields in my head, from the battlefields to the ballfields.

So I drove like a maniac to Oregon, up Highway 97, going like it was 55 miles an hour, I'm sure I was going 75, 80 I was so pumped about this. I got there, talked to my friends. They thought it was a great idea.

Came back, went to FOX, said to Eric Shanks, I'm going to start a foundation, and he rolled his eyes like yeah, everybody does, and I explained to him what it was, and he said, this is really cool. This is a really cool idea.

In our little world with Battlefields to Ballfields, we have now over 500 veterans and actives that we have brought into officiating, and we pay their entire expense that it takes to officiate, which is expensive, when you have to pay for all your uniform and your equipment and your dues and the local associations and all that stuff, and we have hit the 500 mark.

It's not -- it doesn't solve the issue, but it's like to me, when I heard somebody speak the other day, for little things like

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

that that you do, it's like a little piece of the puzzle. I feel like now through this, because there is some phenomenal stories of veterans whose lives have been changed by going on the field and working with kids and developing this group of new friends that -- all your friends have become these officials because you all understand the frustrations and stuff, and some of the stories -- I mean, I'm humbled by them. In reality, in really reality, I personally feel like I'm worth the quarter it took to buy the Coke, because it's something that I've done that means a lot more to me. I shouldn't say that to my bosses at FOX who might hear this, but it means a lot more to me than what I do at FOX, than going to Green Bay and freezing my ass off and sitting there and saying, no, that's an incomplete pass, not a catch and a fumble.

What I do now, when a lady called me -- and I went back to Rochester, New York, where we have a group of veterans that are officiating now back there, and I went back there to -- we stage a little golf event, and she pulled me by the shirt and said, You saved his life. I said, I saved his life? Jameson Pilgrim, you saved his life. His fiance, she said, I didn't want to go to work, I didn't want to go to work every day because I was worried about what I was going to come home to, and one day I came home and he had this smile on his face, and he said, I think I found it. He went from a guy that was hardly even going out of the house, didn't even have a job, nothing. Now he officiates three sports and has a job. He got a job three months after starting officiating, and they got married, and while I don't know that I saved his life, but being involved in sports and being involved in officiating saved his life.

For those things -- we had a guy just two days ago, again in Rochester, he made it through the veterans' court. He was arrested and they have a plan back there, if you go to a veterans' court and if you follow their guidelines over a six-month period and do this reporting thing, they'll expunge from your record. This guy made it through the whole court, and guess what the first thing he did was: Applied for a scholarship to Battlefields to Ballfields and now he's going to umpire softball back there.

This makes my life.

Q. Mike, thanks so much. Awesome.

MIKE PEREIRA: I according to the clock I've got nine minutes to go. We could talk football, you know. There is football.

Q. If we're going to ask a football question, it really diminishes this incredibly powerful story you've just told me, I would say, what, if anything, can or should be done about overtime?

MIKE PEREIRA: I think it's a complex question. It's never easy. Listen, I was a product of the first one where it was just flip a coin and the first time that scored won, kick a 48-yard field goal after four plays and you win the game. There wasn't a lot of sentiment to change it, and then as the numbers started to reflect, then I was part of the group that took the coaches out to play golf, and while the owners voted on it, because the coaches really didn't even want to change it. So they're out playing golf and it got changed while we were out playing golf, then they're yelling at me because like finagled them to go out and play golf so that these owners who didn't really understand would vote for this current as we have it now.

I think it's been okay, but I've gone over. I've flipped.

I think it's relatively simple. I think it should not change in the regular season. But I think it should change when you're one and done in the postseason. How difficult can it be just to say, hey, each team is going to get the ball once. If you score a touchdown on your first possession, kick the extra point, the other team gets the ball, and if they score and it's tied then it becomes sudden death.

I think one and done is different than basically 17 games. I think they'll look at it -- the number that's pretty shocking, right, is that like nine of the last ten overtime games have been won by the team that won the toss. Now, not necessarily on the first possession, but the overtime rule changes in the postseason. It's not a 10-minute limit. You basically start another game.

Give each team the opportunity, because I don't think anybody can say that the last six games that we've had in the NFL prior to the Super Bowl have been unbelievable, but there was a void. There was a void in the Kansas City-Buffalo game.

I don't like the pick and choose, spot and choose, whatever John Harbaugh's thing was, and Peter King's thing that he wrote about, okay, each team gets the opportunity -- the first team scores, then the other one comes down and they score, they've got to go for two, whatever. But I think you -- you have to listen to fans. I mean, you really do. One of my guiding lights was 50 drunks in a bar, because I always said, if 50 drunks in a bar thought that Tom Brady fumbled against the Oakland Raiders back in 2001, if 50 guys in a bar thought that was a fumble, then dammit, it ought to be a fumble. But then the rule made it not a fumble. If 50 guys in a bar thought that Calvin Johnson caught the ball in 2010, my first year at FOX, my first time I went on camera, if 50 drunk guys in a bar thought it was a catch, then it ought to be a catch.



Eventually -- if Dez Bryant's play, if 50 people in a bar thought that was a catch, it ought to be a catch. Guess what, the Tom Brady play against the Raiders is now a fumble. The Dez Bryant, incomplete pass gnat playoffs is now a catch, and Calvin Johnson's play in the end zone is now a catch.

If you look back and say, well, those 50 drunks in a bar must have known something because then they changed the rule. So the overtime? Come on, let's just give each team in the postseason the ball, and the third possession just becomes -- if it's still tied it becomes overtime. Not rocket science.

Q. You did make the right call on TV in saying that Calvin Johnson's was not a catch, even though everyone, including those 50 drunks, would have said it was.

MIKE PEREIRA: It was my first call, and I didn't -- I didn't know what to expect, and I was petrified. I was petrified because I really wasn't sure.

FOX wasn't even going to -- they weren't quite sure how they were going to use me, but they stuck me in the studio and said, well, we'll bring you on in case something happens that maybe you can -- and then boom, this happens, and then Tom Brennaman and Brian Billick, they're going, what are they going to do, is it a catch? And Billick is going, that's a catch, it's a catch. And I'm like -- Mike, what are they going to do? Well, the rule says that if you're going to the ground you have to hold on to the ball when you hit the ground. He's going, but he had the ball, he had the ball, took three steps, then reached out -- I said -- tell me, what do you think. Well, the rules -- and finally Billick got mad at me and said, Well, what are they going to do.

I mean, I said, Based on the rule I think they're going to leave this incomplete, and he went, No way, he yelled. And then Gene Steratore is the guy that came out from under the hood and said, After reviewing the play, the ruling of incomplete pass stands.

I almost fell off the chair because if I'd have missed my first one on a game-winning thing, I'd have probably been fired the next day, and Jay Glazer came running in and said, you hit a grand slam on your first -- you hit a grand slam. The league called me and said, This was amazing, this was great. You took all the criticism off of the officials and put it on the rule. This was great. This is a great role.

The next week then I disagreed with a call and the league called me and told they hated me. But it's just the nature of the beast, the nature of the beast, I guess.

Q. Mike, you let this one go into overtime, this interview. I really appreciate it. Great job.

MIKE PEREIRA: Thank you, Sam. It's great to be with you.

Q. Enjoy the Super Bowl. You had the Chiefs winning that Super Bowl, so your next one is --

MIKE PEREIRA: Next year, so FOX is -- we have two of the next three actually the way it falls.

Q. Arizona and New Orleans?

MIKE PEREIRA: Arizona and New Orleans, so I plan to be around until New Orleans if I make it that long, and then I think it'll probably be time to ride off into the sunset maybe.

Q. Made some news here. You're in the booth now with Joe and Troy, and I think it's a great trio.

MIKE PEREIRA: I truly love being in the booth with them, and maybe not for the reasons that you would think. You know, I can say, geez, wow, just to be standing four feet from Troy Aikman is like, whoa, it's Troy, but it's not that. It's just the fact that they're so open to me.

The one thing I found out about both Joe and Troy, I think it's pretty true in others, too, but they want to be right. They do not want to be wrong. They don't want to misquote a rule. When I'm standing right there and I have these buttons, so it's fascinating, I can -- if there's a pass interference call, and Troy is saying -- he starts -- I can listen -- obviously I hear him, and if he starts to go down the path of, I don't think that's a good call, but it's like a hook and turn, it's a good call, I'll say, Troy, it's a hook and turn, they turn before the ball gets there. So Troy goes, I don't think it's really a -- but then again, it looks like a hook and turn. They're so open to me to talk to them in their ears even while they're talking.

Sometimes I -- we had a play, and I'll end it with this and my relationship with them. We had a play, a 4th down fumble inside of two minutes in a game a couple years ago. It was a great play but the quarterback fumbled, the lineman picked it up and ran it in the end zone, and Joe is going, He's at the 20, it's going to -- and I said to Troy, and the thing is it's a fumble inside of two minutes, they've got to bring it back to the spot of the fumble. So Joe finishes and Troy said, Yeah, Joe, that was great, but it's a fumble inside of two minutes. And he got all these accolades for knowing the rule. He didn't have any damn idea but I told him.

Q. Oh, that's great. Thank you so much, Mike.

MIKE PEREIRA: You got it, Sam.

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