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March 4th NFLPA Media Call

- DeMaurice Smith: [00:02](#) Pleasure to be with everyone today. This is the first time we've all had one of these briefings since the season ended and since the Super Bowl press conference that we held. Given that as the first time we're all together, I would be remiss if I didn't take a moment to... It's hard these days to have virtual fellowship, but we do want to take a moment to honor the memory of Terez Paylor. Again, he was a regular on our calls. We continue to be saddened by his loss and share our grief with all of you who knew him. So the only way we know how to honor his memory is to continue to do the work, continue to honor the facts, continue to be transparent and be kinder to each other, so that's what I'll say about that. Thanks to everybody for joining today, and in memory of Terez.
- DeMaurice Smith: [01:04](#) With that, we really don't have any opening statements. We know that there are a lot of issues on the horizon with respect to free agency, the salary cap, COVID losses, et cetera. I'm going to do my best to get as many questions in as we possibly can. I will take a look at the participant list. I would appreciate it if you guys raised hands. And I see Calvin and Lindsey are already hands raised, so you guys get the first crack. Go ahead, Calvin.
- Calvin: [01:42](#) Hello, can you hear me? Oh, you can? Okay. I can't hear you. This is for obviously two big guys. Texas and Mississippi obviously have lifted their mandates for mask and 100% opening. What is your message to your constituency? So many live in those states and you have two teams at Texas. What do you say to your members who try to work out in those states about these mandates that have been lifted?
- DeMaurice Smith: [02:22](#) Yeah. Great question, Calvin. We're going to meet with the leadership next week at our annual meeting, we're going to come up with guidance that comes out of there. I think the message to the membership is going to be take a look at what got us through an uninterrupted season this year and make sure that you adhere to, as much you can, the same level of guidelines that kept you and your family safe all year. I





NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

think we've seen states do things before our season started that we felt were inconsistent with the best health and safety practice. We decided to come up with our own protocols and how we were going to operate. And I'm really glad that we did given the success that we had. I don't know if there's a better message to our membership than to look back on what we were able to do and how we were able to accomplish it this year.

DeMaurice Smith: [03:29](#)

Okay. Lindsey, go ahead.

Lindsey: [03:34](#)

Hi, guys. DeMaurice, actually I have kind of two parts, one for De and one for JC. But DeMaurice, I was hoping you could maybe provide some context and elaborate on the message that you delivered to agents last week about working together to make sure that players are getting paid and that the market is not being depressed. And then JC, I think, I guess the related question to that would be, as a player, what are you guys concerned about, about what the market might look like with the cap dropping? And is there any sort of particular subset of players that you guys are concerned might be unduly affected, whether that's the middle-class the kind of the mid-career guys? How are players kind of handling this market?

DeMaurice Smith: [04:23](#)

Yeah. So one big, giant step back, we've advocated for players and agents to work together since I've been in this job. And the reason we do it is because we know that things like guaranteed contracts, and we've done the stick now for a few years now. Remember guaranteed contracts in basketball and in baseball are not creatures of their collective bargaining agreements. They're creatures of custom. So that is an important distinction. Everybody talks about why don't we have guaranteed contracts in the National Football League, how come the CBA doesn't provide for them in the NFL. Well, the CBA doesn't provide for them for baseball or basketball either.

DeMaurice Smith: [05:12](#)

Basketball players achieved guaranteed contracts because basketball free agent players made that a condition of the contracts that they would sign. So I took the agents through, and I apologize a little bit for the history lesson, I took the agents through the Moses Malone contract in 1983 and the Larry Bird contract in 1984. Moses Malone breaks the bank with his contract and in the early eighties. Largest contract ever for an



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

NBA player. My recollection is \$11 million of that contract was fully guaranteed. The final 3 million was not fully guaranteed. One year later, Larry Bird comes in to do his free agent contract. He takes the same number that Moses Malone has in his contract. But as far as I can tell, it's the first time where he wanted the full amount, regardless of anything, tied to incentives or other bonuses that were in Moses Malone's contract. So what Larry Bird does is what we want to happen in the market. We want players and agents to have their contracts evolve forward and insist that those contracts are fully guaranteed. Now, we saw that when Kirk Cousins did his contract. He left the Washington football team, went into the market. The only teams that he had serious conversations with were teams that were willing to make his contract fully guaranteed. And he engaged in the same level of leverage that we want our free agents to make as a group of people.

DeMaurice Smith: [07:13](#)

So to answer your question, we aren't asking for players to act in concert simply because of where we are in this current market. We've been advocating for players and agents to work in concert because that's exactly the way players were able to achieve guaranteed contracts in baseball and in basketball. So what we've done this year, we looked at... Well, first of all, I sent that message to all of the agents. Then we had our salary cap department reach out to, I think, certain groups of players to contact both the players and the agents. And those were players who were either players in the same position and players who were somewhat equally or similarly situated, urging those players to work with the other agents who are working with those players at that position, who are also similarly situated.

DeMaurice Smith: [08:20](#)

And those agents should talk with each other, and those players should talk with each other. And they should talk about not only the salaries that they're interested in, but they should also be talking about the terms of their contracts and eliminating terms that we think aren't good for players and advocating for terms of contracts that are better for players. Does that make sense to everybody?

JC: [08:47](#)

Then Lindsey, the take on the second question. Obviously it's tough to project and pinpoint where I think it tough in general to define what the middle-class is in general in any sports league. But obviously it's



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

going to be a unique free agency with the dip in the cap. I think that's why everything De talked about there is important because now the more information that can be shared and spread makes the player in his agent, more capable to make a good deal for him. So the more the agency communicate, as well as the agents can reach out to the NFLPA to get information they need, will be valuable, especially in a year like it is right now with a dip in the salary gap.

- DeMaurice Smith: [09:35](#) Thanks very much. Liz, you're up next.
- DeMaurice Smith: [09:50](#) Liz, I'm going to try to unmute you, but you should unmute. We can't hear you.
- Liz: [09:57](#) You couldn't? Can you hear me now?
- DeMaurice Smith: [09:59](#) There we go. We got you now. Go ahead.
- Liz: [10:01](#) Okay. Sorry.
- DeMaurice Smith: [10:01](#) That's okay.
- Liz: [10:03](#) I have two questions. There was a report that the NFL is likely to play 17 games this season, with one bi-week, that it's likely to play that. I want to know, is that true? Is it likely? And then, my second question is when do the TV contracts need to be done to affect the salary cap? And how high could the salary cap possibly go? We know the lowest is 180. What's the potential high for the salary cap? Thanks.
- DeMaurice Smith: [10:41](#) The question about when the TV contracts will we'll get done, I would say, ask the league. They don't ask me. They don't allow me to come to those meetings. When do the deals need to be done in order to affect the salary cap? Well, the salary cap is made based on projections for revenue of next year. We typically set the salary cap around this time, give or take four or five days. Do I expect the TV contracts to be done prior to the time that they set the salary cap? I think it's probably likely, but once again, Liz, I'm not in those meetings.
- DeMaurice Smith: [11:29](#) With respect to the 17th game, you'll remember that the old, the CBA in 2006 allowed the teams to add, I think, up to three regular season games without



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

consulting with the union. We took that unilateral right away from the league in the 2011 CBA. The league bought the right to go to 17 games in the new CBA. And once again, when they choose to exercise that right,

DeMaurice Smith: [12:00](#)

And when they choose to exercise that right, they'll let us know, but right now the nature of the TV contracts and the ultimate decision about the 17th game based on their right under the CBA, they'll make that decision and they'll let us know when they've made that decision.

Liz: [12:21](#)

Okay. So, they haven't told you and they're going to tell you if this is true, there's going to be a 17th game, and then you don't know anything about what's going on with the TV deals or how high they're going to come in, they haven't that either?

DeMaurice Smith: [12:37](#)

I didn't say that I didn't know anything about it. I've read things in the media that you guys report and write on. I think one of your colleagues at the Sports Business Journal wrote an article about the TV deals. I think he even said that one of the TV deals was done. So, Liz, I can't say I don't know anything about it. What you asked me, when did I know when they were going to get done and the answer is no. With respect to telling us about the 17th game, it's the league, they set the schedule. So, they're going to have to tell us what the schedule is at some point. Right?

Liz: [13:13](#)

Okay. Thank you.

DeMaurice Smith: [13:16](#)

Thanks very much, Liz. Jonathan Jones.

Jonathan Jones: [13:23](#)

De, following up on Liz's question, if you can, I'm extremely aware of the formula in the CBA of how it creates the salary cap. Very obviously though, in these unprecedented times, things are adjusted a little bit in salary cap fours are created. And so I'm curious, what sort of math has been done? If you can take us behind the scenes at all of how the TV contracts may impact this year, even though the formula doesn't necessarily permit for that, and what sort of conversations have been had about how much money to borrow from the future in order to keep a salary cap that's at a decent or reasonable level.



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

- DeMaurice Smith: [14:13](#) Yes. I'm a little confused by your question because the way in which the collective bargaining agreement is written and the way that you engage in the math, remember the collective bargaining agreement requires that the salary cap be based on projections of next year's revenue, right? So, it's both a math problem, but also a projection problem. So when it comes to projections, the reason why it takes so long is sometimes there's disagreement about whether, for example, in-stadium attendance is going to be at 60% next year, or is it going to be at 75% next year? We might think it's going to be at 75%, the league might think it's going to be at 60%. We fight over those things.
- DeMaurice Smith: [15:12](#) With respect to the television contracts, again, if the new contracts have a possibility of going into effect governing revenue coming into the league during the period of the league year next year, then that is money that we would rely on as a reasonable projection, and that would influence a salary cap. So, at the end of the day, what you're dealing with is, is not just the hard revenue numbers that you already have, but the projected revenue numbers that might come from contracts that are not yet done. And then projections on things like stadium attendance and other things that we won't know, but we'll just have to agree to. Does that make sense?
- George Atallah: [16:13](#) It does. Appreciate it.
- DeMaurice Smith: [16:19](#) And then I know as we head into free agency, the other aspect of the cap that I want to make sure is clear the actual losses from this past season, how we spread those out over the next three years and what the projection is going into the next three years because one thing we want to make sure that is reflected accurately is that in future years, it doesn't mean that we're going to have a depressed cap for multiple years going forward. So I think DGC it's worth you guys hitting on that too.
- DeMaurice Smith: [16:58](#) Yes. So, the other piece that George was talking about and again, they're based on projections, but am I comfortable with the prospect of us having substantially



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

more fans in the stands next year? Yes. Do I think that the way things are trending in the country that we should be back to 100% after next season? Yes. That has a substantial impact on the salary cap. Do we think that other things that have led to such a robust NFL revenue over the past 20 years, do we think that those things are going to return? I do.

DeMaurice Smith: [17:40](#)

And then the last piece is, is if we do expect robust growth, does that mean that we can eat up losses or projected losses quicker? Yes. So, the message we wanted to leave with the agents last year, I think it got a little bit twisted and some of the reporting is I'm actually very bullish on the salary cap going forward. After this year, we do have some losses to absorb, but in no way, shape or form, do I think that we would be looking at \$160 million salary caps over the next two years of what we would have had this year, had we not had we not engaged in the COVID floor deal.

DeMaurice Smith: [18:39](#)

Okay. And then the other two things to keep in mind that we have been trying to communicate with you guys and with our players, two other mechanisms to help cushion this year's losses. JC, I think I'm going to tee you up to talk a little bit about the cap carry overs that are in place, which we released the numbers for those last week, and then the minimum cash spending.

JC: [19:05](#)

Yeah. First, we're working [inaudible 00:19:08] The roll over, they're raised to cushion. Hold on one second.

DeMaurice Smith: [19:19](#)

All your business we're going to have mics out. [crosstalk 00:19:27]

DeMaurice Smith: [19:27](#)

Let's see. Okay. Let's try that again.

JC: [19:33](#)

Right. So we obviously have ways to cushion in the losses that we are facing. So with the roll over that we showed, we have teams that are carrying over that's the system we have in place. I also think it's important to just take another step back of how we got here in the first place. The important thing was we had a CBA in place this year in order to spread these losses over multiple years. In the original plan during these negotiations from the owner side, like the other sports leagues had to deal with was an escrow system in which every player that's facing the hardship of playing in the midst of a pandemic, all takes an X percentage pay cut



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

JC:

[20:32](#)

that year. And that was our perspective from the start was we shouldn't be having one group of players, especially the year in which they're facing the hardship.

Also, then take the cut and salary. So instead of us taking the losses upfront, the owners had to take the losses and then spread it over these years. And like De said, we are comfortable with the idea of where we're trending that revenue will come back quicker and we'll be back to a normal state.

DeMaurice Smith:

[20:57](#)

Any other questions from folks? Anybody else? Any last thoughts to you, JC? We didn't want to keep everybody long, but certainly... Oh, Charles, you raised your hand?

Charles:

[21:14](#)

Yeah. I must not be showing up.

DeMaurice Smith:

[21:17](#)

Okay, go ahead, man.

Charles:

[21:18](#)

Yeah. Sorry about that. Have you guys paid any attention to the, I guess this is JC or De. What's going on with this NBA top shot stuff where they're selling non-exclusive digital rights to highlights and it's turned into this booming tens of millions of dollars industry and they're projecting. I saw Mark Cuban is big into it. They're projecting massive growth in this. I'm curious if you guys have paid attention to this and whether you think there's any future in the NFL and the NFL PA sharing in something that's similar to that selling non-exclusive digital rights to digital trading cards. I've read through this like 50 different ways and I'm still having a hard time absorbing exactly what people are investing in, but clearly funny.

DeMaurice Smith:

[22:13](#)

Well, I can only tell you that I've probably read too much of it because I'm an insomniac, but it's an interesting business, and let me just say right off the bat, it's something that's really interesting. Our folks at and players ANC, and as well as one team partners has been following it closely. I think that the trading card market is a fascinating market to begin with. It sounds like you know a little bit about it. It's substantially larger than just the trading cards you and I had when we were kids, it's upwards of depending on who you ask five to \$6 billion of a market every year, and we've taken a hard look about that market and where we intend to play in the future. The digital video, like top shot is interesting and just to level set. It's a uniquely created



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

use of a player's image married with a video. And they create a, let's just call it a widget.

- DeMaurice Smith: [23:16](#) That widget is identified uniquely by cryptocurrency and then people bid on that thing once they buy it, trade it, sell it, whatever. I think it's really interesting, and I think it's clearly going to be a new evolutionary development in the market. I think there's still a lot of questions. People want to know that if they're buying something that's digital or virtual, how do I make sure that it's unique and retains its value? I think people have questions about the consumer interface with it, but in the same way that people are looking at that market and that cryptocurrency break.
- DeMaurice Smith: [24:00](#) That market and that cryptocurrency market. All you have to do is to go on YouTube and type in card breaking and you pull up all these videos where, these breaking parties are things that... I'm probably a little bit too old to do, I think, but they're clearly something. I think it's exciting because it's a new level of fan engagement.
- DeMaurice Smith: [24:29](#) We tend to make really good decisions on our licensing and marketing front. I'm proud of what Players Inc. has done. We've always been on the forefront or ahead of where everybody else has been. We're looking at this and a few other things, but I think it's really exciting.
- DeMaurice Smith: [24:48](#) Anything that seems to me that increases fan engagement is pretty cool. There's still a lot of questions, but that's a really interesting market and I look forward to where we're going to be playing in that space.
- Charles: [25:02](#) Just a quick follow-up to that, If you were to-
- DeMaurice Smith: [25:06](#) Now that everybody is completely asleep that I've talked about cryptocurrency, like literally running for alcohol, just pouring it on themselves.
- Charles: [25:15](#) Believe it or not, people are fascinated by these stories. You'd be-
- DeMaurice Smith: [25:18](#) No, they don't care.



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

- Charles: [25:20](#) I'm curious. If you were to delve into something like this, how do you open a dialogue? I mean, if it's a highlight, I'm curious, because this seems to be so different than the average licensing of trading cards or whatever.
- Charles: [25:34](#) How do you open that dialogue with the league about how do we create that partnership for something that's being created new? This is nothing really the NBA had ever seen before. This was cooked up between the Players Association, the league.
- Charles: [25:47](#) I mean, do you just reach out to... I mean, how did the two parties come together when it's something... Is this just to you, is this just an average licensing type of situation? Or is it...?
- DeMaurice Smith: [25:58](#) Yeah, the NBA... I mean, my understanding is the NBA Players Association did a license with Top Shot after the group in the NBA did a deal together. There's a number of ways to do it, but I mean, to make it overly simple, it's not much different than a group like EA Sports wants to do a video game around NFL players.
- DeMaurice Smith: [26:24](#) They need team marks on one hand, so there's a deal with the league. They need the players name, image, and likeness, they do a deal with the NFL Players Association. From a nuts and bolts standpoint, there's really no magic in how that happens.
- DeMaurice Smith: [26:41](#) I think that the opportunities though are somewhat... I mean, it's clear that the opportunities here are different because they are creating a digitally unique thing that's now going into the market and the numbers that you're talking about, sure. There's some people buying them because they just want to have that picture of JC. That perfect snap. The perfect snap, but there are some people out there who are buying that digital thing.
- DeMaurice Smith: [27:18](#) There's probably tons of people in Cleveland and other places that would pay more than, whatever it is, 199.99 than it was worth. They're attaching an intrinsic



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

personal value to that and then people are trading on that.

- DeMaurice Smith: [27:36](#) I mean, what it reminds me of a little bit is sneakers. I mean, the sneaker craze 10, 15, 20 years ago, Nike puts out a shoe, it's \$150 shoe. Somebody buys it, in my case, they bought it from Foot Locker and then you take it home... Shut up, George. There used to be a thing called Foot Locker. Those were stores, they were brick and mortar-
- DeMaurice Smith: [28:01](#) It still exists, dude.
- DeMaurice Smith: [28:03](#) They would go to Foot Locker. They buy 10 of the shoes, they put the shoe on eBay. A hundred dollars shoe, somebody wants to pay \$300 for it. Somebody wants to pay 350, then it's 400. Well, all of a sudden, because somebody has attached some personal intrinsic value to this, there's a market.
- DeMaurice Smith: [28:25](#) When you look at eBay and the way that their sports memorabilia and sports business thing took off, a lot of that was around stuff that was purchased for retail and put into the market. Then people assigned a different value. That's what this is and I think it's interesting. I think it's pretty cool. Everybody's asleep. I'm sorry.
- DeMaurice Smith: [28:51](#) No. Everybody actually just, they all just went to buy a JCs rookie card, which is what we're going to do too. At the moment. sorry, I missed a couple of hands raised. We'll go, Dan, Brooke, Howl and [Jory 00:29:06]. Dan, go ahead.
- Dan: [29:10](#) I'm wondering how much conversation there's been between you guys in the league about what the off-season program will look like and what your expectations are for OTAs, mini-camps, etc, with the pandemic still not yet behind us.
- DeMaurice Smith: [29:33](#) We haven't had a whole heck of a lot of conversation about the upcoming off-season. We've talked a lot with our membership and our senior leaders. A lot of that is going to turn on where we think the country is in handling COVID. You've probably all read a lot of the things that JC has written about the off-season. I think



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

he makes a ton of good points about us learning how to do things smarter and better. JC, you want to jump in?

[30:05](#)

Yeah, but I mean, obviously for this year specifically, we're still dealing with COVID. We always have to have that on our minds of how do we have this program, if at all, if we can't have things in control of the virus in our local communities.

JC:

[30:21](#)

Moving forward, this obviously has to be negotiated with the NFL but what we saw this year was, the virus forced us to do things differently and showed that we could do things differently and we had a ton of success. If you look at it as, in a 10 week or a nine week off-season program. The level of play is at a certain level and then we have a zero week off-season program, this off-season, and the level of play is at that same level, if not beyond, if you look at the points, being higher penalties, being down and miss tackles being down. Then it shows you there's no value add to that nine week in the middle of April and May off-season program. I've always said, it would be a shame if we see things like this and we get all this new data, and then we don't act on it because we can just fall back into the way things have always been done. I think that would be a crucial mistake.

JC:

[31:22](#)

Instead, I think we need to come together and figure out the best way forward to design a program that actually does add value and makes the players healthier, makes the teams better and that needs to be the focus. We're still waiting on our injury data to come back from the season, but that will also play an important role and how we acclimate, how we make sure we build this program to keep our players as safe as possible.

JC:

[31:47](#)

Player safety always tends to get lumped into a player only issue, but when players are healthy, fans are happy. Coaches are happy. GM's are happy. Owners are happy. It's more than just players should be caring about player safety. Everybody should be caring about player safety and the healthier the rosters are the better for everybody. It all just needs to be discussed and I think we just need to find the best program to accomplish what we want to accomplish.

DeMaurice Smith:

[32:17](#)

Thanks, Dan. Brooke, how are you doing Brooke?



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

- Brooke: [32:21](#) I'm great. Thanks for calling on me. For D and JC. Looking at the cap dropping. Some teams could ask some of their high dollar guys to take pay cuts, to help them settle their cap issues. What precedent could that set if teams start asking and players start accepting those cuts? Do you advise players on how to handle that type of suggestion? What things would you say to them?
- DeMaurice Smith: [32:44](#) Yeah, I mean, I'm not too worried about a precedent because teams have done it historically. Players have done it. The only message we've tried to give to our players is, we know GM's this year, like they've done in other years, but certainly in this year, are going to use the cap as the end-all, beat-all excuse for why they can't agree to pay players X.
- DeMaurice Smith: [33:12](#) What we want players and agents to do is, especially if players are similarly situated, first of all, work together. Remember, the caps about a number. The issues that we care about on with players contracts, a lot of times have to do with the terms of the contract. What's voidable, what's not? What constitutes conduct detrimental, what doesn't? What terms that we feel are onerous?
- DeMaurice Smith: [33:46](#) Sometimes those terms get into contracts, very hard to pull them out. That's the first thing. With respect to the cap number, however. The advice to agents and players has been, don't just look at next year in isolation. Look at, if there's ways of spreading the contract over several years, are there other avenues that are better than just simply taking a pay cut?
- DeMaurice Smith: [34:20](#) Again, the overarching messages, work with our salary cap department and not to beat the horse to death, but I think Kirk Cousins agent did a fantastic job. He did an incredible job and he will tell you that a lot of the work that went into getting that young man a great contract was done because he worked well with our salary cap department. I'm a big fan of players working together as a team, obviously. Agents need to work together as a team.



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

DeMaurice Smith: [34:59](#) Thanks, Brooke. Howl, how you doing? No pool background today, Howl. What's going on?

Howl: [35:08](#) No, I'm inside. It's too hot believe it or not.

DeMaurice Smith: [35:11](#) Thanks for rubbing it in. I appreciate it.

DeMaurice Smith: [35:13](#) Thanks man, thank you.

DeMaurice Smith: [35:15](#) Always looking out for us [inaudible 00:35:16].

DeMaurice Smith: [35:16](#) Yeah. Good for you.

Howl: [35:19](#) Now that you're going to just wipe me off the map here. D, I have a left field off question for you and I have no idea if this crosses your desk at all or not. I was talking with a former player a few days ago, and he brought to my attention, this issue of race norming as it applies. I think primarily to former players, retired players. Does any of that cross your desk? Do you have any thoughts or comments about that?

DeMaurice Smith: [35:56](#) Okay. I'm going to have to drill down a little bit more. By the way, you'd be surprised about the stuff that comes across my desk. Just number one.

DeMaurice Smith: [36:00](#) By the way, you'd be surprised about the stuff that comes across my desk, just number one. But to give me the context of race norming, the only issue I know of that's been bubbling out there is with respect to there was a story by an outfit, and I do read everything you guys put out, I do. I don't. But there was a story by someone who was talking about disparities or alleged disparities in the NFL concussion lawsuit. And there was an allegation by someone that there were some sort of race norming that was going on with respect to the cognitive test that were being given to former players. Is that what you're talking about?

Howl: [36:52](#) Yes. It's an ABC report.

DeMaurice Smith: [36:55](#) I don't know anything about it. Sorry. That's a joke. No, I read the report. I thought that's what you were talking



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

about. We weren't a party to that lawsuit. I obviously read the story and I think, George, I even answered a couple of questions about it at Super Bowl, but my recollection was that some of the physicians were talking about race norming on their list serve. I'm a firm believer that the League should make sure that these awards and how they're treating former players is fair, that it should be transparent. We weren't a party to that lawsuit, so it's really hard for me to comment beyond that.

Howl: [37:42](#)

Okay. And secondly, and a totally different direction, over the past couple of virtual meetings we've had, we've talked about how well things went this year in dealing with COVID for obvious reasons, because you got the whole season in. But I wondered if either of you have any thoughts, if you could go back and do things differently, is there anything that jumps out at you as, "Gee, I wish we did this or that?"

DeMaurice Smith: [38:12](#)

JC?

JC: [38:15](#)

I think it's tough to say because the whole idea was that we were going to make sure we continued to follow the science and follow the data. So we were continuing to get new information and develop new protocols through the year and where we started with the protocols surely wasn't where we ended. So I don't think we even could go back and say, "Well, we should have started doing this earlier." The reason we started doing it when we did was because we got that new information, that new data, and that was our response to shore up holes that we felt were left open. So an example of that would be the change to the high risk close contacts, where instead of just using the CDC guideline of how many minutes were you in a close proximity, six feet to a sick individual, we started seeing as the season went on that that wasn't the best way to determine whether someone was a high risk close contact, and you needed to really delve into the exact interaction that those two people had.

JC: [39:16](#)

And by doing that and using our contact tracers and using interviews and video surveillance, we were able to better understand who is a high-risk close contact and who isn't. And then if somebody is a high-risk close contact, bringing them out of the building for those five days. And that way there wasn't this rolling positive



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

tests where you're kind of waiting for the next person to pop positive. If you remove them from the building, at least that person when they pop positive, haven't been in the building the entire time.

JC: [39:45](#)

So I think that was something we learned as it went on, as we kind of saw how this virus was going through the building when we did have transmission. But I don't think we could have did that earlier because we had to learn that through the examples.

George Atallah: [40:05](#)

Thanks Dale. From left field to right field. We appreciate it. Jory, how are you doing?

Jory: [40:12](#)

Good. How are you doing? Thanks, George. Thanks. I know we touched on this a little bit a couple of questions ago, but specifically the players looking for new deals, can you reiterate some of the mechanisms you'd recommend to maximize earnings without minimizing the chance that a player gets it done because they're playing too hard ball? And JC, if you could weigh in on this one as well. I know D's touched on it.

DeMaurice Smith: [40:37](#)

Yeah. I don't know any other way to play with the League than hardball. I mean, it's a group of people who have because of their management, they have a disproportionate amount of bargaining power. So our players play an average of 3.5 years. So, I mean, if you go in there like a supplicant, begging for yet another year, I'm not sure that that's the best negotiation strategy for anybody. So what we've just tried to do is address the disproportionate level of bargaining power. I'm talking about more a non star player, obviously. But, what do you do if you're negotiating with someone and you feel that they have a disproportion amount of bargaining power? Well, you do more research. As players and agents, we're able to work together in concert, and that doesn't violate the law. It violates the law for management to work in concert. So all of it is about really availing yourself of every means possible to get the most fair contract.

JC: [41:58](#)

Yeah. To add to that. I think it's tough to give a blanket recommendation or advice to a group, because we're all in different positions, especially free agents, even top of the market free agents. Everybody's just in a different position in their life and what teams are interested and



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

what teams aren't. Where they stand on the list of free agents. And I think that's what touches on with D, is the importance of getting all the information you could possibly get as you're having these discussions and making these decisions. It's, I would say, impossible to give someone just one thing of advice, because again, you don't know what that person's unique situation is.

- JC: [42:41](#) So that's why it's so important that you work with the NFL PA salary cap department and our agent department. And that way you get the player, especially as the agent does so much work with the negotiations, having that person get all that information for that player and what they need to know of where that player stands and what type of language is good for them. Because again, like D said, the money dollar amount is always what's talked about, but the language underneath is so important, so crucial to those deals. Making sure those are ushered up and protecting the players long-term is the most important part.
- George Atallah: [43:18](#) Thank you. We're going to end on this question because I got to get D and JC out for another call after this. Nate Taylor?
- Nate Taylor: [43:26](#) Did I raise my hand? I'm sorry, I don't have a question.
- George Atallah: [43:35](#) Okay. Well, nice. Nice to hear your voice, Nate.
- Nate Taylor: [43:40](#) Thank you. Sorry about that.
- George Atallah: [43:41](#) No, no, no. It's all good. My sidebar has been acting funky, so it's okay.
- DeMaurice Smith: [43:55](#) George, did you mute yourself?
- George Atallah: [43:58](#) Now, I muted myself? Thanks.
- DeMaurice Smith: [44:00](#) You did. It was fantastic man.
- George Atallah: [44:02](#) Or did you mute me? Always looking out for me, man. Geez. Oh my goodness. All right. So if there are no other questions, we'll drop the transcript up on the site as soon as we have it. I appreciate everybody getting together and we'll try to do this again right before free agency starts when the cap is actually set at the number of... I'm glad you caught the joke.



NFL PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION

DeMaurice Smith:	44:32	I did. I did. Silly man, silly man.
George Atallah:	44:35	Appreciate it everybody. Have a great day.
DeMaurice Smith:	44:38	Thanks guys.
JC:	44:39	Thanks guys.