NFL

Goodell wants league to look deeply into catch rule

By BARRY WILNER
AP Pro Football Writer

MINNEAPOLIS — Roger Goodell wants to see the mystery of the NFL's catch rule solved, and he's ensured that the process has begun.

The commissioner said at his annual Super Bowl news conference Wednesday that he personally sees that rule as the most obvious to address.

Asked about the scrutiny that NFL officiating came under this season, Goodell said "on the catch/no catch rule, we need to find a rule we think will address that. We certainly need to get this rule right so everyone can appreciate."

Goodell recently spent three hours with former players, including Pro Football Hall of Famers, going over 150 plays. He said there were many good ideas offered, but as for the specifics of what should be a catch, there was little consensus.

"There were a lot of people with different perspectives and lot of disagreement in the room," he said.

So the competition committee will dive into not only this rule, but perhaps refining the rulebook.

"I would like to start back, instead of adding to the rule, subtracting the rule. Start over again and look at the rule fundamentally from the start. Because I think when you add or subtract things you can still lead to confusion. These rules are very complex; you have to look at what the unintended consequences are of making a change, which is what the competition committee, in my view, does so well and with so much thought.

AP Photo/Matt Slocum

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell speaks during a news conference in advance of the Super Bowl 52 football game on Wednesday in Minneapolis.

"Clearly, the catch/no catch has had a lot of discussion. I won't tell you there won't be controversy (in the future), but we need to get to a better place."

He added that there were more video replay interruptions in 2017 "and I think we can look at that. How do we make the game more attractive with less stoppages is one of the things we focus on. How do we use replay to ensure correcting obvious mistakes but making sure it doesn't interrupt the flow of the game."

Goodell noted that in his 36 years working in the NFL, officiating always has been in the spotlight. Recently, because of advances in technology, the attention has ratcheted up significantly.

Goodell revealed that the league has hired an independent investigator to look into claims of sexual and racial misconduct in the workplace against Carolina Panthers owner Jerry Richardson.

Former U.S. attorney Mary Jo White will lead the investigation. White has led similar investigations in other fields, including a recent one at the University of Rochester.

Richardson stepped away from day-to-day operations after allegations surfaced and is seeking to sell the team. The NFL has said it didn't pressure Richardson to sell based on the allegations.

Goodell said he wants the team to remain in Carolina and believes most of the other owners do, as well.

"I am sure that is a question many of our owners will ask," Goodell said of the Panthers staying in Charlotte under new ownership.

He also:

—announced that the Rams will play a home game in Mexico City against the Chiefs. Until the new stadium in Los Angeles is ready in 2020, the Rams are likely to spend one home game a year elsewhere.

—reiterated his stance that it's not the NFL's place to get involved in whether Colin Kaepernick gets a chance with another team. "Clubs have to make their own decisions as far as who's on their roster," he said.

Kaepernick, who sparked the protests involving the national anthem early in the 2016 season, wasn't signed for the 2017 season following his release in San Francisco.

The comments from Goodell came a day after Philadelphia Eagles receiver Torrey Smith said Kaepernick not getting a chance with another team "kind of falls in the category of an injustice in itself."

As it relates to roster decisions, Goodell said the NFL won't "get involved in that in any way."

—referred to the recently created owners/players committee on social justice when asked any questions about protests during the national anthem, expressing optimism the NFL and its players are on the proper path.

—said he was aware of the plans to relaunch the rival XFL in 2020, but had been too busy to look at details. Goodell emphasized that the NFL constantly looks at spring football options if they will improve opportunities to reach the NFL.

Another wave of victims confronts disgraced sports doctor Nassar

By DAVID EGGERT
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, Mich. — Another wave of victims confronted disgraced former gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar at his third and final sentencing hearing Wednesday, this time about sexual abuse at an elite Michigan club run by an Olympic coach.

The judge presiding over the case said the number of people who allege they were abused by Nassar has climbed to 265. That total includes 150-plus victims who offered statements at a different hearing last week, as well as scores of new ones expected to speak over the next few days.

Nassar, who has already been sentenced on federal child-pornography charges and charges that he abused young women and girls while working at Michigan State University, faces another long prison sentence on top of the two he has already received.

"You are most vile, disgusting creature I have ever met," said Katherine Ebert, who was a gymnast from 5 to 18 and started seeing Nassar at 15. "There are black holes in my memory that come back as nightmares or flashbacks, not wanting to believe they're true."

Nassar, once the doctor for the national gymnastics team, sat at a table with his lawyers as accusers rebuked him.

"You took advantage of my innocence and trust," 17-year-old Jessica Thomashow said. "You were my doctor. Why? I ask myself that question all the time. What you did to me was twisted. You manipulated me and my entire family. How dare you."

Cory Morse /The Grand Rapids Press via AP

Eve Petrie, right, gives her statement next to her parents Mary Schulz and Eric Petrie during Larry Nassar's sentencing at Eaton County Circuit Court in Charlotte on Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2018. The former Michigan State University sports-medicine and USA Gymnastics doctor is being sentenced for three first degree criminal sexual abuse charges related to assaults that occurred at Twistars, a gymnastics facility in Dimondale.

Judge Janice Cunningham has set aside several days for more than 60 victims who want to confront Nassar or have their statement read in the courtroom in Charlotte, a city outside Lansing.

The event could unfold much the same as last week's proceedings in another county. That hearing ended with Nassar getting to 40 to 175 years in prison, a sentence that judge described as Nassar's "death warrant."

The case on Cunningham's docket in Eaton County centers on Nassar's assaults at Twistars, a Lansing-area gymnastics club that was run by 2012 Olympic coach John Geddert. Nassar admits penetrating three girls with his hands when he was supposed to be treating them for injuries.

Annie Labrie said what Nassar did to her made her "skin crawl," but every adult around her assured her he was the only option, and she hid the abuse from her parents. She said Nassar's pedophilia was not an isolated incident, and gymnastics and gyms like Twistars have a "specific culture" that allows people like him to flourish.

The doctor's accusers include Olympic champions Simone Biles, Gabby Douglas and other top gymnasts.

A nearby police department admitted that it missed an opportunity to pursue charges against Nassar in 2004.

After a 17-year-old girl complained that Nassar removed her underwear and touched her genitals and breast, Meridian Township police began investigating. But officers dropped the case after Nassar explained that he was performing a legitimate technique known as a ligament release. Nassar even provided a Power Point presentation.

Township Manager Frank Walsh said Nassar deceived police.

"We missed it. We're not going to hide it," Walsh said.

Also Wednesday, former Michigan Gov. John Engler was formally named interim president at Michigan State, following Lou Anna Simon's resignation last week from the school's top post. Engler will head the school as it deals with lawsuits filed by more than 100 abuse victims and investigations by the state attorney general, the NCAA and Congress.

Engler, a Republican who was governor from 1990 through 2002, said he would strive to lead the school without regard to politics.

"I think we start from the standpoint: How do we change things?" he said. "That starts today."

Trustees also named another former governor, Democrat Jim Blanchard, to advise the school on lawsuits and investigations.

BRIEFLY

Cavs' Love suffers broken hand

CLEVELAND (AP) — Kevin Love's broken left hand has caused further damage to the crumbling Cavaliers.

The All-Star forward Kevin Love is consulting with surgical specialists in New York about fixing his hand, an injury which has rocked the Cavs, a team plagued by as much malfunction as dysfunction.

Love fractured his fifth metacarpal during the first quarter of Tuesday's ugly loss in Detroit. The team's medical staff is reviewing treatment of the injury with specialists at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York. There is still no timetable on Love's return.

Early indications are that Love could miss as much as two months. Love's absence complicates things for the Cavs, who are 5-8 in January and in third place in the Eastern Conference just ahead of Miami.

Love is the third All-Star to suffer a significant injury in the past few days. New Orleans big man DeMarcus Cousins tore his Achilles last week and is done for the season, and Washington guard John Wall will miss 6-to-8 weeks following a knee procedure.

Mariners extend protective netting at Safeco Field

SEATTLE (AP) — The Seattle Mariners will extend the protective netting at Safeco Field for the upcoming season to include protection behind both dugouts.

The Mariners announced the finalized plans Wednesday. The new netting, which will be in place before the opener on March 29 against Cleveland, will extend to the outside edge of both dugouts and be 11 feet high. Seattle worked with Major League Baseball and design firm HOK to come up with the engineering and design for the new netting.

Team President Kevin Mather says the new design improves safety "and uses the latest materials and industry standards to minimize the impact on sightlines."

NHL star Fisher ends retirement, rejoins Nashville

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Center Mike Fisher is coming out of retirement and will rejoin the Nashville Predators for his 18th NHL season as they try to win the Stanley Cup.

General manager David Poile says Fisher has some unfinished business and wants to help the Predators win two more games than they did last year when they lost the Stanley Cup Final in six games to Pittsburgh .

The Predators will sign Fisher officially before the Feb. 26 trade deadline for the stretch run.

Nashville wanted Fisher back last summer. But Fisher, 37, announced his retirement Aug. 3. Fisher had 18 goals and 24 assists last season as Nashville earned its first Western Conference title. He's also husband to country star Carrie Underwood.

BMCC's Elias Kaden (23) shoots over defender Landon Jones, of Treasure Valley, on Wednesday night in Pendleton.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney

BMCC: McAllister scores 16

Continued from 1B

the Timberwolves weren't able to top Treasure Valley and remain winless in their conference.

The Chukars (8-12 overall, 4-5 NWAC) held just an eight-point lead after the first half with Blue Mountain keeping the game close behind its 30 opening points.

The Timberwolves (3-16, 0-9) weren't able to score more than 30 points the entire game, while Treasure Valley extended its lead in the second half to win 74-60.

Girls

TVCC	**10**	**18**	**25**	**10**	**— 63**
BMCC	**7**	**15**	**14**	**15**	**— 51**

TREASURE VALLEY — H. Raymond 11, S. Gilchrist 10, M. Berenguer 8, L. Saenz 8, A. Wheatley 8, H. Reynolds 6, T. Chamberlain 4, P. Vorwaller 4, T. Whitney 2, M. Hunter 2.

BLUE MOUNTAIN — A. Watson 14, S. Wammock 11, M. Bisbee 8, T. Crafts 6, C. Sidney 6, M. Slater 4, K. Gerlinger 2

Boys

TVCC	**38**	**36**	**—**	**74**
BMCC	**30**	**30**	**—**	**60**

TREASURE VALLEY — H. Bailey 21, J. Schetzle 15, T. Jefferson 11, K. Williams 8, R. Mitchell 6, E. Okafor 4, L. Jones 4, M. Foreman 3, D. Alexander 2.

BLUE MOUNTAIN — L. McAllister 16, D. Seme 16, A. Landeros 11, E. Kaden 9, J. Massey 5, J. Hillard 3.

SCOREBOARD

Local slate

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL

Friday
Stanfield at Culver, 6 p.m.
Hood River at Pendleton, 7 p.m.
Hermiston at The Dalles, 7 p.m.
Condon/Wheeler at Sherman, 7 p.m.
Irrigon at Burns, 7:30 p.m.
Umatilla at Nyssa, 7:30 p.m.
Riverside at Vale, 7:30 p.m.
Heppner at Weston-McEwen, 7:30 p.m.
Ione at Horizon Christian, 7:30 p.m.
Dufur at Arlington, 7:30 p.m.
Helix at Powder Valley, 7:30 p.m.

PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL

Friday
Stanfield at Culver, 4:30 p.m.
Irrigon at Burns, 6 p.m.
Umatilla at Nyssa, 6 p.m.
Riverside at Vale, 6 p.m.
Heppner at Weston-McEwen, 6 p.m.
Ione at Horizon Christian, 6 p.m.
Dufur at Arlington, 6 p.m.
Sherman at Condon/Wheeler, 7 p.m.
Helix at Powder Valley, 6 p.m.
The Dalles at Hermiston, 7 p.m.
Pendleton at Hood River, 7 p.m.

PREP WRESTLING

Saturday
Riverside, Irrigon, Echo at District Tournament (Boardman), 10 a.m.
Heppner at District Tournament (Joseph), 10 a.m.

MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Friday
Northwest at EOU, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday
BMCC at Big Bend, 4 p.m.
Evergreen at EOU, 7:30 p.m.

WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Friday
Northwest at EOU, 5:30 p.m.
Saturday
BMCC at Big Bend, 2 p.m.
Northwest at EOU, 5:30 p.m.

COLLEGE WRESTLING

Saturday
EOU (women) at Southern Oregon, 6 p.m.
EOU (men) at Southern Oregon, 7 p.m.

Prep Standings

Through Jan. 30

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL

5A COLUMBIA RIVER CONFERENCE

	Lg	Ovr	PF	PA	Rnk
Pendleton	3-0	11-7	974	929	10
Hermiston	2-1	7-10	1019	1057	15
The Dalles	1-2	9-8	1026	1025	20
Hood River	0-3	5-13	1049	1103	33

4A GREATER OREGON LEAGUE

	Lg	Ovr	PF	PA	Rnk
La Grande	4-0	13-7	1201	1077	5
Baker	2-2	9-11	1152	1157	16
Ontario	2-2	9-12	1009	1085	20
Mac-Hi	0-4	11-10	949	886	29

3A EASTERN OREGON LEAGUE

	Lg	Ovr	PF	PA	Rnk
Irrigon	6-1	17-2	1141	821	10
Umatilla	4-2	16-5	1200	885	12
Burns	4-2	11-9	1042	1000	23
Nyssa	3-3	12-8	967	968	18
Riverside	1-5	9-11	911	953	30
Vale	1-6	5-15	859	981	36

2A COLUMBIA BASIN CONFERENCE

	Lg	Ovr	PF	PA	Rnk
Pilot Rock	5-0	14-6	1143	911	11
Heppner	4-1	9-7	806	806	13
Weston-McEwen	2-2	7-12	981	1068	24
Stanfield	1-4	8-13	997	1223	22
Culver	0-5	4-17	882	1156	39

1A BIG SKY CONFERENCE

	Lg	Ovr	PS	PA	Rnk
Sherman	10-0	18-1	1293	743	2
Horizon Christ.	8-2	14-5	987	897	13
Condon/Wheel.	8-2	14-6	1316	1055	17
Arlington	6-4	10-9	1037	921	25
Dufur	4-6	7-12	890	911	33
Ione	3-7	5-15	883	1160	53
South Wasco	1-9	3-17	714	1144	51
Mitch./Spray	0-10	2-16	590	1131	64

1A OLD OREGON LEAGUE

	Lg	Ovr	PS	PA	Rnk
Nixyaawii	10-1	17-3	1377	903	8
Powder Valley	9-1	14-4	1179	927	10
Joseph	7-4	11-6	915	755	22
Wallowa	5-6	10-10	917	951	35
Echo	5-6	8-14	1069	1193	37
Cove	4-6	6-13	856	982	42
Helix	2-8	3-17	643	1052	61
Pine Eagle	0-10	3-14	538	924	56

PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL

5A COLUMBIA RIVER CONFERENCE

	Lg	Ovr	PS	PA	Rnk
Pendleton	3-0	12-6	932	888	11
Hermiston	2-1	6-12	796	852	17
Hood River	1-2	9-8	707	781	18
The Dalles	0-3	6-11	719	772	31

4A GREATER OREGON LEAGUE

	Lg	Ovr	PS	PA	Rnk
Baker	4-0	17-1	1088	648	4
La Grande	3-1	8-12	914	945	22
Ontario	1-3	7-14	857	906	31
Mac-Hi	0-4	2-18	578	1076	34

3A EASTERN OREGON LEAGUE

	Lg	Ovr	PS	PA	Rnk
Irrigon	5-2	16-3	929	653	14
Burns	4-2	12-8	932	803	13
Nyssa	4-2	11-8	804	694	9
Vale	4-3	8-11	699	791	15
Riverside	2-4	14-6	830	617	19
Umatilla	0-6	3-17	565	888	36

2A COLUMBIA BASIN CONFERENCE

	Lg	Ovr	PS	PA	Rnk
Weston-McEwen	4-0	13-6	1016	856	11
Heppner	4-1	12-4	822	690	12
Culver	3-2	12-8	790	732	19
Pilot Rock	1-4	11-9	867	738	22
Stanfield	0-5	2-18	620	997	33

1A BIG SKY LEAGUE

	Lg	Ovr	PS	PA	Rnk
South Wasco	10-0	17-3	974	661	7
Ione	8-2	9-11	839	925	29
Horizon Christ.	6-4	9-10	790	776	32
Sherman	6-4	8-10	731	858	33
Dufur	5-5	9-10	789	802	27
Condon/Wheel.	4-6	4-16	703	951	53
Mitch/Spray	1-9	6-12	431	783	57
Arlington	0-10	1-12	309	566	60

1A OLD OREGON LEAGUE

	Lg	Ovr	PS	PA	Rnk
Nixyaawii	11-0	20-0	1472	575	2
Powder Valley	8-2	18-2	1027	686	3
Joseph	8-3	14-4	920	608	5
Helix	7-3	13-7	878	788	15
Cove	3-7	7-12	640	798	26
Wallowa	3-8	5-15	744	975	40
Echo	2-9	7-15	840	1023	35
Pine Eagle	0-10	2-15	399	780	52

Basketball

NBA

Wednesday's Games
Indiana 105, Memphis 101
Orlando 127, L.A. Lakers 105
Brooklyn 116, Philadelphia 108
Charlotte 123, Atlanta 110
Cleveland 91, Miami 89
Boston 103, New York 73
Portland 124, Chicago 108
Phoenix 102, Dallas 88
Thursday's Games
Memphis at Detroit, 4 p.m.
Toronto at Washington, 4 p.m.
Houston at San Antonio, 5 p.m.
Milwaukee at Minnesota, 5 p.m.
Oklahoma City at Denver, 7:30 p.m.

NCAA Men's Basketball

Top 25 Schedule
Wednesday
No. 5 Michigan St. 76, Penn State 68
No. 18 Tennessee 84, LSU 61
No. 2 Virginia 74, Louisville 64
No. 8 Cincinnati 80, Houston 70
Iowa St. 93, No. 15 West Virginia 77
No. 3 Purdue 75, Maryland 67
No. 10 Texas Tech 73, Texas 71
No. 9 Arizona 100, Washington St. 72
Thursday
Creighton at No. 1 Villanova, 3:30 p.m. (FS1)
No. 16 Wichita St at Temple, 4 p.m. (ESPN2)
San Diego at No. 14 Gonzaga, 6 p.m.
No. 25 Arizona St at Washington, 8 p.m.
San Francisco at No. 13 St. Mary's, 8 p.m.
Pac-12 Schedule
Wednesday
No. 9 Arizona 100, Washington St. 72
Thursday
Oregon at Cal, 6 p.m. (PAC12)
Oregon St at Stanford, 8 p.m. (FS1)
No. 25 Arizona St at Washington, 8 p.m. (PAC12)

NCAA Women's Basketball

Top 25 Schedule
Wednesday
No. 18 Ohio State 94, Penn State 64
No. 3 Baylor 77, No. 23 Oklahoma St. 64
No. 8 Texas 55, Kansas 41
Thursday
No. 14 Texas A&M at No. 12 Tennessee, 3:30 p.m.
No. 10 Florida St at NC State, 4 p.m.
Georgia Tech at No. 19 Duke, 4 p.m.
No. 4 Louisville at Virginia, 4 p.m.
Rutgers at No. 11 Maryland, 4 p.m.
No. 1 UConn at No. 7 South Carolina, 4 p.m. (ESPN)
North Carolina at No. 5 Notre Dame, 4 p.m.
No. 17 Georgia at LSU, 5 p.m.
Northern Kentucky at No. 20 Green Bay, 5 p.m.
Purdue at No. 13 Michigan, 5 p.m.
No. 2 Miss. State at No. 15 Missouri, 5:30 p.m.

Hockey

NHL

Wednesday's Games
Toronto 5, N.Y. Islanders 0
Detroit 2, San Jose 1, SO
Washington 5, Philadelphia 3
Thursday's Games
Toronto at N.Y. Rangers, 4 p.m.
Montreal at Carolina, 4 p.m.
St. Louis at Boston, 4 p.m.
Florida at Buffalo, 4 p.m.
Anaheim at Ottawa, 4 p.m.
Philadelphia at New Jersey, 4 p.m.
Vegas at Winnipeg, 5 p.m.
Los Angeles at Nashville, 5:30 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Calgary, 6 p.m.
Dallas at Arizona, 6 p.m.
Colorado at Edmonton, 6 p.m.
Chicago at Vancouver, 7 p.m.

Football

NFL

Super Bowl 52
Sunday
New England vs. Philadelphia, 3:30 p.m. (NBC)

Golf

PGA Tour

Waste Management Phoenix Open
Site: Scottsdale, Ariz.
Course: TPC Scottsdale. Yardage: 7,216. Par: 71.
Purse: $6.9 million. Winner's share: $1,242,000.
Television: Thursday-Friday, 12-4 p.m. (Golf Channel). Saturday, 11 a.m. - 12:45 p.m. (Golf Channel), 1-4 p.m. (CBS); Sunday, 10-11:45 a.m. (Golf Channel), 12-3 p.m. (CBS).
Defending champion: Hideki Matsuyama.