

Kyle

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WeightWatchers' Contributor

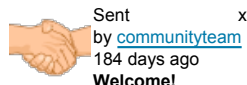
# Sports Stack

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**kylestack**  
Planning for tomorrow  
12/15/2010 12:55 AM

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[devjfl1](#) Exhaustion has won. Off to bed for me  
1/13/2011 11:15:39 PM

[pedrog263](#) is terribly sick from a stomavh bug! God willing, will recover ASAP.  
1/13/2011 8:41:50 PM

[devjfl1](#) first Podcast is coming together.  
1/13/2011 6:42:23 PM

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### What my Friends are up to

[blondekel13](#) wrote on [blondekel13's blog](#).

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[devjfl1](#) wrote on [devjfl1's blog](#).

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## Can NFL Safety Panel Protect Players?

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Written by [kylestack](#) on 1/12/2011 9:05 AM

The NFL's new Player Safety Advisory Panel includes some of the most recognizable names in football history. Their task is to use their football experience to protect today's players from all injuries; head injuries are prioritized. What's unclear is how impactful the panel can be. I hesitate to think it will make substantial progress.

The NFL announced the formation of the panel, led by ex-Oakland Raiders head coach John Madden, in a January 4th press release. It has hit the ground running. The panel will review all areas of safety assessment existing in the sport, communicate with NFL players and coaches on the effectiveness of those rules and develop new safety recommendations, among other responsibilities.

The panel's members are a who's-who list of players, coaches and executives from the 1970s, '80s and '90s -- Madden, Ronnie Lott, Anthony Munoz, Marty Schottenheimer, Ernie Accorsi, Willie Lanier, Antonio Freeman and Patrick Kerney. Their presence resonates with fans, and I believe that will help their credibility. Lott was known as a hard-hitting safety who likely concussed more than his share of ball carriers. So, he understands how susceptible players are to head injuries.

My doubts regarding this panel's effectiveness stems from the indication they can't actually enact a rule, according to the press release; they can only recommend rules to the NFL, which would then have to be agreed to by higher-ups in the league office.

An NFL spokesperson told me in that the panel will likely meet several times per month on conference calls, in addition to in-person congregations at various NFL calendar events. That part is fine. I have no doubt this panel wants to protect players of the present and future. What I doubt is whether their recommendations will be implemented. Can they make a difference?

If the NFL is to form this sort of panel, then it better take advantage of it. Potential ineffectiveness could be damaging. The impression that the panel is taking appropriate measures to protect players might ward off critics who otherwise would call out the NFL for its handling of player injuries. Furthermore, most people can identify with wasteful meetings and unproductive committees, because they see it within their own jobs. Hopefully this panel takes a more productive route. The NFL has its players' health on the line.

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