**Committee:** National Football League 2016

**Assigned Team:** Tampa Bay Buccaneers

**Delegate name:** Anthony Dagher

Collège Charlemagne

**Topic 1: Expansion**

The National Football League is without a doubt one of the biggest sports leagues in the world, and still growing exceptionally each year. This popularity has made of this national sport a large market of opportunity for expanding and therefor adding to its growth. Although this may seem as a great chance to add new teams and even become an international sport, there are several consequences that expansion could have on already existing teams. The Tampa Bay Buccaneers believe that in order to expand the organization, it is necessary that certain guidelines be put into place to insure each new and already existing team will not be at any disadvantage whatsoever.

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers values at around $1.8 B, one of the teams with the least operating income in the entire league ($75 M)[[1]](#footnote-1). The Bucs believe that there should not be any sort major expansion within the United States, since this would affect the way the Tampa Bay Buccaneers add to their roster. The team is mainly composed of young players due to the fact that it can only afford the younger college players[[2]](#footnote-2). Expansion in the United States would mean new teams in need of cheaper players or even unprotected ones, therefor competing with the Tampa Bay Buccaneer’s market. On the other hand, expansion to cities like Toronto and Mexico City would be much more favorable for the Bucs due to the fact that these “new teams” would be picking their players mostly within their own country. These cities are within the Americas so there would be very minimal jet lag; only a 2 hour difference[[3]](#footnote-3). Uncertainty comes when extreme expansions such as London get mentioned. Several things must be put into consideration for this to occur; the spectators will most likely be entirely from that country, that team will be at a large disadvantage due to the time zone, and this will end up affecting other teams including the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. The team is aware that the games played in London did result in very high attendance rates, but would this continue if there were actually a team established in London. Also, the Bucs understand that any sort of expansion would obviously add to the football fan base, and consequently bring back more in revenue.

All of this being said, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers believe that introducing international teams could largely benefit the NFL and increase growth without harming the team, and consider it an interesting decision. The Bucs main concern are the extreme cases such as London due to its many cons, as well as new American teams.

**Topic 2: Concussions and Head Safety**

Like many other sports, American football is one of hard hits and fast-pace action. Being the full contact sport that it is, injuries have become a frequent part of the game. Concussions are one of the most common kinds of injury and have shown to be quite severe on the long-term for players. The National Football League’s image is at stake when they deal with player safety, so lots of thought must be put into the decisions they make. Throughout the years, research has shown that there is a link between concussions and other diseases. The NFL have done several contributions to help with research as well as change a few of their rules, but much more must be done. The Tampa Bay Buccaneers believe that in order to improve player safety and prevent lawsuits, the NFL must act responsibly and change some aspects of the game while still preserving the traditional “hitting” of American football.

Jerry Eckwood, a former player from the Buccaneers, currently receives benefits from the NFL due to the fact that he now suffers with dementia[[4]](#footnote-4). The Tampa Bay Buccaneers consider this as a way for the NFL to look away from the real problem and that the league should truly step up and participate in new research by funding. Concerning the league’s image, it is crucial that the NFL adopts a safer gameplay style or adds safer equipment to the game[[5]](#footnote-5). In order to maintain some sort of interest from the youth, the Bucs believe that the league needs to find ways to convince the parents of the game’s safety. The NFL cannot continue denying that the game produces future disorders for the players. For example, a recent movie “Concussion” opened the eyes of many on the NFL’s problem[[6]](#footnote-6). It is clear that the league has promoted new technologies to better protect players but there is still so much to be done[[7]](#footnote-7). The team believes that concussed players be taken care of immediately and not be put back into the game any earlier than they should and that new helmets with higher-end protection should be forced to be worn by all players[[8]](#footnote-8). Adding new helmets wouldn’t change the game whatsoever but will change the player’s health dramatically. Once all of this done, the league could even promote themselves with advertisements on how the game has become much safer, but still is as fun.

All in all, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers believe that the NFL must ensure player safety by promoting new and safer technologies as well as funding several research programs to contribute to the cause. It is the league’s job to give out a good image and by doing so it will encourage more people to play the sport, benefitting the teams.

**Topic 3: Players and Criminal Offences**

The way the NFL tolerates cases of abuse and drugs is one very complex set of rules and policies. However, most of the time players aren’t treated appropriately and this gives a bad look for the organization on its severity for the subject. The players are role models for generations to come, and there is no room for any sort of wrongdoing from these athletes. The Tampa Bay Buccaneers believe that the NFL must take a more serious tone on this and show the fan base that they do not accept criminal behavior.

Aggressiveness is obviously a part of this rough sport, but it shouldn’t be done outside of the game. Players facing abuse and violence charges are offered clinical evaluations by the NFL, but once the case gets very serious, they conduct an investigation and eventually suspensions[[9]](#footnote-9). The Bucs do not accept the fact that players are so heavily protected by the organization. There should be absolutely no toleration for violence and that any professional found doing so be immediately prosecuted in court, while receiving a ban from the league. In a world where sports have become so involved with drugs and performance enhancers, the NFL must take action against these forms of abuse. Since the teams decide when they will be doing the tests, it is clear that there is room for scandals[[10]](#footnote-10). It is crucial, according to the Buccaneers, that the NFL have each team’s players be tested for drugs before each season, and include random tests conducted by the organization any time during the offseason. Any misuse of drugs must be severely punished. For now, the biggest punishment is a one year ban[[11]](#footnote-11), but the Tampa Bay Buccaneers believe that once any player is involved with substance abuse, he must be kept under continuous supervision (with tests) throughout the whole season in order to prevent any other possibility of drug abuse.

All of this being put into consideration, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers are in favor of increasing the severity of punishments for any sort of violence, and that players found to be using any prohibited substances must pursue frequent tests for the remainder of their career; if they should be found to be using drugs again, they will receive a permanent ban. The NFL must remain extremely strict on this matter and prove to the fans that there is no tolerance for abuse in the league.

1. Sports Money: 2016 NFL Valuations, http://www.forbes.com/nfl-valuations/list/#tab:overall [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Player Roster, http://www.buccaneers.com/team-and-stats/roster.html [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The World Clock, https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/difference.html?p1=250 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Jerry Eckwood, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerry\_Eckwood [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. 10 steps to make the game safer, http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/\_/id/8061129/nfl-10-steps-make-game-safer [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Here’s How the NFL Combat Concussions, http://fortune.com/2015/12/31/nfl-concussion-technology/ [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. 10 steps to make the game safer, http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/\_/id/8061129/nfl-10-steps-make-game-safer [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. NFL Personal Conduct Policy 2015, https://nflpaweb.blob.core.windows.net/media/Default/PDFs/Active/Players/PersonalConductPolicy2015.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Breaking Down How the NFL Substance Abuse Policy Works Bleacher Report, http://bleacherreport.com/articles/1875478-breaking-down-how-the-nfl-substance-abuse- policy-works. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)