



New York Giants coach Tom Coughlin, left, chats with quarterback Eli Manning during warmup exercises at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J., on Jan. 3.

# Giants' owners extend coach's contract

By Tom Canavan  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## CALDWELL, N.J.

An embattled Tom Coughlin was given another year to coach the New York Giants on Wednesday after he convinced owners he can make Eli Manning a better quarterback and the team a winner.

"He has a vision, and he understands how that vision can now move forward," co-owner Jonathan Tisch said to announce Coughlin's one-year contract extension. "He did not have to save his job. He did

not have to talk us into anything."

Coughlin, 60, seemingly was on the hot seat after weathering a disappointing 8-8 regular season, fan and player unrest and a second straight first-round loss in the playoffs Sunday.

In the two days that followed, Tisch and fellow co-owner John Mara talked football and coaching philosophy with Coughlin, who had a year left on the deal he signed in 2004.

The owners didn't ask Coughlin to make any changes, and they said they were satisfied he was the right man to lead the Giants.

"Tom Coughlin is our coach for 2007 and hopefully for many years after that," Mara said.

Terms of the extension were not immediately available. Coughlin was to earn \$3 million in 2007.

Coughlin said he appreciated the decision and was not surprised.

Many questioned whether Coughlin, who has a 25-25 record with the Giants, was the right coach for a team that faltered a year after winning the NFC East with an 11-5 mark. Despite reports that players were tuning out their no-nonsense coach, Mara said Coughlin still has

the respect of the team.

Mara admitted there were bound to be fans who were not happy with the decision.

"I am certainly sensitive to what the fans think. I have received a lot of mail. But at the end of the day you can't make decisions on what the fans say, but what your eyes tell you and what your experience in the game tells you," he said.

Mara said a major part of the interview process was listening to what Coughlin had to say about Manning, and he was satisfied with the answers.

# Eagles get no breaks from NFL

## League schedule gives team fewest days between playoff games

By Rob Maaddi  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## PHILADELPHIA

The Philadelphia Eagles spent every Tuesday during the season away from the field, relaxing and resting before starting preparations for their next game.

Thanks to quirky scheduling, the Eagles returned to practice a day early this week, less than 48 hours after a last-second victory against the New York Giants on Sunday sent them to the second round of the playoffs.

While both the AFC wild-card winners, Indianapolis and New England, have seven days between games, the Eagles (11-6) are playing the New Orleans Saints (10-6) six days after beating the Giants. Seattle's game at Chicago on Sunday is eight days after its victory against Dallas.

If the NFL would've scheduled the Eagles-Saints game for Sunday and the Seahawks-Bears for Saturday night, every team would've had equal rest.

"You can't even think about it," quarterback Jeff Garcia said Tuesday. "You have to just keep focused and keep working on the things that we've been working on throughout the season. We got our day off on Monday, and Tuesday becomes our Wednesday."

"It's one of those things where you can't worry about whether we should've been playing on Sunday or how the NFL could've helped us out or anything like that. It's the playoffs. We move forward."

It's no different from playing the Sunday after a Monday night game. The Eagles were 3-0 on Mondays this season and won the following Sunday each time.

Coach Andy Reid conducted a shorter practice Tuesday to allow the players more time to recover. The game plan was implemented during the outdoor session, so the team headed indoors Wednesday, and crowd noise was pumped through speakers to simulate the noisy atmosphere expected at the Louisiana Superdome.

"You give them the opportunity to bounce back and then you get back into a normal look on Wednesday and Thursday," Reid said.

Since the league went to the current playoff format in 1990, the team with the extra week to prepare for the divisional round is 28-4 in the NFC. Three of those four upsets have occurred in the past five years, starting with the Eagles' victory at Chicago on Jan. 19, 2002.

Carolina won at St. Louis in 2004 and in Chicago last year, and Green Bay beat the 49ers in 1996. Reid was an assistant coach with the Packers when they won at San Francisco 11 years ago.



The Philadelphia Eagles' Rod Hood crosses the field during practice in Philadelphia on Tuesday. The Eagles returned to practice a day early this week because of the playoff schedule.

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