

Union may fight on without QB

Tom Brady's role in the Deflategate saga is over, but union attorneys fighting against the unfettered power of NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell may continue the fight without the star Patriots quarterback.

"They may keep going due to the precedent that this has set," said Daniel Wallach, a sports law attorney who has followed the case. "The current decision could impact player discipline for a generation, and it would be difficult for the union to craft legal arguments in the face of the commissioner's superpowers that are limitless under the current decision."

Brady decided yesterday to stop his involvement in a lawsuit challenging Goodell's edict to suspend him for four games for being generally aware of footballs that may have been deflated before the 2015 AFC Championship Game.

Brady made the announcement on Facebook.

"It has been a challenging 18 months and I have made the difficult decision to no longer proceed with the legal process," Brady wrote. "I'm going to work hard to be the best player I can be for the New England Patriots and I look forward to having the opportunity to return to the field this fall."

Brady won't ask the Second Circuit Court of Appeals to stay Goodell's punishment on the heels of the court's decision to not rehear the case. That means he will serve the four-game suspension — a league-issued penalty that Goodell upheld after an arbitration hearing on July 28, 2015.

While Brady will no longer fight for his playing time, the NFL Players Association — which has represented the All-Pro throughout the controversy — said it was still considering its options.

"We will continue to review all of our options and we reserve our rights to petition for cert to the Supreme Court," the NFLPA said, in a statement.

Patriots owner Robert Kraft stood by his quarterback, and in a statement said the "entire process has indelibly taken a toll on our organization."

"His reluctant decision to stop pursuing further action and to put this situation behind him is what he feels is best for the team in preparation for this season and is fully supported by me and our entire organization," Kraft said.

The remaining legal maneuver for the NFLPA will be to petition the Supreme Court to hear the case. The union has until October to file.

The long-running controversy started after the Indianapolis Colts notified the NFL about concerns over underinflated footballs during the 2015 AFC Championship Game.

Brady was suspended by the league for four games, and Goodell upheld the punishment.

U.S. District Court Judge Richard Berman overturned Goodell's decision, but a divided three-judge panel of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals later reversed Berman, citing long-standing labor law.

Brady's final move was to ask the full panel of the Second Circuit to hear his case, but that was thrown out on Wednesday.

By: Bob McGovern