

John Madden welcomes Favre, Vick to his video game

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In this video game image released by EA Sports, an image of NFL quarterback Brett Favre wearing a Minnesota Vikings uniform is shown from "Madden NFL 10." (AP Photo/EA Sports)

(AP) -- It's been a busy week in professional football, with a couple of big, controversial stars - Brett Favre and Michael Vick - joining NFL rosters. No worries, though, for John Madden, because both men are already set to take the field in "Madden NFL 10," his namesake video game.

Fans who bought "Madden" when it came out Aug. 14 can download both players thanks to roster updates posted by publisher EA Sports. For Favre, the process was easier: Taking him out of last season's New York Jets uniform and putting him in his new Minnesota Vikings gear. "We know what Brett can do," says Madden. "He'll be quarterback No. 1."

Vick, however, has been out of the league for a couple of years while serving jail time on felony dogfighting charges. What the new Philadelphia Eagle does "is going to be determined on the road," Madden says. "When's he gonna play? What'll they do with him? It's a big guessing thing."

Madden, who retired this year from broadcasting NFL games for NBC, is still keeping busy working with EA Sports. "I talk to a lot of people who play the video game," he says. "Sometimes we think it's just kids, but kids who started playing at 16 are now 40." And NFL rookies, "guys 22, 23, they're all [video-game](#) players," he says.

A survey performed for EA by the University of Oregon's Sports Marketing Center found that "Madden NFL" players were considerably more knowledgeable about the sport than other fans. For example, 67 percent of "Madden" players could correctly identify specific passing routes, compared with 48 percent of non-gamers.

"Fans aren't given enough credit," Madden says. "They know a lot more than fans 25 years ago."

And "Madden NFL" will keep evolving, too. "The way the NFL is set up, change is inevitable," Madden says. "And we'll change with them."

On the Net:

<http://maddennfl.easports.com/>

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