

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Hallmark Channel has breaking news, go to [www.crownmediapress.com](http://www.crownmediapress.com) for more images and more information.

**TWITTER:** @HallmarkChannel, @7BoomerEsiason, #KittenBowl

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**HALLMARK CHANNEL NAMES STAR ATHLETE AND NFL LEGEND**

**BOOMER ESIASON**

**AS COMMISSIONER OF HISTORY'S FIRST FELINE FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

Hallmark Channel proudly announces NFL all-star Boomer Esiason as the commissioner of the first-ever Feline Football League (FFL). Esiason will serve as spokesperson for the FFL, which includes a Scouting Combine, draft, season games and playoffs that lead up to the biggest feline showdown in history, "Kitten Bowl II," premiering Su-purr Bowl Sunday, February 1, 2015.

"We couldn't have formed history's first Feline Football League without an exceptional commissioner," said Bill Abbott, President and CEO, Crown Media Family Networks.

"Boomer Esiason is the embodiment for everything the Feline Football League stands for and we're excited to bring him on as the new face and leader of the network's newest league that celebrates pet adoption."

Upon graduating from the University of Maryland, Esiason played a 14-year career in the NFL as quarterback for the Cincinnati Bengals, New York Jets and Arizona Cardinals. As one of the most successful quarterbacks in NFL history, Esiason was named NFL's Most Valuable Player in 1998 and became a four-time Pro Bowl quarterback. In 1995, Esiason was honored with the Walter Peyton Man of the Year award for his excellence on the football field as well as his charitable work through the Boomer Esiason Foundation, an organization created to fund research to find a cure for cystic fibrosis. Esiason finished his athletic career with 2,969 completions in 5,205 pass attempts (57% completion

percentage) for 247 touchdowns and 37,920 yards.

After retiring from the NFL after the 1997 season, Esiason began his career in the broadcast booth as a commentator for ABC's NFL "Monday Night Football." Esiason also called games for Westwood One/CBS Radio Sports' "Monday Night Football" for nearly a decade and in 2002 joined CBS Sports as a studio analyst for "The NFL Today." In 2007, Esiason debuted as host of WFAN's morning radio show "Boomer and Carton in the Morning" and has also hosted "The Boomer Esiason Show" on Madison Square Garden Network.

The FFL brings adorable—and adoptable!—kittens together with celebrities and personalities from all facets of the entertainment world as the kittens compete on the field in Hallmark Channel Stadium. "Kitten Bowl II" is part of Hallmark Channel's corporate initiative "Pet Project," a movement dedicated to celebrating pets and the incredible joy they bring to our lives. The FFL and "Kitten Bowl II" will significantly raise awareness of the plight of shelter animals across the country as Hallmark Channel once again partners with North Shore Animal League America and Last Hope Animal Rescue and Rehabilitation, who will provide the feline competitors with forever loving homes once the games conclude.

"Kitten Bowl II" is executive produced by Eyeworks USA's JD Roth, Todd A. Nelson, Adam Kaloustian and Brant Pinvidic, with Jesse Drollette serving as co-executive producer. Eyeworks USA credits include "Extreme Weight Loss" (ABC), "Bar Rescue" (Spike) and "My Cat From Hell" (Animal Planet), among others.

Hallmark Channel, owned and operated by Crown Media Holdings, Inc., is a 24-hour basic cable network that provides a diverse slate of high-quality family entertainment available in high definition (HD) and standard definition (SD) to a national audience of 86 million subscribers. Hallmark Channel is the nation's leading destination for quality family programming featuring an ambitious slate of original content, including movies; scripted series, such as *Cedar Cove* and *When Calls the Heart*; annual specials like *Hero Dog Awards* and *Kitten Bowl*; and a daily 2-hour lifestyle show, *Home & Family*. Hallmark Channel is also home to annual holiday franchise, *Countdown to Christmas*, featuring a lineup of 24/7 holiday programming, including *The 12 New Movies of Christmas*. Rounding out the networks' lineup are television's most beloved sitcoms and series, including *The Golden Girls*, *The Middle*, *Little House on the Prairie*, and *Frasier*. Hallmark Channel's sibling network, Hallmark Movies & Mysteries, available in HD and SD, features a unique mix of content including original movies and acquired series that are dramatic in tone and focus on the lighter side of the mystery genre, as well as classic presentations from the acclaimed Hallmark Hall of Fame library.

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