With Occurrence of Concussions in the NFL Under Attack?

Anthony G. Barilla
**With occurrence of concussions is the NFL under attack?**

The National Football League has seen revenues soar to billions of dollars. Advertising has successfully built off-season activities into can’t-miss TV events. Moreover, the NFL has made regular season games into can’t-miss events. Fantasy football allows fans to become more interactive with the game by promoting individual player performance. The individual player may be on a team that normally would not be of interest, but it is now because of potential fantasy points.

This increasing interest has caused a spike in ratings. The NFL has become an economic juggernaut, replacing baseball as America’s most popular sport. So why is the NFL under attack? In a word: concussions.

Concussions are defined by Dictionary.com as (1) an injury to the brain, often resulting from a blow to the head, that can cause temporary disorientation, memory loss or unconsciousness, (2) an injury to an organ of the body, usually caused by a violent blow or shaking and (3) any sudden violent jolting or shaking.

The long-term effects of concussions are still relatively unknown. Although a court of law doesn’t allow supposition, research does. New research is attempting to detect the by-products of concussions. These by-products possibly include early onset dementia or Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, memory loss, loss of cognitive ability and possible suicide tendencies.

The recent suicides of retired NFL players Dave Duerson (2/17/2011) and Junior Seau (5/2/2012) made front page news. Both died of a gunshot wound to the chest. Duerson informed his family that he wanted his brain to be used for scientific research at Boston University.

The university is conducting research on chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) caused from football. Researchers confirmed that Duerson suffered from a neurodegenerative disease linked to concussions. Seau’s family is considering whether to allow researchers to study his brain, but as of this writing no decision has been made.

The similar nature of their deaths could be coincidental, but Duerson was known to have suffered a concussion during his career while Seau had no prior reported history of concussions. However, Gina Seau, Junior’s ex-wife, reported that Seau did sustain concussions during his career but kept playing.

Seau’s approach has been the norm in football, a sport known for tough play. This could cost the NFL millions, if not billions, of dollars. The NFL in its dealings with the National Football League Players Association has recently begun to take a more long-run approach to the health of ex-players.

Standard ex-players’ health insurance benefits expire five years after the conclusion of their career. Players must pay for COBRA benefits to extend coverage. The level of need both monotonically and increasingly for most retirees can be staggering. This brings us to the reason the NFL is under attack.

If concussions can be linked to Pop Warner football, the cost of insurance could drive some parents (and children) away from the game. If concussions can be linked to high school or college football, the higher insurance costs could cause some schools to drop football.

I realize this statement is border-line sacrilegious in the South, but cuts in education dollars by local and state governments have left many extra-curricular actives subject to cancellation. If football players do not have the chance to develop in college, the NFL could be forced to create a minor league or a developmental league system. The cost of that, coupled with an increased costs of insurance because of the long-run insurance costs, could cause the profit structure of the league to change drastically.

The NFL could lose some of its TV audience if many of the best athletes head into other sports, coupled with decreased player recognition as fewer collegiate athletes enter the league.

My above arguments are all supposition, but the results of concussions are becoming widely known and expensive, just something for the NFL to think about.

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**NeSmith parts staffers earn awards**

CLAXTON — Demere NeSmith, dealer principal of NeSmith Chevrolet Buick GMC in Claxton, has announced that three of the dealership’s employees were awarded as Platinum Parts Sales Professionals for achieving over $3 million in annual parts sales.

The awards were given to assistant parts manager Tim Bland, wholesale parts specialist Debbie Fluet and wholesale parts specialist Shelly Hemphill.

“$It’s a team effort among our entire operation, and I cannot say enough about the way our family-oriented business works together to make this dealership a success,” said NeSmith.

NeSmith parts manager David Anderson said he’s proud to have Bland, Fluet and Hemphill on his team.

“The NFL could lose some of its fans into can’t miss TV events.

We boomers probably remember it quite well, as it was an ad for a laxative, and it was suggesting that when it comes to constipation, prunes were just not the answer — that “better living through chemistry” was the solution to the situation.

Well, as an appraiser, I often ask the same question but for a different reason. I ask the question because when I am doing the research on items in an appraisal, if the value of the particular item warrants it, I must look for what we call “comparables” or “comps” for short.

The comparables should be similar to the subject item. For example, if I have a federal bow front chest of drawers, I will search for another federal bow front chest with similar characteristics. Does the piece have banding? Brass batwing pulls? How many drawers does it have and how are they arranged? Is it American or English or something else? Does it have a history or provenance as we call it?

The answers to the above questions are also asked about the comparables I can find. The best of all situations is when I find another chest that is virtually identical to the subject property. The worst situation is when I cannot find anything even remotely like my piece of furniture.

But what usually occurs is that I can find several pieces that are at least similar to the one I am researching. And that is where compare and contrast comparables come into play.

If my piece is banded, are the others I have found? If they are not, I give my piece points for being more decorative. How many drawers do the comparables have? If they have more or they have two drawers over three, it may mean a premium for the comparable pieces.

What is the condition of the pieces? If mine has been refinished, it usually warrants a downgrade. American trumps British, at least in America. If it was owned by an illustrious individual and it can be proven through written and/or photographic evidence, brownie points to my property.

Other considerations must also come into play. Why did this comparable sell for so much more than my piece when they are so similar? Was the market particularly good that year for furniture like this? Did Martha Stewart hype federal bow front chests? Did two antique dealers who hate each other’s guts duke it out in the auction room? Conversely, why did this comparable sell so cheaply? Was there a surplus of chests for sale? Was it a façade with a rebuilt back and sides? Was it a reproduction? Finally, how is the appraisal to be used? Equitable family distribution? Estate taxes? Insurance replacement? And if the latter, where does the client most often purchase furniture like this — at retail or auction?

As you can see, answers in the appraisal field are rarely simple or cut and dried — not, at least, when it comes to things of beauty, value and age.

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Demere NeSmith, dealer principal, David Anderson, Timothy Bland, Shelly Hemphill and Debbi Fluet.