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Are Concussions Ruining the NFL?

While football is a physical sport and concussions is a common injury found in players. Concussions are commonplace in American football. For a long time, the problem was hidden by the league. After numerous suicides of prominent players, a rethinking begins. The NFL referees throw more flags; if a hit is physical or to the head, this makes it to where flags are thrown more often even if a referee is overexaggerating a hit and this is the very reason why the NFL is losing popularity. The players in the NFL know that this issue needs to be brought to light because they are the ones who are playing and have to pay fines for making a physical play in a brutal sport. Therefore , it is hypothesized that the reason of decreasing popularity of NFL is due to concussion.

A concussion is the lightest form of traumatic brain injury. It is more common than most people think. Nevertheless, symptoms should be taken seriously, because otherwise threaten soon consequential damage. In American football, that's why rule changes have been made to protect players. In connection with a blow or a blow on the head very typical complaints occur. Depending on the severity of the injury, symptoms can sometimes occur immediately after the accident, in other cases with a time delay of up to 24 hours. Especially in children, symptoms often appear later. In part, the accident is followed directly by a brief unconsciousness or loss of memory of what happened around and after the accident. These symptoms must be taken seriously because they can also be a manifestation of a more serious brain injury. Other typical symptoms include moderate to severe headache, nausea and dizziness. Frequently, sufferers also report hypersensitivity to light and noise.

The head injuries should not be underestimated. 32 percent of these were bruises, 16 percent were brain injury. "The biggest danger in football is based on the impact of a header duel," Sheth, Dharun and Saumil 117).The referees in the NFL have no easy job. Is her performance good, that hardly finds mention? If they make mistakes, they are the scapegoat of fans and the media. The referees are evenly distributed all over the field in order to have a maximum of vision of the game. Each referee has a definite role even if some overlap strongly (notably the Field Judge and the Side Judge). Referees are equipped with the famous black and white striped uniform hence their nickname zebras. Among the equipment of referees, note the importance of the whistle, the cap and the yellow handkerchief penalty. When a referee sees a foul, he throws this yellow handkerchief about the place of the fault. If he sees a second fault, he throws his cap.

The NFL has fired only two referees in the past decade. Otherwise, the league simply let the contracts with their referees expire, if their performance did not meet the requirements. The NFL Referee Association, the union of NFL referees, described the decision as "precipitate" and "ruthless." (Pellman, Elliot J., et al. 80) They wants to challenge the dismissal with an official complaint. In the pre-season matches, the weak referee performances were not yet so important, but on September 5, the new season has begun. With the replacement referees. They will remain in action until at least matchday five, with 17 games in regular NFL playing time before the playoffs begin. What looks like an involuntarily grotesque show so far could have even more serious effects on the favorite sport of the Americans.

 The concussion has plagued the NFL since the 1990s, and its initial response — avoidance and superficial gestures to appease critics — damaged its public image. However, in recent years, the league has moved as a leader in preventing concussions and research, according to a new University of Michigan study (Bailey1). The study showed that the NFL’s recently proactive stance shows how a large organization can wrest control over the very problem that was haunting it. As less attention whistles, more fouls happen, the game becomes more brutal and uncontrolled. DeMaurice Smith, chairman of the players' association, is therefore concerned about the safety of the players: "On a scale of one to ten, the situation represents a twelve," he says. For example, Mario Williams of the Buffalo Bills complained about numerous, unsuspected beatings in the face (Branch1). And Troy Aikman, formerly quarterback and now a television commentator, stated after the first games of the season, "I've seen a lot of illegal actions that can lead to serious injuries." The amateur referees endangered the health of players with their lack of experience. Drew Brees, quarterback of the New Orleans Saints, explains: "It's like putting young players in front of a top team and showing them off - how do they develop confidence and strength?" (Branch1). It is not the first time that NFL referees have been excluded from the game. Eleven years ago, the league was in a similar situation, but back then the replacement men came from semiprofessional college sports. However, these more experienced referees did not want to backstab the NFL directors this time, weakening their bargaining ground.

Already on matchday one, the Super Bowl winners New York Giants opened against the Dallas Cowboys, the amateur referees made game-changing mistakes: rule-compliant plays were whistled, players were penalized for actions they had not taken, rules were wrong, often designed too soft. The players know how to take advantage of this - which obviously causes the biggest problem. (Didehbani, Nyaz, et al.418).

To protect the players and themselves, the National Football League (NFL) changed the rules. Attacks with the helmet against the opponent's helmet were banned. As early as 2009, the so-called Concussion Protocol was introduced and has since been adapted steadily. Triggers were increasingly complaints of current and former players because of head problems in the largest football league in the world. Especially the case of Aaron Hernandez caused a stir. The former tight-end of the New England Patriots hanged himself in his prison cell in September 2017, where he was imprisoned for a 2012 murder. His wife blamed the football and sued the NFL. At autopsy, Hernandez diagnosed the degenerative disease CTE(chronic traumatic encephalopathy). Not an isolated case- Scientists at Boston University and the Boston Healthcare System CTE were able to prove that 110 out of 111 brains from dead football professionals were examined. The disease is considered to be the result of repeated beating of the head and can lead to memory loss, depression and dementia. In the summer of 2017, the NFL has already paid a billion dollars (about 830 million euros) to former players affected by CTE to avert further lawsuits. (Simson-Wood, Taylor, and Robert 13).

Concludingly, the reason of decreasing popularity of NFL is due to concussion or in other words it is ruining the NFL players. Former players have already received the American Football Main Series, NFL, for compensation in a contract that was drafted just before federal law was issued for a mass appeal. (Didehbani, Nyaz, et al. 422).NHL and former players are currently on their own legal war on the subject. Players claim that the NHL was aware of the problems caused by concussions but did not take them into account and did not tell them about them. The football team can no longer rely on lack of information. The Internet is full of information. It is just a matter of recklessness and gambling by players. Every blow to the head is dangerous. It's about the human brain and the rest of life. As brutal as this sounds, man can live without limb and internal organs can be changed, but the brain is and remains. There's one man in them. Damaged cannot be replaced.

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