

THE NATIONAL FELON LEAGUE: WEEK 2 TRASH TALK

Welp. Not a particularly banner week for the National Football League. In fact, I am not sure I have ever seen a league, any league, take quite the self inflicted beating that Goodell and the NFL have this week.

The Ray Rice affair was already quite the ugly black eye before all hell broke loose, and appropriately so, with the release of the TMZ tape clip from inside the elevator at the Revel Casino in New Jersey. Marcy already covered the tape and some of its implications. I don't have a ton to add here, but I do have a couple of things to say. First, the NFL and Goodell are just flat lying through their teeth about the video. I have dealt with pro security offices before, including one in the NFL. They are almost always run by either ex-FBI or ex-state police. Experienced people that know what they are doing and are very connected to police and other local authorities (say, for instance prosecutors). If the Ravens and NFL security wanted the video, they would have the video, whether from the Atlantic City Police or from the Revel Casino itself. The thought they couldn't get it is absurd. And that is irrespective of the law enforcement member that says he gave it to the NFL.

Secondly, a lot of people are shocked and outraged that Rice was give a diversion plea. Frankly, I am not all that shocked; diversion is not at all uncommon where there are no serious physical injuries, no prior convictions and the victim uncooperative as to prosecution and requests that diversion be given. That is certainly the case here, and from talking to a couple of experienced attorneys in New Jersey, it is not at all unheard of there. Here is the actual prosecutor's reasoning for doing so. Here is a TMZ report citing anonymous junior

prosecutors in the Atlantic County DA's office saying it is very rare and expressing outrage. Frankly, in Arizona, I think the Rice case would be filed as a misdemeanor to start with and while diversion would be discretionary, it would not be uncommon. Time, and their own conduct, will tell if diversion was the right decision and path in the case of the Rices.

Lastly, I cannot shake the thought that Rice has some leverage against the NFL, and maybe the Ravens. While there is no specific double jeopardy against successive punishment per se for the NFL, Article 46, §4 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement states:

The Commissioner and a Club will not both discipline a player for the same act or conduct. The Commissioner's disciplinary action will preclude or supersede disciplinary action by any Club for the same act or conduct.

It is not hard to see how Rice could make some hay with this. He is staying very quiet regarding legal action, and that is probably very smart while the NFL is self destructing, but I bet it is coming, and he may well have a pretty strong argument. Goodell clearly senses this coming and has issued some classic Goodell bullshit trying to head it off. Problem is there are already several witnesses who claim Rice did tell the whole story. Who do you root for here, Rice or Goodell? Yeesh, it is all just pathetic.

Then there is the black eye of the Carolina Panthers and Greg Hardy, who, after being convicted of domestic violence apparently every bit as bad as that of Rice, will be suiting up and playing this weekend. Granted, Hardy has appealed the case, which appears to entail a trial *de novo*, but still, rather uncomfortable in light of Rice.

And then, boom! Adrian Peterson is indicted for reckless or negligent injury to a child. He claims he was just acting as a parent and

disciplining his child. But the kid was only four years old, and the pictures of the injuries are pretty damning. Interestingly, the first time the Montgomery County prosecutor submitted the case to a grand jury, they no billed it...that is they refused to return charges. So the prosecutor shopped it to a second grand jury, who did. I am rather uncomfortable with that, but, while some jurisdictions have rules limiting such practice, it does not appear to be forbidden in Texas. The clincher to it all is that Peterson has had Rusty Hardin representing him for months. Never count Rusty out, but man the details are really troubling. Unlike the Panthers and Greg Hardy, the Vikings immediately deactivated Peterson, and he will not play against the Patriots in Minnesota's home opener.

There is a lot more that could be said about all the criminal and league issues in the NFL, and we will undoubtedly doing so for some time to come. For now, let us take a quick look at the actual games. Before Adrian Peterson was bounced, I was thinking the Vikings and Pats would be a great game and the Vikings had a very good chance to send Bill Bel and the Pats off to an 0-2 start. They still may, but it just got a lot tougher. The Falcons at Bengals could be pretty interesting, as could Lions at Panthers. Will also be interesting to see if Buffalo can put together another full game; if so, they can beat Miami.

Not a lot of sizzle in the college schedule this week. The best bet may be Georgia at South Carolina. The Gamecocks got their ass handed to them by Kenny Football and Texas A+M last time out. And Georgia is good and has a all world running back, Todd Gurley. Keep your eye on this kid, he is great. Maybe UCLA at Texas could be good, be nice to see the Longshorens get whipped again, and UCLA is very good. Other than that, a pretty meh schedule.

Hats off to the Phoenix Mercury who won another WNBA Championship last night, sweeping the Chicago Sky. And they did it without Brittney

Griner who sat out the game with a retina issue.
Diana Taurasi owned the fourth quarter and won
the game.

Well, there you have it. Sad part is Law and
Order: NFL is actually more interesting than the
games this week. Roger Goodell has a jailbreak
on his hands. Bleech.