

Will the Broncos have a workhorse running back or a committee?

By Mark Kizla
The Denver Post
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The Denver Post's Mark Kizla on Monday answered sports questions from readers in a live Lunch Special chat. Here are the highlights:

Without a QB competition this year, how big of a difference do you think that'll make as far as the offense's chemistry?

Kiz: The Broncos found out the hard way: Quarterback competitions are for bad football teams. Now ... there's an exception to every rule. But if an NFL team goes into training camp uncertain who its QB is, that's almost always a bad sign. I don't know if Case Keenum will be the quarterback he was in 2017 for Minnesota ... or more like the back-up QB he was most of his NFL career. But you know and I know and Vance Joseph knows and Demaryius Thomas knows that the starting QB against Seattle for the season-opener will be Keenum. And that's a good thing, because there's no confusion in the huddle, no splitting of reps at practice, no temptation for a player in the locker room to waste even an ounce of energy hoping for one QB or the other to earn the starting job.

What level of production do you think is reasonable to expect from the Broncos tight ends this year?

Kiz: Tight ends. Broncos Country has an obsession with who's going to play tight end. Let's face it. Rob Gronkowski ain't walking through that door at Dove Valley Headquarters. So what's reasonable to expect as production from the Denver tight ends in 2018? More than last year, which was next to nothing. But don't get your hopes up to high. Merely hope that Jake Butt is healthy enough to give Case Keenum a viable option short and over the middle in the red zone or when the Broncos need 4 yards to move the sticks on third down. It's Courtland Sutton that Denver selected in the second round on the draft. If John Elway picked the right guy, then that tells you the third wide receiver should be a more viable target for Keenum than any of the Denver tight ends.

OF COURSE Mark Reynolds would hit 2 HRs on national TV in his Washington Nationals debut. OF COURSE he would.

Kiz: There are some Rockies loyalists who told me I've been too tough on Ian Desmond. But the man is making \$22 million and hitting .170. Yes, it's still early in the season. I do, however, invoke the Mother's Day rule. (It's a rule I made up ... so if you don't like it, discard it.) I try not to make any serious judgments on a baseball player or team until Mother's Day. But if early in June, there's a player or team only a mother could love, then it's trouble. Doesn't mean there's no way out of the trouble. But the trouble is legit. The Rockies are in legit trouble if Desmond cannot hit. And it's especially frustrating, because general manager Jeff Bridich could've resigned Mark Reynolds for 10 percent of what the team is paying Desmond this season.

Now that we have a better idea of which running backs on the roster, which one(s) do you think will lead the team in rushing yards, catches, and TDs this year? I'm sensing it'll be RB by committee.

Kiz: The last thing I want to see is the Broncos employ the dreaded "Running Back by Committee." I'm OK with a lead back and a change of pace back. A workhorse and a third-and-long specialist. But if it's by committee, then I go back to my idea about a QB competition. It's often a sign that the talent isn't what you need to win. The Broncos used a third-round pick on Royce Freeman for Oregon. If they picked correctly, he should lead the team in every meaningful statistical category for a running back. And if Freeman doesn't, maybe my man Phillip Lindsay! not only makes the team, but gets a shot in the rotation. If Freeman isn't the guy, it doesn't mean the Broncos are doomed to miss the playoffs. But it would mean that Mr. Elway whiffed on another draft choice.

Hi Mark, I keep thinking about the decision to pass on Shane Ray's fifth year option and I get the bad feeling the Broncos made a mistake on this. We know he's a Kansas City guy and my biggest fear is he'll sign with the Chiefs and haunt us for years to come. Interested in your thoughts.

Kiz: There is immense hand-wringing about Shane Ray. He has been a nice football player for the Broncos. He was sidetracked by injury in 2017. But if you've seen a Pro Bowler in Ray, then you have better eyesight (and insight) than I do. I would worry more about Ray staying healthy enough to make a big impact for the Broncos in 2018 rather than what team he might join and come back to haunt the Broncos in 2019, But that's just me.

Is the QB race already over?

Kiz: If the Broncos quarterback race isn't all over, then John Elway wasted \$25 million guaranteed on Case Keenum. So for Keenum's sake, Elway's sake and the sake of Broncos Country, I hope the QB race is over.

What does Bradley Chubb's rookie season look like? Will he be a full time starter or a backup?

Kiz: Bradley Chubb better play at least 60 percent of the snaps. If not, Chubb isn't the guy John Elway thought he was when the Broncos decided against trading out of the No. 5 pick with Buffalo. Von Miller was far from perfect as a rookie. But you could see a young Miller was an impact player. We better be able to see it clear as day with Chubb ... or there's gonna be trouble in Broncos Country.

Mark, you have had a glimpse of Chad Kelly at camp. I am curious to get your take on his physical attributes as it relates to throwing mechanics, velocity, accuracy, command with his teammates, fitness level, etc. and if you had a chance to speak with him to gauge his maturity level.

Kiz: Stop with Chad Kelly. Stop, stop, stop. I wish the young man well. If he performs well, he can beat out Paxton Lynch for the back-up job. But, from my experience, almost every Kelly question is asked with the wishful thinking that his name is Jim Kelly. Wouldn't that be wonderful? And I think it would also be real cool if I woke up tomorrow as George Clooney.

How does the playbook look this season? Does the new quarterback change things?

Kiz: Bill Musgrave has not shown me the playbook. Keep waiting for it to pop up for download on my tablet, but as yet ... No such luck. I would expect there will be a fair amount of West Coast offensive principles in there. (Gary Kubiak is back in the building and let's see how much input he has in

philosophy, for better or worse.) I would also hope the playbook will be a work in progress, shaped to Keenum's preferences, during spring practice. If not, why have spring practice.

How will the receiving corps in Denver benefit from Keenum's arrival?

Kiz: Emmanuel Sanders and Demaryius Thomas should know who their starting QB is, week-in and week-out. That's a benefit, as either Sanders or Thomas would gladly tell you. The NFL is a league where almost everything is game-to-game and day-to-day, so whatever little certainty a player can have brings peace of mind.

Which rookies will make an immediate this season?

Kiz: Is it OK if I watch the rookies in training camp before making the call? But at least two rookies, including Bradley Chubb, better have a big impact. If not, Vance Joseph is going to get fired.

Sir Kiz. What have you heard in terms of rumors, innuendo or other on potential Avs offseason moves? Any guess as to what the odds are of the Avs signing Tavares?

Kiz: John Tavares will be the name whispered most often in hockey once the Stanley Cup is raised. The Avalanche is a longshot to sign him. General manager Joe Sakic has tried to downplay Colorado's interest. But I do strongly believe Nathan MacKinnon is pushing hard for Tavares to join him as a 1-2 punch that could bring back memories of Peter Forsberg and some guy named Joe. Will that make a difference? I dunno. But I'm grabbing some popcorn and staying tuned, just in case.

Excuse me Broncos fans, I would like to comment on the Rockies. Bridich is responsible for the mess Desmond has created and he needs to fix it. My suggestion is to trade Desmond for Mark Reynolds and give Washington a lot of money as well.

Kiz: Jeff Bridich made a boo-boo on Ian Desmond. That's being generous, I think. But I don't think the Washington Nationals would trade Mark Reynolds for Ian Desmond even if Bridich also sent \$25 million to DC in the deal.

Kelly beating out Paxton Lynch would significant in my view. Much like the VP of the USA, only a heartbeat away. And, your Clooney wish is scary.

Kiz: Happy to talk about my scary thoughts all you want. Not gonna talk about Kelly any more today, except to echo what Vance Joseph had to say: It's good to see he's not a chubby little kid any more. That's a start.

How many game leash do you feel coach Vance Joseph has?

Kiz: The leash on Vance Joseph will grow longer with each victory and tighter with every defeat.

Kelly seems intriguing as a QB prospect.

Kiz: Aargh!

Will the defense, offense or both benefit from the new rookies?

Kiz: The offense needs more help. So there seems to be more opportunity for Courtland Sutton and Royce Freeman. But that's a gauge of opportunity, rather than a prediction at this point.

Desmond messed with his swing in spring training, then went back to what wasn't working. Looks like a mistake by the Rox, but it doesn't look like there are in-house options. If Desmond stays below the Mendoza line, what options are there?

Kiz: If Desmond doesn't hit, the options are A) Ryan McMahon finding his swing in minors and getting a chance to play every day; B) Swapping prospects for a veteran first baseman (Joey Votto? Somebody else?), or C) The Rockies missing the playoffs because they can't score runs (and would've ever think that?)

Chad Kelly transforms from “little tubby kid” to Denver Broncos’ backup quarterback contender

By Gina Mizell
The Denver Post
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Vance Joseph recalled last weekend that Chad Kelly was a “little tubby kid” when he joined the Broncos last year, a Mr. Irrelevant who was not able to play during the 2017 season while recovering from wrist surgery. Kelly has since traded meals with fried foods for dishes featuring spinach and chicken, slimming down his 6-foot-2 frame. And, after about 18 months away from football, Kelly now feels primed to battle Paxton Lynch for Denver’s backup quarterback job.

“I knew I needed to move around, get back to my old playing weight (from) back in early college and high school,” said Kelly, who was listed at 224 pounds at the beginning of last season. “(I’m) kind of feeling I can move around and do some things with my legs, but also (remain) powerful in throwing the ball ...

“It’s been (a) really long (wait). But finally getting out here, you can kind of feel like yourself again. This is what you do. This is your job.”

“Consistency” was the word Kelly uttered most during his media session following Saturday’s walkthrough practice with Denver’s rookies. He has not had much of that since his senior college season at Mississippi, where he finished third on the school’s all-time list in career passing yards (6,800) and passing touchdowns (50) before a bevy of injuries caused his draft stock to tumble to the final pick of the final round. Tears to the anterior cruciate ligament and lateral meniscus in his knee ended his college career in November 2016. Then, during last spring’s pre-draft process, Kelly ruptured a ligament between two bones in his throwing wrist, which also required surgery.

The rookie nicknamed “Swag” eventually landed on injured reserve with the Broncos, fading into the background of a tumultuous 2017 quarterback carousel. Trevor Siemian, Brock Osweiler and Lynch started games for an offense that ranked 27th in the NFL in scoring (18.1 points per game) during a 5-11 season.

The Broncos stabilized the top of their quarterback pecking order by signing Case Keenum to be the starter during free agency, a move Joseph said has “been a weight off all of our backs.” Denver traded Siemian to Minnesota, while Osweiler signed with Miami. General manager John Elway said after last month’s draft that Kelly would compete with Lynch for the backup job, a public comment that caused Kelly to take note.

“At the end of the day, I thought of it as, ‘OK, perfect. I can get more reps,’” Kelly said. “That’s what it’s about — being consistent in what you do, being athletic in what you do and going out there and competing.

“I just look at it as another opportunity to get better each and every day, and each and every rep.”

Kelly has gotten a bit of a head start as the only quarterback working with the Broncos' newcomers during last weekend's rookie minicamp. He threw a variety of routes to pass-catchers like second-round draft pick Courtland Sutton, ran the 11-on-11 periods and got feedback from coaches during individual drills. Kelly said it's been "awesome" working with new quarterbacks coach Mike Sullivan, whose list of pupils is headlined by Giants' quarterback Eli Manning.

"(Kelly) can rip that thing, now," said tight end Jake Butt, who was also on the field during rookie minicamp after spending the 2017 season on injured reserve while recovering from knee surgery. "You definitely gotta wear gloves. He'll be spinning that bad boy pretty tough. He's learning the offense. He's taking leadership. He's doing a good job."

Denver's organized team activities with the full roster will begin May 22. That presents Kelly with his next chance to show what he can do with his healthy, slimmed-down body.

And to regain the consistency he's been missing for the past 18 months.

And to officially challenge Lynch for that backup quarterback job.

"He's definitely put the work in," Joseph said of Kelly. "He's throwing the ball really well right now. I'm really proud of Chad."

Broncos' De'Angelo Henderson "grateful to be alive" after crash involving stolen car

By Daniel Boniface
The Denver Post
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Denver Broncos running back De'Angelo Henderson said he's grateful to be alive after a rollover crash in Parker this past weekend.

Josh Hans, a spokesman for the Parker Police Department, said the three-car crash occurred Saturday at 8:20 p.m. at the corner of Jordan Road and Carlson Drive in Parker when police were chasing a stolen vehicle. Police were pursuing a suspect named Rainbow Sunset Espinoza, 36, at the time of the crash.

The 18th Judicial District said Espinoza was arrested on eight felony charges, two misdemeanor charges and four traffic violations stemming from the chase. Parker police said the chase originated in Denver. Espinoza was arrested on three counts of second-degree assault, two counts of vehicular eluding, one count of criminal mischief, one count of motor vehicle theft and one count of possessing burglary tools. All are felonies.

She also faces misdemeanor charges of driving under the influence and driving after revocation prohibited. In addition, Espinoza faces charges of reckless driving, failure to stop at a red light, failure to display headlights and unlawful display of license plates.

Espinoza was advised of the charges on Monday and remains in custody. Formal charges have not yet been filed.

Through his Instagram account, Henderson said it was "the most traumatic event I've probably ever had to deal with." He said his vehicle was "T-boned, airborne, flipped and rolled."

Despite the ordeal, Henderson said he escaped with "only minor injuries and a few scrapes and bruises." He was transported to a hospital following the crash.

"We're thankful that Broncos RB De'Angelo Henderson sustained only minor injuries as one of several accident victims when a car collided with his jeep Saturday," Patrick Smyth, the Broncos executive vice president of public and community relations, tweeted Monday.

Smyth said Henderson was taken to the hospital as a precaution. Henderson was back at the team's Dove Valley headquarters on Monday and was treated for minor bumps and bruises.

Henderson said he is rehabbing and trying to get ready for organized team activities (OTAs) next week.

Henderson last season appeared in five games, rushing seven times for 13 yards. He also caught two passes for 36 yards and a touchdown.

How legalized sports betting in Colorado could become a reality by 2019

By Kyle Frederickson

The Denver Post

May 15, 2018

Imagine walking into Mile High on a fall Sunday shortly after placing a legal bet just outside the stadium on the outcome of a Denver Broncos game. It's a realistic possibility in the not-too-distant future.

The Supreme Court on Monday struck down a federal law that prohibits gambling on sports in a landmark 6-3 decision that allows individual states to form their own laws to regulate bets placed on games within professional and amateur athletics. Nevada was previously the only state where such wagers were legal, under the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act of 1992.

Sports leagues and lawmakers now face complex decisions for regulating an industry in which Americans illegally bet an estimated \$150 billion each year, according to the American Gaming Association.

Several states have passed preemptive laws that provide framework for legalized sports gambling to take place almost immediately — including New Jersey (the state that filed the suit), Delaware, West Virginia, Mississippi, Connecticut, Illinois, New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, according to the Washington Post.

Colorado legislators did not take similar action, and with the state's general assembly concluding its 2017-18 session last week, the state cannot change its gambling laws until at least 2019 when the General Assembly reconvenes. April 6 was the deadline for citizens seeking to circulate a ballot petition to schedule a hearing before the state's title board to verify the language in their initiative, according to the Secretary of State's Office.

Colorado did not allow casino gambling until 1991, when the Limited Gaming Act was approved as an amendment to the state constitution. Voters have given gambling more leeway in the state since then. Amendment 50, passed in 2008, increased maximum bets, green-lighted some new games and allowed casinos to stay open 24 hours a day. But gambling is still tightly regulated.

The state permits gamblers to play poker, blackjack, roulette and craps and try their luck on slot machines, but only in the towns of Black Hawk, Central City and Cripple Creek. State statute expressly forbids gambling on the outcome of sporting events.

"Any expansion of gaming beyond the constitution would require legislation and a vote of the people," said Meghan Tanis, a spokeswoman for the Colorado Division of Gaming.

The gaming division has reached out to Attorney General Cynthia Coffman's office for guidance and to issue a formal opinion on the Supreme Court ruling, Tanis said. Coffman was not available for comment Monday.

"We're going to have to look at it pretty closely," Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper told KDVR-TV on Monday, saying he is concerned about gambling addiction. "We've got to figure out how people who

want to gamble (on sports) can do it recreationally and how people who are vulnerable to that kind of addiction, how we protect them, if indeed that's possible."

Bruce Seymore, executive director of Mile High Racing and Entertainment, said he can't predict how the state legislature would format legalized sports betting, but is hopeful change will go into effect as soon as next year. Seymore's company owns Arapahoe Park, a live horse racing venue in Aurora. He said he would like to see the state allow for Las Vegas-style sports books where Colorado residents could place a variety of bets in-house or online through government-accredited organizations.

But the ruling arrives after years of heavy resistance from the NFL, NBA, NHL, MLB and NCAA as cheating scandals related to gambling throughout sports history have often left deep scars. Commissioners from each league released statements Monday urging lawmakers to protect the integrity of their games when considering legalized sports gambling.

For the gaming industry, though, the proposed changes are expected to reduce illegal gambling activity.

"I think it will be a negative for the bookies of the world because they're going to lose a lot of business," Seymore said. "The positives are going to be dealing with people who are licensed by the state who are solid and have the financials to back-up payouts. ... The devil is in the details and we haven't seen any of that yet."

How Colorado adapts is yet to be seen, but one thing remains clear: The state's gaming industry is celebrating a major victory.

Troy Stremming, a spokesman for Pinnacle Entertainment, the parent company for Ameristar Blackhawk Casino, has been closely involved with various states across the United States on legislation that would allow for a smooth transition to legalized sports betting.

"From our industry's perspective, it provides a great opportunity for us to touch a new group of guests that may not be familiar with the businesses that we operate today," Stremming said. "They may not have an interest in slots or table games, but they follow their favorite sports team and have an interest in sports wagering. I think it creates new opportunities for us, particularly with the millennial group."

John Elway to compete in CoBank Colorado Senior Open

By Joe Nguyen
The Denver Post
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John Elway is heading back to the links to chase a title he's twice finished runner-up.

The Denver Broncos general manager and executive vice president is competing in the low-amateur category at the 19th annual CoBank Colorado Senior Open, which takes place May 30 to June 1 at Green Valley Ranch Golf Club. He will play at 1 p.m. on May 30 and 8:05 a.m. on May 31.

Elway finished second in the 2014 and 2016 tournaments.

The professional field includes PGA Tour winners Keith Clearwater, Donnie Hammond, Guy Boros and Larry Rinker. Players will compete for a share of a \$50,000 purse.

The winner of the event will earn a spot in the CoBank Colorado Open in July.

The event is free and open to the public. For more information, visit coloradoopen.com.

Henderson after car wreck left him all-over body sore: "I feel like I played a football game"

By Mike Klis

9 News

May 15, 2018

Broncos running back De'Angelo Henderson was briefly hospitalized with minor injuries Saturday night after he was an accidental victim of a high-speed police chase involving a woman driving a stolen vehicle.

"I don't know if lucky is the word," Henderson said in an interview with 9News. "Blessed. There's just so many different words."

Henderson was an accidental hero as his Jeep, which was struck with such force it flipped over on its top, helped stop the chase. He was headed to Famous Dave's BBQ in Parker to pick up some takeout for him and his fiancée. He was on Jordan crossing the intersection of Carlson.

"At the last second I saw a truck plow into my passenger side," Henderson said. "T-boned, and then everybody who was talking to the police said I was airborne and I flipped in the air and I landed on another car and I rolled after that. I was very fortunate. Very blessed."

Rainbow Sunset Espinoza, 37, was arrested and is facing 11 charges related to her actions Saturday night, including stealing a vehicle, driving recklessly, driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, evading police, failing to turn on her headlights, driving a car without plates, driving while her license was revoked, running red lights, criminal mischief, possession of burglary tools and second-degree assault with a deadly weapon, according to the Douglas County Detention Center.

After Espinoza allegedly T-boned Henderson's Jeep, her stolen vehicle hit a pole, ending the chase. To get out of his upside vehicle, Henderson said he unbuckled his seat belt, scooted to the roof and with the door jammed, shouldered his way out.

As he got out, the officers had guns drawn as there was a crime scene. Henderson was escorted away from the crime scene to the back of a police car.

"Did not get a look (at the person who hit him)," he said. "I was more in shock of everything that happened that I didn't think about looking."

Henderson, who played briefly for the Broncos last season as a sixth-round rookie, was checked out at the hospital and released when tests revealed no internal bleeding. He was one of four people hospitalized with injuries from the crash that occurred in Parker a few minutes before 8 p.m. Saturday.

"For the most part my body in general is sore," Henderson said. "No real injuries. A lot of bruises, a lot of scrapes. But my body is going to get better."

He did suffer a slightly sprained ankle and shoulder.

"But nothing's that's going to keep me out a significant time," he said. "I'll be ready for OTAs next week."

Henderson was at the Broncos' facility Monday but he will be held out of the team's Phase II practices this week. He had been the No. 2 running back behind Devontae Booker and is expected to compete against third-round rookie Royce Freeman for backup carries this season.

But first things, first. Know how they say, 'my body feels like it's been in a car wreck?'"

"Yeah, well, I told them my body feels like it played a football game," Henderson said.

Broncos' De'Angelo Henderson OK after Jeep hit by stolen vehicle

By Jeff Legwold

ESPN

May 15, 2018

Denver Broncos running back De'Angelo Henderson suffered "scrapes and bruises" in an auto accident Saturday night when his Jeep was one of several vehicles struck by a driver eluding police in a car that had been reported stolen earlier in the day.

Henderson was taken to the hospital as a precaution following the accident, treated and then released, according to the Broncos spokesman Patrick Smyth. Henderson, a sixth-round pick in the 2017 draft, was back at the team's complex Monday for offseason workouts.

Henderson posted a picture of his Jeep, upside down on the roadway after the accident, Monday afternoon on Instagram.

According to police in Parker, Colorado, a car driven by a 36-year-old woman hit several other vehicles, including Henderson's, just a few miles from the Broncos' complex in south suburban Denver. The driver and a passenger in the stolen vehicle, as well as Henderson, were among the four people treated at a local hospital.

The driver of the stolen vehicle was arrested on potential charges for vehicular assault, eluding the police and auto theft, as well as driving under the influence and several traffic violations.

Henderson saw limited duty in his rookie season with seven carries for 13 yards, two receptions and two kickoff returns.

After landmark decision, NFL wants Congress to pass betting legislation

By David Purdum

ESPN

May 15, 2018

For months, while the NBA and Major League Baseball began making their voices heard in the dozens or so states looking to legalize sports betting, the NFL sat on the sidelines, awaiting a ruling from the Supreme Court.

That ruling came down Monday, and suddenly the NFL appears ready to get into the game.

"The NFL's long-standing and unwavering commitment to protecting the integrity of our game remains absolute," a league spokesman said in a statement Monday after the Supreme Court found the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act of 1992 (PASPA) to be unconstitutional.

"Congress has long-recognized the potential harms posed by sports betting to the integrity of sporting contests and the public confidence in these events. Given that history, we intend to call on Congress again, this time to enact a core regulatory framework for legalized sports betting. We also will work closely with our clubs to ensure that any state efforts that move forward in the meantime protect our fans and the integrity of our game."

The Supreme Court struck down PASPA, paving a way for states to legalize sports betting if they choose. As states move forward, the NFL's focus is on Washington, D.C., and the league might have found a political partner in veteran Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah, who said Monday he will introduce sports betting legislation.

"At stake here is the very integrity of sports," Hatch said in a statement. "That's why I plan to introduce legislation in the coming weeks to help protect honesty and principle in the athletic arena."

There is already a federal sports betting bill in Congress. In December, Rep. Frank Pallone of New Jersey introduced legislation -- the GAME Act -- that includes a regulatory framework. Pallone's staff reached out to the NFL several times in recent months, but was told the league wasn't interested in discussing until after the decision.

Many states are not waiting for Congress to act. New Jersey racetrack Monmouth Park plans to be taking bets within weeks. Delaware, Mississippi and West Virginia are among the states that also appear poised to move quickly.

For decades, the NFL has opposed the legalization of sports betting over fears that it would impact the integrity and public perception of the games. At the same time, NFL owners invested in daily fantasy companies and voted overwhelmingly in favor of relocating the Oakland Raiders to Las Vegas, the epicenter of U.S. sports betting.

In March, the NFL presented an analysis on sports betting at the owners meetings in Orlando. The analysis examined revenue opportunities, the impact of legalization on fans, and ways to manage integrity issues.

"Nothing was resolved on this," one owner told ESPN after the presentation. "Mostly a heads-up message. We need to be prepared for the possible change in the law; here is what the NBA does; this is the way the Premier League deals with gambling. More discussion to follow at future league meetings."

Owners are slated to meet again next week in Atlanta.

David Tepper expected to sign Panthers purchase deal

By David Newton

ESPN

May 15, 2018

Pittsburgh Steelers minority owner David Tepper is expected to sign the deal Tuesday to buy the Panthers and keep them in Carolina, a league source told ESPN's Seth Wickersham and Adam Schefter.

A source confirmed to ESPN that the Panthers will be sold for \$2.2 billion. That will set a record for the highest sale price for an NFL team, surpassing the \$1.4 billion that the Buffalo Bills were sold for in 2014. The NBA's Houston Rockets also sold for \$2.2 billion in 2017.

The Charlotte Observer first reported the Panthers' sale price.

The deal would be expected to be approved at the owners meetings in Atlanta on May 22. The purchase needs to get approval from the NFL financial committee and then three-fourths approval from the 32 owners.

Tepper, the founder of global hedge fund Appaloosa Management, has a net worth of \$11 billion, according to Forbes, and is committed to keeping the team in Charlotte. Under league rules, Tepper must put up at least 30 percent of the selling price.

Because Tepper, 60, is a minority owner of the Steelers, he has already passed the league's vetting process. He currently owns 5 percent of the Steelers and would have to sell that interest before completing the Panthers purchase.

The Panthers were put up for sale after the 2017 season following sexual harassment and workplace misconduct allegations against owner Jerry Richardson that were published by Sports Illustrated in December.

On Dec. 17, Sports Illustrated published a report alleging that Richardson sexually harassed multiple women and used a racial slur toward a team scout. The SI report said the Panthers had reached settlements with at least four former employees regarding inappropriate workplace behavior by Richardson.

Richardson, 81, allegedly made verbal comments about women's appearances, inappropriately touched female employees and made advances to women that included asking whether he could shave their legs and for them to give him foot rubs.

Along with the allegation of using a racial slur that led to a settlement with the former scout, SI noted comments made by Richardson about black players' appearances and his threat to discipline players who addressed social issues.

On the evening of Dec. 17, Richardson announced in a public letter that he would sell the team after the season.

The Panthers hired Steve Greenberg of New York investment bank Allen & Co. to help with the sale. The banking and legal team have worked to sell the LA Clippers, Washington Wizards, St. Louis Cardinals, Brooklyn Nets and other major franchises in recent years.

Tepper arguably is one of the greatest hedge fund managers of this generation. He also has a strong philanthropy résumé, particularly in areas where he has lived. He donated \$3 million over the year to help with hurricane relief in Puerto Rico and Texas.

When Hurricane Sandy devastated the New Jersey coast in 2012, Tepper gave out 12,000 \$100 gift cards to people in need in 20 different communities.

Tepper grew up in a lower- to middle-class neighborhood in Pittsburgh and received a degree in economics from the University of Pittsburgh. Early in his career, he worked as a credit analyst at Goldman Sachs.

Ben Navarro, the founder of Charleston, South Carolina-based Sherman Financial Group LLC, was considered with Tepper to be the other top candidate to get Richardson's recommendation. Fanatics owner Michael Rubin and CEO and chairman of Bedrock Industries, LP Alan Kestenbaum were also reported to be interested in becoming primary owners of the franchise.

Tepper emerged as the early leader, although Navarro at one point appeared to take the lead. Because Richardson wanted to complete the sale as fast as possible, according to multiple sources, and there were questions about whether owners would approve Navarro immediately, Tepper became the top choice.

Broncos RB De'Angelo Henderson miraculously OK after serious car accident

By Nicki Jhabvala
The Athletic
May 15, 2018

Broncos running back De'Angelo Henderson was hospitalized Saturday night after suffering minor injuries in a car accident in Parker. Henderson was a victim in a high-speed police chase of a stolen vehicle and was one of four people hospitalized after the incident.

His Jeep was T-boned and flipped on its roof during the collision, which thwarted the chase and miraculously left him with only minor bumps and bruises.

Rainbow Espinoza, 37, the driver of the stolen vehicle, was taken into custody and, according to the Douglas County Detention Center, was charged with 11 counts that include second-degree assault with a deadly weapon, possession of burglary tools, vehicle theft, criminal mischief, vehicle eluding, driving while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, and driving with a revoked license, as well as four traffic violations.

She is being held on a \$50,000 bond.

Henderson posted a photo of his damaged Jeep and a message on Instagram on Monday, detailing the incident and thanking Parker Police, South Metro Fire Rescue and doctors at Parker Adventist Hospital.

"With OTAs a week a way and a season that I'm competing for a significant roll, the most traumatic event I've probably ever had to deal with occurs. T-boned, airborne, flipped, and rolled," Henderson wrote. "I plowed through my jammed door and exit my Jeep on my own. I'm truly blessed that God protected me through this accident. Without his favor I don't know if I would've survived."

According to Patrick Smyth, the Broncos' executive vice president public and community relations, Henderson was back at the team's training facility Monday for offseason workouts.

A sixth-round pick by the Broncos in 2017, Henderson played in five games as a rookie, totaling 13 yards on seven attempts.

Denver Broncos' RB De'Angelo Henderson thankful after vehicle hit by suspected drunk driver

By Blair Miller

KMGH

May 15, 2018

Denver Broncos' running back De'Angelo Henderson escaped with only minor injuries when his car rolled over after he was hit by a suspected drunk driver Saturday night.

Henderson posted about the crash on Instagram Monday, and called the crash "the most traumatic event I've probably ever had to deal with."

Henderson was one of four people hospitalized in the crash, which happened Saturday night around 8:20 p.m. at the intersection of Jordan Road and Carlson Drive, near E-470.

Parker police spotted a pickup truck they suspected was stolen that had fled from officers earlier that day. When they tried to pull the truck over again, the driver took off and eventually crashed into two other vehicles.

Two people inside the suspected stolen truck were hospitalized, as were Henderson and another driver in the third vehicle.

Henderson wrote that he was T-boned, that his Jeep went airborne and rolled over.

"I plowed through my jammed door and exit my Jeep on my own," Henderson said in his post.

He thanked Parker police and South Metro Fire Rescue for their work at the scene, and the doctors who subsequently treated him at Parker Adventist hospital.

"My family and I thanks [sic] everyone who has prayed for me over the last few days. My thoughts and prayers are with the other victims and I hope they all are safe and doing well," Henderson wrote. "In the mean time [sic] I'm rehabbing and getting my body ready to participate in OTAs next week."

Parker police confirm the suspect in the crash, 36-year-old Rainbow Sunset Espinoza, was booked for investigation on multiple charges in connection with the crash, including reckless driving, DUI, aggravated motor vehicle theft, vehicular eluding and assault with a deadly weapon.

Court records show Espinoza has a history of vehicle theft and eluding police. Douglas County jail records showed she was being held on a \$50,000 bond Monday morning.

Meanwhile, Henderson, who made the team as a rookie last season and is expected to compete for the Broncos' backup running back position this year, hinted that a higher power was responsible for his coming out of the crash relatively unscathed, with just bruises and scrapes.

"I'm truly bless that God protected me through this accident," Henderson said. "Without his favor I don't know if I would've survived."

Unhappy customers complain about home renovations done by former Denver Bronco

By Jace Larson

KMGH

May 15, 2018

Clients of an ex-Denver Bronco turned home renovator tell Contact7 the former football player did poor quality work that cost them tens of thousands of dollars to fix.

Mark Sonnendecker said when his family met Kevin Clark, Clark shared photos of extravagant homes he said he renovated.

"The sales pitch that was used was that he was a former Denver Bronco and that he had done remodels on a bunch of Denver Broncos' houses," Sonnendecker told Contact7.

Clark was a defensive back and kick returner who played for the Broncos from 1987-1991.

Sonnendecker and his wife, Beatriz, hired Clark to renovate their new home near the Denver Tech Center area but ultimately said they had to fire him because they believed the work was poorly done.

Now Sonnendecker says he is having to pay contractors to fix Clark's mistakes.

"Right now, I think we're in the ballpark of around \$20,000," Sonnendecker said.

Todd Johnson, who owns TJs Custom Renovation, is now working on fixing Sonnendecker's home.

"It is some of the worst craftsmanship I've seen in a long time," Johnson said.

He says the ceiling isn't level and the lights didn't work properly, among other problems.

The family said Clark also tried to install a railing that would have given them splinters.

They believe it was designed for outdoor use only, but Clark wanted to use it indoors.

"This is probably one of the most frustrating experiences of my life," Sonnendecker said.

Another former client named Eren said her experience hiring Clark to work on her Denver home was the same. She was also drawn in with photos of beautiful homes Clark said he renovated. She too said she had to fire him because the work wasn't done properly.

"I saved for 10 years to get this place," Eren said. "He hasn't responded to my phone calls, emails or text messages."

Online building records in Denver and Arapahoe County show no record of Clark getting permits for work he did on either home.

Eren paid contractors to fix many of the mistakes she said Clark made, but she said there are some issues she cannot afford to fix. She showed a Contact7 crew a shower that she says she can't use because the door leaks and another shower with a door that does not open properly.

Eren also showed the crew a faucet that has the hot and cold reversed, and a steam shower that does not properly function, and a kitchen light that appears to hang off-center.

Contact7 Investigates called Bell Home Solutions Remodel Team to check whether they could fix the issues in Eren's home and they estimated it would cost close to \$50,000 to make all the repairs.

"I worked for a long time to save that sort of money," Eren said. "For him to do such a faulty job is very, very disheartening."

Kevin Clark would not agree to an interview with Contact7 Investigates because he said he is planning to sue his former clients.

In text messages sent to Contact7 investigative reporter Jace Larson, Clark said the work he did was not poor quality.

"I simply believe they were provided the correct service," Clark said in a text message. "I always use quality [subcontractors] and try my best to accommodate any and everyone I deal with, because that's the way I am."

Broncos running back Henderson recovering from auto accident

By Arnie Stapleton
Associated Press
May 15, 2018

Denver Broncos running back De'Angelo Henderson is recovering from minor shoulder and ankle injuries he sustained over the weekend when his Jeep was hit by a driver fleeing police in a stolen vehicle.

KCNC-TV in Denver reported that a 36-year-old woman was in custody after she allegedly struck several vehicles while evading police Saturday night in Parker, Colorado, sending four people to the hospital, where they were held overnight.

Henderson discussed the crash on his Instagram page Monday and called it "the most traumatic event I've probably ever had to deal with." He thanked the Parker Police Department and South Metro Fire Rescue as well as the doctors who treated him at Parker Adventist hospital.

He said he was "T-boned, airborne, flipped, and rolled" in the accident but was able to get himself out of his damaged Jeep and suffered only "minor injuries with a few scrapes and bruises."

"I'm very grateful and humbled to be alive," Henderson wrote. "... My thoughts and prayers are with the other victims and I hope they are all safe and doing well."

Team spokesman Patrick Smyth said Henderson was back at team headquarters Monday preparing for next week's on-field work in which the offense and defense will square off for the first time this offseason.

Henderson will compete with Devontae Booker and rookie Royce Freeman for carries in the Broncos' backfield this season.

Henderson was the star of training camp last summer but was buried on the depth chart behind C.J. Anderson, Jamaal Charles and Booker last season, when he had just seven carries and two catches, one of which went for a touchdown.

NFL seeks help from Congress on sports gambling ruling

By Adam Silver
Associated Press
May 15, 2018

The NFL wants Congress to enact a framework for legalized sports betting in the wake of a Supreme Court ruling that clears the way for more states to allow sports gambling.

Supreme Court justices voted 6-3 on Monday to strike down a 1992 law that barred most state-authorized sports gambling. Before the Supreme Court ruling, Nevada was the only state that allowed people to bet on the results of a single game.

"Congress has long recognized the potential harms posed by sports betting to the integrity of sporting contests and the public confidence in these events," the NFL said in a statement. "Given that history, we intend to call on Congress again, this time to enact a core regulatory framework for legalized sports betting."

All the major leagues responded to a ruling that figures to have far-reaching implications throughout the sports world. The NHL noted that "today paves the way to an entirely different landscape — one in which we have not previously operated."

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, a supporter of legalizing sports gambling, said his league would "remain active in ongoing discussions with state legislatures" about expanding wagering options.

Silver also said the league would like to see a federal framework instead of a state-by-state system. The NBA once opposed expanded sports betting but has long said it supports robust regulation.

The NBA and Major League Baseball have argued in recent months for a 1 percent cut of proceeds if legalized sports betting expands across the country, saying part of that money would be needed for additional compliance and enforcement efforts within the game.

"As each state considers whether to allow sports betting, we will continue to seek the proper protections for our sport, in partnership with other professional sports," Major League Baseball said in a statement.

Keith Whyte, the executive director of the National Council on Problem Gambling, believes any governmental body and sports league that receives a direct percentage or portion of sports betting revenue must also dedicate funds to prevent and treat gambling problems.

"Some of that 1 percent of betting fees is going to come from people with uncontrollable gambling problems," Whyte said. "We believe by taking a cut of this money, (the leagues would) put themselves in the position of having to do something to reduce those costs. Great profits come with great responsibility."

MLB said it would "continue to support legislation that creates air-tight coordination and partnerships between the state, the casino operators and the governing bodies in sports" toward protecting the integrity of the game. Major League Soccer issued a statement seeking similar cooperation.

"Although Major League Soccer is supportive of today's Supreme Court decision, we also believe that it is critical that state legislatures and other regulatory bodies work closely with the professional sports leagues in the United States to develop a regulatory framework to protect the integrity of each of our respective sports," the MLS said in its statement. "We look forward to being a part of that process."

Plenty of leagues already have taken steps to make sure its players are educated on the issue.

For example, last year the PGA Tour hired Genesis Sports to help with its new "Integrity Program" that began at the start of the year. The program requires players on all six circuits the PGA Tour manages to take part in an online tutorial that, among other things, illustrates some of the far-reaching effects of gambling.

"We believe that regulation is the most effective way of ensuring integrity in competition, protecting consumers, engaging fans and generating revenue for government, operators and leagues," the PGA Tour said in a statement.

The Supreme Court ruling will impact college sports as well as the pro leagues. Donald Remy, the NCAA's chief legal officer, said the organization is reviewing the Supreme Court's decision and that "we will adjust sports wagering and championship policies to align with the direction from the court."

The NCAA currently doesn't hold NCAA Tournament games or any other NCAA-run events in Nevada because of its legal gambling. Las Vegas is home to the annual Las Vegas Bowl as well as the Pac-12 men's basketball tournament and other tournaments, which aren't run by the NCAA itself.

The NCAA said 24 percent of NCAA male student-athletes and about 5 percent of female student-athletes in 2016 reported they had wagered on sports for money within the previous year, which would violate NCAA bylaws. Just below 2 percent of the men participating in the 2016 survey met what the NCAA termed as standard diagnostic criteria for problem gambling.

Reactions to the Supreme Court ruling across the sports world weren't limited to the league offices. The athletes themselves also were wondering about the possible implications of increased legal sports gambling.

NASCAR driver Brad Keselowski tweeted he was "torn" on the Supreme Court's decision. Keselowski said it "should be great for our sport, but I've also seen gambling ruin lives."

"If you choose to gamble on me or anyone else, please be responsible, and if you need help, get help," Keselowski added.

Supreme Court's legalized sports gambling decision at the intersection of "sin and revenue"

By Paul Klee
Colorado Springs Gazette
May 15, 2018

The NFL just cured its TV ratings illness, Las Vegas just inched closer to hosting a Super Bowl, and it just became tougher than any other time in American history to rig a sporting event.

Pretty nice li'l Monday, don't you think?

The U.S. Supreme Court empowered individual states to legalize sports gambling — by a vote of 7-2, covering the Over — and the big winners are the usual suspects: the sports leagues themselves (whether they come clean and admit it or not), team owners and the entrepreneurs who are first to open sportsbooks when and where sports gambling is eventually legalized. All stand to benefit from a landmark decision that forever will alter sports here as we know it. And the big losers?

You, if you gamble on games. I'm reminded of a night, after a strangely unkempt finish to a Broncos game at Mile High, Gazette columnist Woody Paige told me: "That's why only a knucklehead bets on sports."

Thankfully, I know a ton of knuckleheads.

I'm in favor of legalized sports gambling. It's your money; spend it how you want. And if you bet on sports, you're probably going to lose. I could toss out a bunch of data to prove that's true — the Vegas books haven't suffered a losing month in almost five years, according to an ESPN report — but there was bound to be a time when my degenerate friends would come in handy, other than wedding receptions with open bars.

This is that time.

"(I'm) waaaaaay down," said Poo, who spoke on the condition I use his nickname. "Don't even watch sports anymore."

"Easily down. I don't even bet on sports anymore because I was losing so bad. It wasn't fun anymore," Wildman said. "But I'll get back at it for football and college basketball. Watching a game is boring with no action."

"Definitely not even," E-Hogs said. "Had one monster March Madness three years ago and went way up. Was a slow bleed back to even and below even. Deleted my account. Agree with the Wildman. It became no fun. Wins weren't that fun and losses keep you awake. Ugh, the chase."

These are good men, husbands and fathers. They are productive members of society. They are (or were, in Poo's case) obsessive sports fans with a deep understanding of the games and teams on which they wager.

And they usually lose.

"Disagree," Doofy said. "Casinos are basically big ATMs holding my money for me until I return for that one big night."

What about that one time in Rhode Island when your wife....

"I'm way up and going to be wayer up after this Celtics series," Doofy added.

Yes, some folks win. Rare, but it happens. My friend Bone is 358-357-16 in the past year. Money Mocco is 815-790-33 over his past 1,638 wagers. (No idea how he settled on that number.) Winning's possible, and gambling can spice up even the shruggiest Browns-Raiders Thursday night game.

Which is why the legalization of gambling is destined to change sports here forever. There's only one thing Americans like more than fun, and that's talking about themselves. Sports gambling allows both.

There are few topics I write that draw a louder reaction from readers than Broncos predictions, with one caveat: I only hear from readers when the prediction is wrong. One dedicated soul with a Seattle area code called roughly 50 times after my Super Bowl XLVIII prediction — Broncos over Seahawks — was dead wrong. And no one called after my Super Bowl 50 pick — Broncos over Panthers, a huge upset — was right on. Made money is quiet money, I guess. My last three seasons of Broncos predictions, in print, are 16-3 (against the spread), 10-6, 10-6. Not bad on a team that enforces a quarterback change on days ending in "Y."

But we're all friends here, so let's be real. When legalized sports gambling hits Colorado — and it will, because anything that can be legalized is going to be legalized in Colorado — we're mostly/probably/surely going to lose.

Our sudden status as Grin City, an adult playland where the only bad vice is a vice you don't have yet, makes our state a natural destination for legalized sports gambling. Would it really be a surprise to see a sportsbook in time for Tuesday happy hour at Casa Bonita ("We cover the whole enchilada!"), Breckenridge ("Win, place and snow") and Elitch Gardens ("Let it ride")? Or Garden of the Gambling Gods?

"I would expect an issue like that to be contentious and hard-fought on all sides, to the point it wouldn't happen quickly," state Sen. Bob Gardner told me on Monday. "It's sin and revenue. Any time an issue has to do with sin and revenue, there will be a lot of people lobbying on all sides."

Gardner suspects the soonest that legalized sports gambling would be taken up in Colorado is next January, when the state Legislature is back in session.

I'm no doctor, but legal weed plus legal gambling seems like a combustible combination. But I saw the other night the Golden Knights somehow are still alive in the NHL playoffs, so Las Vegas hasn't burned down. Yet.

With legalized gambling, more people will have a vested interest in sports, which means more people will watch sports, particularly the NFL. This also removes another layer from the sports stigma attached

to Las Vegas, a city that makes too much sense for Final Fours and the like. And potential point shaving now will be watched with Big Brother's eye.

Plus, we're one step closer to self-destruction. Everybody wins!

Except your wallet. And Poo.

De'Angelo Henderson expresses gratitude to first responders following harrowing accident

By Aric DiLalla
DenverBroncos.com
May 15, 2018

Second-year running back De'Angelo Henderson thanked Parker Police and South Metro Fire Rescue on Monday for their role in helping him evacuate from the scene of a multi-car accident that took place Saturday.

Henderson's car was one of several vehicles struck by a stolen car when that driver attempted to evade police.

According to an Instagram he posted Monday, Henderson's car was "T-boned, airborne, flipped and rolled." Henderson said he then pushed his way through a jammed door in order to escape the vehicle.

"I'm truly blessed that God protected me through this accident," Henderson posted. "Without his favor, I don't know if I would've survived. I'm thankful to only [come] out with minor injuries and a few scrapes and bruises."

"... I am very grateful and humbled to be alive."

Henderson also thanked the doctors at Parker Adventist for their help after he was transported to the hospital. He said Monday he is currently rehabbing his injuries in order to participate in next week's organized team activities.

Patrick Smyth, the Broncos' executive vice president of public and community relations, expressed relief Monday that Henderson was not seriously injured.

"We're thankful that Broncos RB De'Angelo Henderson sustained only minor injuries as one of several accident victims when a car collided with his jeep Saturday," Smyth tweeted. "He was taken to the hospital as a precaution and is at the team's facility preparing to participate in OTAs next week."

Henderson on Monday was at UHealth Training Center, where he received treatment for his minor injuries and watched his teammates practice.

Quality over quantity in this year's undrafted crop

By Andrew Mason
DenverBroncos.com
May 15, 2018

Is Jeff Holland being looked at as an inside or outside linebacker for us? He played outside in college, but he is a bit small for a 3-4 outside guy.

-- Alfred Borstmayer

Outside linebacker. That was the position group with which he worked during on-field work at the Broncos' rookie orientation. Further, at 249 pounds, his listed weight is just one pound below that of Von Miller and Shaquil Barrett, and is greater than that of Shane Ray. In terms of size, Holland is fine for his position.

Why have the Broncos only signed eight undrafted players when other teams have signed three times that many?

-- Stephen Leonard

Because of a combination of factors:

1. Only five teams had more draft picks than the Broncos, who made 10 selections.
2. In January, they signed 13 players to future contracts, including eight who were on the practice squad at the end of the 2017 season, so the club saw enough from those players in practice to justify giving them an extended shot during OTAs and training camp.
3. At the end of the 2017 regular season, the Broncos had 11 players on injured reserve, with most of the replacements coming from the practice squad. Seven members of the Broncos' season-ending active roster were on the practice squad at some point in the regular season. Seven of the players on injured reserve when the year ended are still with the team.

All of those moves add up to an undrafted class that isn't as robust in raw numbers, but features eight players on whom the Broncos had draftable grades. Do not be surprised if multiple undrafted players stick on the 53-man roster after training camp.

Remember, when it comes to undrafted signees, two cliches often apply:

1. Quantity does not equal quality.
2. Less is often more.

Is there a chance that Phillip Lindsay could be able to make the 53-man roster as a kick or punt returner?

-- Caleb Rabon

Yes. In fact, Head Coach Vance Joseph has already mentioned that Lindsay will be in the competition at punt returner, along with wide receivers River Cracraft, DaeSean Hamilton, Isaiah McKenzie and Jordan Taylor.

I'm a Danish national and a 12 year fan of Denver Broncos.

I'm excited about Andreas Knappe being on the team.

What's your evaluation of his potential and his chances of getting on the team after the draft?

-- Mads Henriksen

Since the Broncos did not select an offensive tackle this year, his chances of making the team were not affected by the draft. Knappe faces a tough battle to make the 53-man roster, but it would not surprise me if he manages to snag a practice-squad spot, which would allow him to continue trying to turn his raw athleticism into pro-quality technique.

Players like Knappe would benefit from the NFL being able to create a developmental league in the future. Of course, none currently exists, so he will have to do what he can with practice and preseason reps.

Supreme Court strikes down PASPA law that limited sports betting

By A.J. Perez
USA Today
May 15, 2018

The U.S. Supreme Court ruling in favor of New Jersey on Monday effectively killed the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (PASPA), the federal law that essentially limited sports betting to one state for the last 25 years.

PASPA was declared unconstitutional in the 6-3 decision, meaning it will be up to states – including New Jersey, which has sought to establish sports gambling for years – to decide whether to allow its residents to bet on sports.

Here's a breakdown of what the ruling by the nation's highest court means:

What is PASPA?

PASPA was signed into law by President George H.W. Bush in 1992 and went into effect in January 1993. Nevada – the only state at the time the bill became law that had widespread state-sponsored sports bettors – and three other states with more limited betting (Oregon, Delaware and Montana) were grandfathered in.

PASPA didn't outlaw sports betting because that was already illegal. Rather, PASPA banned states – outside those given exemptions – from regulating (and taxing) sports betting.

Despite PASPA's existence, the American Gaming Association (AGA) estimates at least \$150 billion a year is gambled on sports in the U.S. and 97% of that amount was bet illegally.

How soon could states offer sanctioned sports betting?

With PASPA stricken down, states now can establish their own regulated sports betting.

Many are expected to move quickly to establish sports betting as a means to increase their respective coffers. West Virginia Lottery general counsel Danielle Boyd told Legal Sports Report that the state – which already passed a law to authorize sports betting – could have sports betting within 90 days of PASPA's repeal.

"That's the news every one of these states was waiting for," sports and gambling law attorney Daniel Wallach told USA TODAY Sports. "Every one of these states' legislative measures hinged on the finding of the Supreme Court that PASPA is unconstitutional. The ruling allows the states to legislate immediately and for all such laws to become effective immediately."

West Virginia is among 17 states that has passed or have bills making their way through state legislatures to legalize sports betting upon PASPA's repeal, according to the AGA. New Jersey and Mississippi are two other states Wallach said he sees moving the quickest to allow betting.

Now that it's legal, what barriers remain?

Some of the legislation – like one proposal in Pennsylvania – requires a one-time license fee of up to \$10 million, along with a tax of as much as 34% on gross receipts, something AGA senior vice president of public affairs Sara Slane told USA TODAY Sports could be a non-starter for potential operators.

"I think their intentions are good," Slane said. "I think some states will have to go back and structure a policy that will allow operators to want to come into the state."

What do pro sports leagues stand to gain?

The NBA and MLB, seeing the potential of PASPA's repeal, have pushed the idea of a 1% sports integrity fee. (This would be taken out of all sports bets before the government gets to tax bets.) While the leagues have pitched this as a way to police point-shaving and other gambling-related corruption, Slane said it would take such a chunk that it would make legalized sports betting non-viable.

"The integrity fee is really a 20% grab on gaming revenue," Slane said.

According to the AGA, the average sports book keeps only about 5% of the money wagered. The fee would also limit how much each state could earn in tax revenue. Nevada sports books have operated for decades without any such fee.

"The major professional sports leagues earn exorbitant profits from ticket sales, concessions, merchandise and advertising rights, and while we welcome their support for our efforts to end the failed ban on sports wagering, we do not agree that it is good policy for the leagues to take money away from law enforcement agencies that neither they nor their athletes have earned," Chuck Canterbury, national president of the fraternal order of police, said in a statement. "Our professional leagues should focus on their sport and let us focus on enforcing the law."

Could another federal law be on the horizon?

One has already been proposed, although the bill hasn't budged since it was outlined about a year ago and was introduced in December.

Rep. Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) offered up the the Gaming Accountability and Modernization Enhancement (GAME) Act that hasn't even been considered by a committee. There's little chance it will get a floor vote as Congress is consumed by other issues ahead of the midterm elections.

Part of the GAME Act is now moot, since it would have allowed states to offer legalized sports betting. But it would also mandate consumer protections, including a ban on underage betting and establish safeguards against compulsive gambling.

"I don't see Frank Pallone's bill as a relevant piece of legislation," said Wallach, a partner at Becker & Poliakoff. "There has been significant movement on the state level with no corresponding movement on the federal level. I think what we will see is a new bill coming out of one of the committees, maybe even his committee (Energy and Commerce)."

Minutes after the Supreme Court's ruling was released, Pallone used the decision to again tout the GAME Act.

"Now that the Supreme Court has struck down this unlawful and confusing law, it is time for Congress to move the GAME Act forward to ensure that consumer protections are in place in any state that decides to implement sports betting," Pallone said in a statement.

How soon could a new federal law be in place?

Wallach said federal legislation – especially in a gridlocked environment on Capitol Hill – could come well after many states have already started taking bets and likely after the midterm elections.

"At some point, if the legislation starts to diverge from state to state and, more importantly, the leagues don't get what they want at the state level, I think you will see Congress jump into the fray and pass some kind of legislation to create more uniformity across the country," Wallach said.

Agent anger at NFLPA grows amid changes

By Liz Mullen

Sports Business Journal

May 15, 2018

The agent, a self-described litigation attorney from New York City, was blunt.

“You are buying yourself lawsuits,” he told NFL Players Association officials and others gathered in March for the NFL combine in Indianapolis.

For emphasis, he repeated it, according to an audio recording of the annual agent meeting at the combine obtained by SportsBusiness Journal. His anger resonated through the room.

“You are buying yourself lawsuits! ... No one wants to be in a position when you are at war with the players association, but if you take away their livelihood, they have nothing to lose.”

The moment is illustrative of the deteriorating relationship between the community of about 800 NFL player agents and the union, led by Executive Director DeMaurice Smith. The relationship has been declining for years, but it seems to have imploded in recent months.

“There’s a core group of agents who believe the union wants to minimize if not eradicate the agent industry in its entirety,” said Peter Ginsberg, an attorney hired by a group of agents because of what they view as threats to their jobs.

At the Indianapolis meeting, dozens of agents stood in line at three microphones in a large conference room to yell, complain and question the union. The primary issue was a newly mandated test on knowledge of the collective-bargaining agreement that all agents would have to take every two years, but the anger has been festering for a while.

Those who fail the test would be forced to take another one in Washington, D.C., with prospective agents applying for the first time. Failure a second time would mean suspension of their license.

But to agents in Indianapolis, it was just the latest threat from the NFLPA to their careers and livelihoods.

“You are going to see us in court on this one, if you suspend us, because we have already met the requirements,” a different agent told the NFLPA. Applause erupted in the room as agents took their turns to chastise union officials.

One agent who spoke out cited Steelers running back Le’Veon Bell’s contract talks as an example.

“While I am in the midst of negotiating for veterans or franchise players, I have to stop to prepare for a test?” he says, according to the tape. “That’s certainly going to help Le’Veon Bell, that I am going to stop the f----- preparation for his contract to study for a test.”

Veteran agent Adisa Bakari represents Bell.

In the highly competitive agent business, it's difficult to get a group of them together, as grudges over recruiting battles and players switching representation sometimes go back decades. But the chaotic meeting, characterized by multiple people as "a shit show," came after numerous agents have been holding conference calls starting about 2 1/2 years ago.

The secret calls — of which at least one had more than 100 agents on it — have focused on an increasingly harsh business environment under the current CBA negotiated by Smith in 2011 as well as new agent regulations implemented by the union since then. The calls started in the summer of 2015 after it was reported that the NFLPA was looking to cut agent fees and create an in-house function to negotiate contracts for players.

The NFLPA studied, but later rejected, the idea to lower agent fees from the maximum 3 percent to 2 percent a few years ago. They did, however, institute a "default fee" for agents of 1.5 percent unless the player agrees to a different amount, with the maximum still being the old standard of 3 percent. NFL agent fees are, and have been for years, the lowest among the major team sports.

A group of agents has even hired Ginsberg, a former assistant U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of New York, who in private practice has represented many coaches, agents and players in sports matters, including former running back Ray Rice. Ginsberg would not confirm that he has been hired but said he thinks the NFLPA has "a duty of fair representation" to the agents it regulates, as well as to the players it serves.

The NFLPA declined to make anyone available for an interview for this story. But the union did provide a statement:

"Our union works closely with agents and provides them with several formal and informal opportunities to have a dialogue with our player leadership. However, we embrace our fiduciary duty to players when we set regulations, certify and sometimes discipline agents. By law, the union grants agents the authority to negotiate contracts for players, so they not only have a responsibility to players, but they are also obligated to be agents of our union.

"We understand that some steps we take to ensure these obligations are adhered to create tensions with some agents. We also understand that the players' right to set fees upsets some agents. We want a positive relationship with the agents where we work together to protect players and maximize our collective leverage, but we do not apologize for the decisions made by player leadership."

The Los Angeles Chargers' Russell Okung, a member of the NFLPA's executive committee who has negotiated his own contract twice, said the union is trying to raise the standards of representation.

Told about the uproar at the agent meeting at the combine, Okung said, "It comes as no surprise to me that they would feel that way." Agents are important, Okung said, but he added, "I think the real issue is whether the agency business is a viable business."

Fighting for agents

It's unclear how much of Okung's feelings echo union membership, though officials at the meeting told the agents they were doing what the players wanted. Union officials, including Smith, are elected by the players, with agents having no voice in those decisions. Still, even though there have been NFL players

who represented themselves through the years, the vast majority — some estimate upward of 99 percent — are represented by agents.

In the old days, players fought for the right to have an agent, as team owners across sports would refuse to deal with a player who was represented by a lawyer or agent.

The late Marvin Miller, founder of the MLB Players Association, frequently told stories about how baseball executives would not even allow a player's father to negotiate on his behalf, and how the players were taken advantage of in negotiations by the more experienced and better-educated executives. The MLBPA, under Miller's leadership, negotiated the right for players to be represented by agents in the 1970 MLB collective-bargaining agreement.

The NFLPA, meanwhile, was a pioneer in the regulation of agents, requiring they become certified in 1984 and having them take a test starting in the 1990s, adding a criminal background check in 2002 and other requirements since then.

Over the years, there certainly have been unscrupulous agents, such as Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom, who were sentenced to prison in the late 1980s, and Tank Black, who was sent to prison in the early 2000s. Still, the NFLPA has been at the forefront of enacting agent regulations starting under the late Gene Upshaw and former general counsel Richard Berthelsen.

But since Smith took over in 2009 and negotiated a CBA that ended the owners' lockout in 2011, media reports started questioning the need for players to have an agent at all. The 2011 CBA contains many provisions unfriendly to their profession, multiple agents said. Most notably, the agreement contains a rookie wage scale in which there is little room for financial creativity and, thus, negotiation.

The deal also hurts players who make it to a second contract in a number of ways, agents said. For example, all rookies have four-year deals except for first-round picks, theoretically the most valuable young players, for whom teams have the option for a fifth year at a set price.

The franchise-tag price that clubs can put on one player also was reduced under the CBA. Under the old deal it was the average of the top five players at the position, but under the current deal it is the average of the top players at the position going back five years, when the salary cap and salaries overall were lower.

Multiple agents said the first agent to speak out at the Indianapolis meeting was veteran Jimmy Gould, who they said gave an impassioned speech about how he has fought for clients, including the late Korey Stringer, during a 23-year career.

When asked about the relationship between agents and the union and what happened at the meeting, Gould said later, "Any time a demand is made on a group of dedicated and professional people without their input, what ultimately follows is a feeling of distrust and ensuing chaos. That is what happened and it is occurring at a very critical time when those same groups must be in lockstep with one another and married to the same agenda that is based on trust, respect, fairness and above all else, a real feeling of partnership."

Reason for hope?

At least one agent said there is reason for hope in improving the relationship between agents and the NFLPA, based on a more placid smaller group discussion between agents and the union a day before the combative meeting.

The union typically holds a small agent meeting the day before the larger one at the combine. Agents are required to attend at least one meeting a year; most choose the larger gathering. The meeting before the bigger combine meeting is invitation-only by the union.

Veteran agent Peter Schaffer, one of those in the small group meeting, said there was a diverse group of about 25 agents there that included representatives from agencies large and small, agents who were young and old, male and female. From the NFLPA, Smith was there, as was player president Eric Winston, union general counsel Tom DePaso and other player leaders from the union's executive committee.

"They put a great cross section of agents together, and I think the agents were very passionate and educated in the way they expressed themselves on the major issues that were causing friction between the agents and the union," Schaffer said. "I think there was some hesitation or reservations going in that these concerns would be met with resistance by the union."

They were not.

The agents talked about a number of topics, including the proposed test and the 1.5 percent default fee, and they spoke on the premise that it was in the best interest of players if agents and the union worked together.

"To everyone's appreciation, Eric and De and Tom DePaso heard the concerns of the agent community," Schaffer said, adding he was optimistic that the relationship would get better.

But the next day, the tenor changed dramatically with the larger group of agents.

The explosion at the bigger combine meeting the next day did not happen in a vacuum. It occurred after previous meetings where agents said they felt union officials treated them in a condescending manner, and after several rules and regulations were enacted in recent years that placed more burdens on agents (see timeline).

The hostile relationship between agents and the union is something that's increasingly being noticed in the larger sports world. USA Today recently ran a story with the headline "USA Today poll reveals union chief DeMaurice Smith has made 'a lot of enemies' among agents." The story said a poll of 25 agents "largely graded the job performance of the NFL Players Association's executive director as no better than 'fair.'"

Although publicly agents are fighting the union, privately some say they are thinking of walking away from representing players in the sport they love. Some football agents and agencies are branching into other areas of representation, such as broadcasters and coaches, as the NFL increasingly becomes a low-margin business with a lot of headaches.

During the contentious meeting with the union, some agents credited Mark Levin, the NFLPA's longtime director of salary cap and agent administration, for keeping the meeting calmer than it could have been.

Levin, in attempting to calm the agents, told them in a measured tone not to worry, that the new test would not be that big of a deal.

But one agent, like Gould, brought up the issue of trust between the player representatives and the union.

“If the honest motive is just to make sure we have a baseline of knowledge, that would do the trick, for me,” the agent said at the meeting, according to the audio tape. “But to me the bigger problem is the flavor, this feel, of this partnership — that you call a partnership. It seems — I’ve been a member, a regulated agent, for decades — and it seems to me as the years go by more and more restrictions are put on us, more hardships. It’s become more difficult to earn a living.

“I think if this continues, the very thing you are trying to safeguard, that is having players represented by competent agents, will fail because the most competent among us will realize this is not a good idea to spend our time and make a living at. You will lose the best among us.”

How it got here

March 2009

Trial lawyer DeMaurice Smith is elected executive director of the NFLPA, beating three challengers for the position that was vacated when Gene Upshaw passed away in August 2008.

August 2011

The NFLPA agrees to a new collective-bargaining agreement that lowers the players’ share of revenue, puts in a rookie pay scale, removes agents’ ability to negotiate player incentives in rookie deals, and lowers franchise-tag amounts for veterans.

March 2012

Smith runs unopposed for executive director and is re-elected to another three-year term.

June 2014

The NFLPA initiates a review of agent regulations, including requesting any side agreements such as marketing guarantees and loans that agents had with players, information that was previously private between agents and players. In a memo sent to agents, the union also warns that multiple violations of rules will result in double the discipline handed down for the previous violation.

March 2015

Smith wins re-election after being challenged by eight opponents, each of whom needed the endorsement of three player representatives to be placed on the ballot.

Summer of 2015

USA Today reports that the NFLPA is looking at changes that include lowering the maximum agent fee and creating an in-house resource to negotiate contracts and/or advise players on doing their own deals. SportsBusiness Daily reports that rival agents begin to hold meetings in response to what they see as a threat to their livelihoods.

Summer of 2015

The NFLPA implements new, stricter testing requirements for agent certification; 38.7 percent of the 204 test-takers pass the test, the lowest pass rate ever. The previous pass rate had been around 70 percent.

November 2015

The NFLPA holds a meeting with a small group of powerful agents to discuss union rule changes. The meeting is unusual in that it was held during the season at the union's Washington, D.C., headquarters and agents were sworn to secrecy. The union tells the agents that it is looking at reducing the maximum agent fee from 3 percent to 2 percent on playing contracts.

February 2016

The NFLPA holds a contentious meeting with agents at the NFL combine. Tempers flare over rumors that the union might cut the maximum fee.

March 2016

The NFLPA votes down a proposal to cut the maximum agent fee from 3 percent to 2 percent. Russell Okung, a member of the NFLPA executive committee, negotiates his own contract with the Denver Broncos, first reported at \$53 million over five years but widely criticized in media reports for being team friendly. He ends up getting cut after a year and being paid just \$8 million. Okung then negotiates another four-year, \$53 million deal with the San Diego Chargers. Reports indicate it's a much better deal, with \$25 million in guaranteed money.

August 2016

The NFLPA informs agents that it has changed the Standard Representation Agreement (SRA) to make 1.5 percent the "default fee" for agents unless the player agrees to a different amount.

September 2017

The NFLPA changes its constitution so that a new 14-member committee of players will determine whether to keep the executive director. The change removes the ability for other candidates to run for election by garnering the support of three player representatives. The union announces Sept. 20 that Smith has been re-elected under the new procedure.

January 2018

The NFLPA notifies agents that they will be tested every two years in June on knowledge of the CBA. If they fail the test they will sit for the prospective-agent test in July. Agents who fail twice would lose their license.

March 2018

Agents at the NFL combine ask the union to consider testing modules as well as no punishment for failing the new test. Later, at a group meeting, agents yell at NFLPA members on stage in what veterans in the business say was the most factious meeting the two groups have ever had.

Broncos player involved in fiery crash with alleged DUI driver, has car flipped

By John Breech
CBS Sports
May 15, 2018

Broncos running back De'Angelo Henderson was taken to the hospital over the weekend after being involved in a fiery car crash that was caused by an alleged DUI driver.

Henderson was on his way to pick up some food for his family on Saturday night when he got T-boned by a woman who was driving a stolen car. The woman was in a high-speed police chase when her vehicle smashed into Henderson's Jeep. The impact of the crash caused Henderson's vehicle to flip over in the air, but it did end the chase, which led to 9news.com in Denver labeling him as an accidental hero.

The Broncos running back described the incident to 9news.

"At the last second I saw a truck plow into my passenger side," Henderson said. "T-boned, and then everybody who was talking to the police said I was airborne and I flipped in the air and I landed on another car and I rolled after that. I was very fortunate. Very blessed."

The driver of the stolen vehicle crashed into a pole after hitting Henderson's Jeep.

In the photo below, you can see Henderson's Jeep, which is sitting upside down behind the silver car.

Henderson shared a close-up shot of his Jeep on Instagram. The Broncos running back said he was able to climb out of the car after it landed.

Despite the terrifying nature of the accident, Henderson walked away with only minor injuries.

"For the most part my body in general is sore," Henderson told 9news. "No real injuries. A lot of bruises, a lot of scrapes. But my body is going to get better."

The 25-year-old suffered a sprained ankle and sprained shoulder.

"I'm truly blessed that God protected me through this accident," Henderson wrote on Instagram. "Without his favor I don't know if I would've survived. ... I'm very grateful and humbled to be alive. My family and I thanks everyone who has prayed for me over the last few days."

Henderson, who was selected by the Broncos in the sixth-round of the 2017 NFL Draft, as a rookie had seven carries for 13 yards, and also caught two passes for 39 yards and a touchdown. He said his plan is to be back participating in OTAs by next week.

"Nothing's that's going to keep me out a significant time," Henderson said. "I'll be ready for OTAs next week."

According to 9news, four people were taken to the hospital following the incident. The woman who crashed into Henderson, 37-year-old Rainbow Sunset Espinoza, has been hit with 11 charges, including DUI-drugs vehicular assault, eluding officers, motor vehicle theft, driving a car without plates and several other offenses.

Broncos GM John Elway thinks the Chargers might be the AFC West's team to beat

By Jared Dubin
CBS Sports
May 15, 2018

The Kansas City Chiefs have won the division two years in a row. Before that, the Denver Broncos won it in five consecutive seasons. During those seven seasons, the Chargers have won an average of just over seven games per year and have made the playoffs once.

They've been building out a very strong defense over the last few seasons, though, and after a strong draft, at least one of their division rivals is very impressed with their team. Broncos general manager John Elway told reporters in Omaha this week that he thinks the Chargers might be the team to beat in the division in 2018.

"It's the wild, wild West. I thought the Chargers did a really nice job with the draft," Elway said, per The MMQB's Peter King. "They've got the settled quarterback, even though the Raiders do too. Looking at it, [the Chargers] may be the ones to beat. As I stand here, looking at it, the Chargers might be the team to beat."

The Chiefs are transitioning from the Alex Smith era to second-year quarterback Patrick Mahomes. They traded away the best player from their moribund 2017 defense (Marcus Peters) and sustained losses to their coaching staff.

The Raiders hired Jon Gruden, which is nice PR, but Gruden is out here disparaging all the changes to the game since he last coached and openly musing about bringing football back to 1998. The Raiders signed two blocking tight ends and a fullback this offseason, and seemingly everyone else they signed was over 30 years old. There's obviously a chance for them to take a step forward, but it's no guarantee.

Then there's Elway's Broncos. They missed out on Kirk Cousins and ended up signing Case Keenum instead. They cut ties with their 1,000-yard running back. They traded away one of their best corners (Aqib Talib) because he became too expensive. They added one of the draft's best defenders in Bradley Chubb but we don't really know what their offense is going to look like.

Meanwhile, the Chargers finally have something resembling a real offensive line, if they can stay healthy. They still have Philip Rivers and Melvin Gordon and Keenan Allen and Hunter Henry, and they should have a full season of Mike Williams. They've got Joey Bosa and Melvin Ingram up front, one of the NFL's best cornerback tandems (Casey Hayward and Trevor Williams, plus the returning Jason Verrett) and now a strong duo at safety after drafting Derwin James. Maybe they really are the team to beat. As long as they find a kicker, that is.

Broncos RB says he's grateful to be alive after stolen car crashed into his Jeep

By Frank Schwab
Yahoo Sports
May 15, 2018

The good news first: Denver Broncos running back De'Angelo Henderson suffered only minor injuries on Saturday after being the innocent victim of a car crash.

But what led to that was a wild and scary scene in Denver that involved a stolen car, a chase away from police and an accident that left four hospitalized, including the Broncos' second-year back.

Car in Denver was stolen on Saturday night

The only involvement Henderson has in this story is being at the wrong place at the wrong time.

According to the CBS affiliate in Denver, officers spotted a car on Saturday night that was reported stolen. The vehicle eluded officers and sped away, CBS4 Denver said.

The stolen car crashed with other cars, including Henderson's Jeep that flipped over. The accident closed lanes of traffic on Jordan Road, near a major freeway, for hours. Because of that, the story was notable in Denver long before anyone realized one of the victims was a Broncos player.

Team says Henderson is OK

Broncos spokesman Patrick Smyth confirmed Henderson was injured in the accident but was OK. All four people injured, including the two people in the stolen car, were released from the hospital on Sunday, CBS 4 Denver said. Smyth said Henderson's injuries were minor.

Mike Klis of 9News reported that Henderson was bringing home takeout food for his young family when his Jeep was hit at about 8 p.m. Saturday.

"Most traumatic event I've probably ever had to deal with"
Henderson described the incident on Instagram, with a picture of his flipped-over vehicle.

The second-year back is competing for a roster spot, and OTA practices start next week. The timing of the situation is not good, but at least he wasn't seriously injured.

Henderson admits he was fortunate to not only escape the accident without major injury, but to live through it.

"I'm very grateful and humbled to be alive," Henderson said.

Henderson hopes to practice next week

While football might seem trivial given what happened, the next few months are hugely important for Henderson's career.

The Broncos drafted Henderson in the sixth round last year and he played well in preseason, averaging 4.6 yards per carry. Henderson was stuck behind veterans on the depth chart when the season started and only got seven regular-season carries, though he did add a 29-yard touchdown reception in the season finale. Denver drafted running back Royce Freeman in the third round last month, and Henderson will be battling for a job through preseason. Any missed practice time wouldn't help, but he said he hopes to participate in OTAs next week.

The driver of the stolen car has her own ramifications to deal with. According to 9News, 37-year-old Rainbow Sunset Espinoza was arrested and according to the Douglas County Detention Center is facing 11 charges: stealing a vehicle, driving recklessly, driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, evading police, failing to turn on her headlights, driving a car without plates, driving while her license was revoked, running red lights, criminal mischief, possession of burglary tools and second-degree assault with a deadly weapon.

Here's how NFL will embrace and cash in on sports gambling after losing in Supreme Court

By Charles Robinson

Yahoo Sports

May 15, 2018

In 2016, when the NFL's stance of refusing to place a franchise in Las Vegas began to wobble, former Oakland Raiders CEO Amy Trask began repeatedly framing the change in one word.

Antiquated.

For anyone who listened, Trask kept the message on a singular point: The NFL's playbook on protecting the game against gambling was outdated. In one significant way, the league's marriage to the gambling world had already been established without consent – coupled through the Internet, inside smart phones and in the grasp of technological ingenuity that had brushed aside the NFL's reticence.

Trask was absolutely correct. And two years later – with the Las Vegas Raiders on the horizon and a Supreme Court decision that allows states to legalize sports betting – the NFL is now neck-deep in sports gaming. And over the long run, that's going to be a titanic financial windfall for the NFL, despite fading protests that have roots in the league's antiquated thinking on the gambling issue.

Expect NFL to be ready to cash in

To put a fine point on Monday's developments for the NFL: the league isn't invading Las Vegas anymore. It turns out that Las Vegas is invading the league, from New York to Los Angeles to Des Moines, Iowa. Wherever an NFL game is being played, chances are you'll be able to put some type of wager on it very soon. Now it's up to the league to not only embrace that reality, but also monetize it.

This is a good thing for the NFL. If there is anything this league knows how to do, it's cash in on the product. Even when it takes time to get used to the idea – which the NFL is, regardless of what some news release says about lobbying for sports gaming legislation.

Does the NFL want a strict framework of rules for sports gambling? Maybe.

Does it want regulatory mechanisms in place to keep unseemly characters from crawling under the foundations of its game? Probably.

But more than anything, does the NFL want to be sure it gets a piece of all the legal gambling action on its game, regardless of whether a state houses an NFL franchise? An educated guess is that in the long-term, the answer will be absolutely. And the best way to get a piece of all the action (even in Twin Falls, Idaho), is to start lobbying for some type of nebulous regulation from Day 1. That's precisely what the NFL did Monday.

More gambling, more eyeballs

Make no mistake, the NFL isn't being caught flat-footed here. Its owners already had a gambling-specific discussion and presentation at the Orlando meetings in March, largely focused on the potential of Monday's landmark Supreme Court decision. But the NFL's homework started long before that meeting. Indeed, the NFL's power brokers have been thinking for quite some time about the changing attitudes toward gambling and what they could mean for the billions on the bottom line.

You could see it in the fairly breezy 2017 relocation approval of the Raiders to Las Vegas. An approval which had the votes of the Los Angeles Rams, Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Jacksonville Jaguars – three ownership groups that also have significant stakes in English Premier League franchises, which all fall under an umbrella of legalized gambling overseas. And lest anyone forget, the starburst of daily fantasy sports gambling over the past five years included the rise of DraftKings, which has two eyebrow-raising investors in Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones and New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft.

All of which confirms what we already know about the NFL. Its thinking may be antiquated in many respects but it's also remarkably fluid when it comes to massive sums of new money. And with the league targeting \$25 billion in annual revenues by 2027, it is aggressively on the lookout for new ways to monetize the product.

Monday's decision will offer plenty. Not just through a traditional cut of gambling profits, which is sure to be sought by the NFL. There will be other streams of cash, too. Whether it's through higher television ratings from coast to coast, new waves of advertising partners, or more complex and lucrative deals with media partners, the equation laid out is fairly simple. A wider national gambling platform means more eyeballs. More eyeballs means more customers. And more customers means the same thing it has always meant: A bloated cash register.

Ticket scalpers taught NFL valuable lesson

How the NFL gets to that windfall remains to be seen. As owners indicated at the Orlando meetings, a Supreme Court decision kicking the door open on gambling would be just the first step in a long process of monetization. One in which there will be a massive string of planning, meetings and regulatory debates. Not to mention the ramping up of a security infrastructure that protects NFL franchises from an explosion of gambling, which is sure to draw in some questionable characters along the way.

But this also wouldn't be the first time the NFL learned to embrace something it once considered the underbelly of its product. Fans only need to look as far as ticket scalping to understand how quickly the league can turn what it deemed a negative into a net-positive for its bank account.

It wasn't that long ago when the NFL griped incessantly about the secondary ticket market that made massive sums of cash off tickets the league had already sold to fans. But after years of wondering how to tackle the sellers who had created a massive underground economy off of the league's product, the NFL decided to join in and double-dip on its own ticket sales.

Rather than chase around scalpers through local law enforcement or in the court system – which was expensive and ineffective – the NFL simply cut deals with large ticket brokers. And then it went out and formed an even deeper partnership with TicketMaster, launching an NFL ticket exchange that gave the league a second cut of profits and teams an opportunity to track the product it was selling to season-ticket holders.

Just like that, the NFL took a negative and spun it into a positive. It gained more power over its product, gained more money on the bottom line, and coopted a new business frontier by embracing the technological ingenuity of someone else.

Few business empires are more capable of pulling off such a financial bonanza with its product. Even fewer are capable of repeating it. The NFL can do both. And starting with Monday's push into the deep end of the gambling pool, it will.

This is how big the Supreme Court's landmark decision on sports wagering will be in America

By Dan Wetzel
Yahoo Sports
May 15, 2018

If someone offers you a bet on how significant of an impact the legalization of sports wagering will be on not just the games America plays and watches, but the entire business of sports ... take the over.

On Monday the United States Supreme Court ruled 6-3 to strike down the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (PASPA), a 25-year-old law that effectively limited sports gambling to the state of Nevada. The case was brought by former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, who argued against the NCAA and four professional sports leagues, not to mention both the Obama and Trump administrations, that PASPA was unconstitutional.

Christie was proven correct.

So, what changes now?

Potentially everything, or at least a lot of things. In some places, it could change quite quickly. In others, maybe not.

First the ruling needs to be sorted out. A storefront sportsbook, like the ones across Europe, will not open down the block from your house today so you can bet on the Golden State-Houston game.

The ruling kicks the issue to the United States Congress to sort out, so politicians (and lobbyists) are going to be involved. If the feds don't act, however, then the issue can be decided on a state-by-state basis. It's expected that if Washington comes up with something, it will still allow state governments to handle local legalization, the way it is with lotteries (44 states have them) and casino gambling (30 states allow it). Industry estimates peg 32 states as likely to legalize initially, with more coming as they realize the revenue being lost.

If you live in Alabama (one state that bans both lotteries and casinos) and you sternly oppose wagering of any kind, it's likely nothing will change. Although since the industry's future is going to be linked to online and mobile, that too might fray.

For others, buckle up. In anticipation of this ruling, six states have already passed legislation on the legalization of sports wagering: Connecticut, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Those could get up and running in a matter of weeks, however it's possible the feds will step in to pump the brakes, at least for a little while. States would need to adjust accordingly.

Ten other states, including major markets California, Illinois and Michigan, are considering or have considered legislation in the past year. Those can be revived, rewritten and passed based on legislative schedules.

What's undeniable is that there is a massive public thirst to gamble. In 2017, the American Gambling Association reports sports wagering hit a record \$4.9 billion in Nevada alone. People living everywhere else have been forced to wager exponentially more than that through local bookmakers, often linked to organized crime, or, of late, offshore sites via the Internet that offer no consumer protections.

Neither, of course, provides tax revenue or a cut to the leagues themselves.

And the leagues want in. This is a watershed day for all of them, and not simply if they can negotiate a cut of revenue under the premise that they need an "integrity fee" to staff up monitoring and enforcement of their contests.

The NBA has already proposed a 1 percent fee. If that's an opening salvo, then it'll likely get less, but it's still a ton. In West Virginia, one proposal had a cut of every wager earmarked as an "integrity fee" for West Virginia University and Marshall, potential windfalls that could help reshape college athletics despite the NCAA's vehement defense of PASPA.

It's the axillary money that will rain down and, in some cases, already has.

"I think everyone who owns a top-four professional sports team just saw the value of their team double," Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban told CNBC Monday morning.

Start with television ratings, which for many sports have been soft in recent years, most notably the NFL. However, research by the AGA found in 2015 regular gamblers watched 19 additional NFL games compared to non-gamblers. They also watched for longer. Gamblers, AGA said, were just 25 percent of the market, yet they watched 47 percent of all the minutes of NFL football broadcasts. The AGA predicts once legal, sports bettors will increase to 50 percent of the viewing audience.

"Broadcasts and advertisers who desire highly engaged viewers would reap the benefits," Geoff Freeman, president of AGA said.

It's not just people sticking around to find out if a team covers a point spread or where a game hits on the over/under. Those are old bets. With mobile wagering, in-game bets on each play can make any game interesting no matter the situation or score. Nothing else matters when you're wagering on the outcome of the next play – say a made field goal or a first down. It becomes less a sports event and more a game of chance/skill/luck (fill in your choice).

That was likely the thinking behind Fox Sports paying the NFL \$3 billion-plus to broadcast just 11 Thursday night games in each of the next five seasons. Despite sagging ratings and complaints about poor quality of play, the per game average increased for the NFL from \$45 million to \$60 million.

More viewers mean higher advertising rates for the networks. Legal sports wagering also means a new market to sell advertisements and partnerships. Just as daily fantasy became a lucrative boom (FanDuel and DraftKings overwhelmed the airwaves in 2015) now comes an even bigger and richer group.

"FanDuel and DraftKings are in a unique position to leverage their huge U.S. databases into these new opportunities," said Cal Spears, the CEO of RotoGrinders.com, which has been modeling player performances for years for fantasy and can now shift to actual wagering. "Look for them to offer

traditional sports bets where legal, but also to create new game types that merge sports betting and fantasy concepts.”

Teams and leagues can benefit here also with a new money stream, not just from a cut of the action, but in sponsorship and advertising deals with sports wagering operations. The Sports Business Daily reported there are some 50 different gambling brands in England sponsoring professional soccer clubs there. The U.S. market is more than five times larger.

Regular sports gamblers don't just watch more game action, they consume more of all coverage, which should be a boon to all types of media. That may especially be true of gambling specific shows, websites and publications. Not only will old media further adapt in coverage of wagering, but a “Gambling CNBC” will sprout up. The Brent Musburger-backed VSiN has been broadcasting out of a glass studio in the South Point Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas for almost 18 months. The recent launch of The Action Network follows the trend.

Then there are, like Wall Street, the data analysis and advanced statistics companies that can offer both gamblers and the house an edge. Information that suggests a pitcher is tiring or a boxer's punching power has softened in the last round would be considered an essential premium.

It goes on and on. Imagination and innovation will rule.

What no longer will carry merit is the tired and untrue arguments by the NCAA and the professional sports leagues that propped up PASPA for all these years. The FBI has long said that the best tool it has in fighting point shaving or game fixing is legalized wagering because it can see suspicious activity in real time.

Instead anti-gambling forces argued against this and rather lined the pockets of organized crime, which for decades has used wagering money to fund far worse endeavors such as drug and human trafficking.

So, Monday was a bad day for the mob.

And a good day for common sense, not to mention Americans who want the freedom to live their lives to do just that.

Well, at least in some states. Which ones will be hashed out on Capitol Hill and in state houses across the land. At least the discussion has finally gotten real.

Sports wagering is coming. Sports, and the business of sports, will never be the same.

What the Supreme Court's Decision to Legalize Sports Betting Could Mean for the NFL

By Albert Breer

MMQB

May 15, 2018

At the NFL's annual meeting back in March, Giants owner John Mara, whose family is in its 10th decade of NFL ownership, was careful when discussing the breadth of what could be coming with the legalization of sports gambling. But he didn't quibble with the significance of what was happening.

"We're having discussions that we've never had before," Mara told me in Orlando.

The Supreme Court's monumental decision on Monday is why. The panel ruled by a 7–2 vote in favor of New Jersey to overturn the long-standing federal ban on sports gambling (only the state of Nevada is exempt), which puts the decision on whether to legalize it in the hands of each individual state. And if most states' willingness to allow casino construction is any indication, there will be some green lights coming.

And what exactly does this mean for the NFL? Well, it's been more reluctant than other pro sports leagues to embrace what many have seen coming for a long time, even with owners like Dallas's Jerry Jones and New England's Robert Kraft investing heavily in daily fantasy sports—seen by many as a first cousin to full-blown betting on NFL games. But that attitude has changed over the last year. The NFL's messaging hasn't just softened on it, but the league has shifted into planning for the new business opportunity that's about to land in its lap. How? Monetize the hell out of it.

Keep in mind that league-wide gambling may take some time. It's likely that not all states will immediately legalize sports betting, so NFL might force teams in states that do legalize it to wait to implement initiatives, like in-game prop betting, until it's legal in every NFL state.

"That'll create another process," Chiefs CEO Clark Hunt said. "One thing that was raised to us is you might have some state laws that conflict with federal laws, which will make it really complicated. What the league is trying to do in preparation for it is figure out how to maintain the integrity of the game, because that's the most important thing on many, many fronts. And so they're beginning their work on that."

Also, the NFL will study, but not necessarily follow, the NBA. The NBA has been aggressive on this front, saying it will seek a 1% cut of all basketball-related bets. My guess is that the NFL will see how that goes and then move on it if it becomes a big revenue-generator in basketball. But one owner told me a few weeks ago that the NFL is looking at taking a fee from bets on point spreads and similar odds as a "low-margin business for us."

- [McCANN: Why New Jersey Won Its Supreme Court Battle to Legalize Sports Betting](#)

Here's what the NFL is thinking on a few topics right now.

Casinos and sponsorship. Legalized gambling could impact the NFL's relationships with casinos. One high-ranking Raiders source explained that his team, and others, are sensitive to the possibility of the league taking a significant cut of the money that casinos make, given the chance for partnerships.

As it stands, teams are not allowed to have deals with casinos that have sports books and can't use the word "casino" in any advertising they sell. Based on what you see overseas, this is one area where the cliché "the floodgates are opening" might be apt.

It's fair to say a casino with a sports book wouldn't mind exposure to 80,000 football-crazy people on a weekly basis.

In-game props. This is a subject I hit hard in my March column. Owners believe there's money to be made in allowing fans in the stands to bet on game situations via apps on their phones, adding to the entertainment value of the in-stadium experience in the same way Premier League teams in the UK have.

At a time when the NFL is having all kinds of issues convincing the public to get off its collective couch and to the stadium, there's potential for the change here to be transformative.

- Read the entire Supreme Court decision to overturn the ban on sports betting

TV ratings. Same idea applies here—legalized sports gambling introduces new, creative ways to make an NFL Sunday more interactive than ever. The idea of sitting on the couch for 12 hours straight doesn't appeal to the younger crowd like it once did.

If you can make it more like video game? Maybe that changes things. And maybe it changes the equation in the foreign countries that the NFL is trying to mine too.

Integrity. Yes, we're going to bring this up, and maybe the most salient point I've heard regarding this topic is one Mara raised to me: "Do we want control of the information that's out there?" Indeed, information is powerful currency in the gambling world. Now should the NFL do more than it already does with injury reports and other game information to ensure that everything is on the same level?

There's a lot of work to be done and many questions like that which need answering. But given this recent move by the Supreme Court, we know that nothing will ever be the same.

Broncos RB De'Angelo Henderson OK after car crash

By Kevin Patra

NFL.com

May 15, 2018

Denver Broncos running back De'Angelo Henderson avoided major injury after being the victim of an automotive accident.

"We're thankful that Broncos RB De'Angelo Henderson sustained only minor injuries as one of several accident victims when a car collided with his jeep Saturday," team spokesman Patrick Smyth confirmed on Twitter.

Henderson was taken to an area hospital as a precaution and is back at the team's facility in preparation for next week's organized team activities, per Smyth. Henderson is expected to compete for snaps with Devontae Booker and third-round pick Royce Freeman.

"With OTAs a week a way and a season that I'm competing for a significant roll, the most traumatic event I've probably ever had to deal with occurs," Henderson posted on Instagram. "T-boned, airborne, flipped, and rolled. I plowed through my jammed door and exit my Jeep on my own. I'm truly blessed that God protected me through this accident."

According to CBS Denver, the driver of a stolen vehicle fled from police and collided with several other cars. Four people were hospitalized Saturday night but released on Sunday, per the report. The driver of the car was taken into custody and faces charges of vehicular assault, eluding officers, motor vehicle theft, DUI-Drugs and several additional, unspecified traffic offenses.

John Elway: Bolts might be team to beat in AFC West

By Kevin Patra

NFL.com

May 15, 2018

Free agency is mostly done. The draft has been wrapped up in a tight bow. We've hit the portion of the NFL calendar where over the next several months the void will be filled mostly by large men running around in shorts, sans pads.

The gap in the process leaves the door open for prognostications and little else. Waves of predictions will flow over the barren landscape like rain pummeling a dry plain. Most of those guestimations will be made by media personalities paid to keep the clicks and eyeballs rolling in during the NFL's downtime.

Sometimes, however, the smoke comes from a more notable source; one that stops and makes you reconsider whether it's simply a scorching thought to gain attention. Such a take took place recently when Denver Broncos general manager John Elway gave his assessment of the AFC West following the draft.

"It's the wild, wild West. I thought the Chargers did a really nice job with the draft," Elway told reporters in Omaha, via The MMQB's Peter King. "They've got the settled quarterback, even though the Raiders do too. Looking at it, [the Chargers] may be the ones to beat. As I stand here, looking at it, the Chargers might be the team to beat."

It's hard to argue with Elway's assessment in mid-May.

The Chargers have a proven franchise quarterback, weapons at receiver, a workhorse running back and an improved offensive line. Los Angeles also boasts what could be the best defense in the NFL in 2018, with a dynamic pass-rushing duo and a deep group of lockdown corners. The addition of rookie safety Derwin James gave the Chargers D playmakers at every level.

Surely, those positives are what Elway sees on paper.

Each of the other AFC West squads has bigger questions.

How will Case Keenum improve the Broncos offense? Is Denver's offensive line fixed? How will trading Aqib Talib change the secondary? Will the combination of Bradley Chubb and Von Miller mask any other defensive questions?

Will Patrick Mahomes live up to the hype in K.C.? If there are growing pains with the young QB, can the rest of the offense overcome those mistakes? Will the revamped defense improve after jettisoning so many big, aging names? Can Kendall Fuller replace Marcus Peters? How will Eric Berry return from injury?

What will Jon Gruden's Raiders look like? Will the coach's old-school approach work in 2018? Will their addition of aging veterans work in the short term? Can Derek Carr bounce back from a down 2017? Ditto for Amari Cooper? Will the defense be any better than the last several bad seasons? Will the chances the Raiders took during the draft pay off?

The past few offseasons, the AFC West has been considered the best division in the NFL. The big changes this year have thrust it into a different light. It's anyone's best guess how it will shake out in six months. Even John Elway is just projecting in May.

How Sports Leagues Are Gearing Up for the Future of Betting

By Andrew Beaton
Wall Street Journal
May 15, 2018

The major American sports leagues had an unmistakable response to Monday's historic Supreme Court ruling that paves the way for legalized sports across the U.S.: We're ready—and we want in.

Just a decade ago, that would have been unimaginable. Then, the NBA had just been rocked by a referee involved in sports gambling. Memories of famous scandals, from Pete Rose to the 1919 Black Sox, still loomed over MLB. The NFL, America's gambling behemoth, opposed the practice perhaps more vigorously than any other major sports body.

But in the months and years leading up to Monday's 6-3 decision, which invalidated a federal law that banned sports betting in most of the U.S., these leagues have been preparing for a different type of future. Both behind the scenes and publicly, their attitudes have shifted in anticipation of a new reality that had come to feel like an inevitability.

"The leagues want a piece of the action, somehow, some way," said Frank Vuono, co-founder of 16W Marketing, a New-Jersey based sports marketing agency.

The leagues have already laid the groundwork for how they would like to proceed in a landscape where fans may be laying bets before—and during—games, whether that's from seats on their couches or in the stands.

These bets will go far beyond the classic wager on who will win a game and by how many points. Legal sports gambling gives more fans access to a huge array of "prop bets" that would be available on every play of every game. They are bets on propositions such as, "How many threes will LeBron James hit in the third quarter?" or "Will the Patriots score a touchdown on this drive?" Such bets are common in the U.K., where soccer fans can make wagers on Premier League matches while at the stadiums.

The stances of the leagues visibly changed even before the Supreme Court made it clear the leagues did not have a choice. David Stern opposed legalized sports betting during most of his 30 years as NBA commissioner, but Adam Silver, who took over in 2014, supports it. The NHL became the first major league to place a franchise in Las Vegas. The Golden Knights, in their first season, are in the playoffs. The NFL's Raiders will move from Oakland to Las Vegas in the next couple of years.

On Monday, the leagues said they would work to protect the "integrity" of the game in states where sports betting becomes legal. The challenge that invalidated the federal law on sports betting came from New Jersey, but other states have already either passed legislation or voiced support of action to follow that.

"As each state considers whether to allow sports betting, we will continue to seek the proper protections for our sport, in partnership with other professional sports," MLB said in a statement.

Not all leagues, though, have taken the same approach in their behind-the-scenes efforts to gear up for this moment and capitalize. And some of the proposals have already faced resistance from gaming experts and industry executives.

In recent months, the NBA and MLB have already been lobbying states for what has been commonly referred to as an “integrity fee”—1% of bets typically—to extract a cut of the action. The leagues believe the fee is the necessary trade-off for the increased administration that would be required to protect the sports and guard against anything nefarious, such as game-fixing.

This idea has gained traction and generated discord. A bill introduced in the Kansas House of Representatives earlier this year, for example, proposed a 0.25% fee on wagers to go back to the respective leagues.

Gambling experts and industry executives, however, have come out strongly against these proposals. They say a 1% fee can amount to upward of 20% of net revenue for gambling operators and that such an action could keep the practice unregulated and underground. After the NBA proposed a 1% fee in New York in January, Geoff Freeman, CEO of the American Gaming Association, an industry trade group, said that the role of the leagues “most certainly does not include transferring money from bettors to multibillion-dollar sports leagues.”

In a statement Monday, Silver said the league “will remain active in ongoing discussions with state legislatures.”

The NFL isn’t insisting on a fee and NFL commissioner Roger Goodell has been less outspoken than Silver on the subject. Instead, said a person familiar with the league’s plans, the league will push for legislation that requires sports betting operations to use official, league-sanctioned data. The NFL believes this will protect consumers and guarantee quality control. Licensing this data would likely involve some sort of fee.

Down the road, there may be even bigger payoffs: The potential to license games or highlights so that fans can bet on the NFL and watch it too—all in one place. So, for example, if a bettor wagers that a football team will score on its next drive, it could watch the action on their phone.

“The money is in the video,” said the person familiar with the NFL’s plans.

The NFL and NBA both called Monday for a federal framework that would set a standard for regulations in each state where sports gambling is ultimately realized. “Congress has long-recognized the potential harms posed by sports betting to the integrity of sporting contests and the public confidence in these events,” NFL spokesman Brian McCarthy said in a statement. “Given that history, we intend to call on Congress again, this time to enact a core regulatory framework for legalized sports betting.”

Sen. Orrin Hatch (R., Utah) said in a statement Monday that he plans to introduce legislation in the coming weeks to “protect honesty and principle in the athletic arena.”

While these sports bodies see opportunity, the NCAA faces a dilemma. The NCAA has consistently opposed sports betting, even refusing to hold championship events where sports betting is legal. The NCAA already faces growing questions about how it compensates college athletes, a drumbeat that may only grow louder with the potential for new money flowing in from gambling.

Now, the court's decision appears to be spurring the sprawling, member-led organization to reconsider.

On Monday the NCAA's chief legal officer, Donald Remy, said in a statement: "While we are still reviewing the decision to understand the overall implications to college sports, we will adjust sports wagering and championship policies to align with the direction from the court."

Broncos RB De'Angelo Henderson OK after car accident

By Josh Alper
Pro Football Talk
May 15, 2018

Broncos running back De'Angelo Henderson was involved in a car accident on Saturday night, but avoided any severe injuries.

Team spokesman Patrick Smyth announced on Monday that Henderson was taken to the hospital as a precaution and released after suffering minor injuries. Henderson was at the Broncos facility on Monday and is expected to participate when organized team activities start next week.

CBS Denver reports that the crash occurred when a vehicle that was reported as stolen in Denver collided with other cars, including the one Henderson was driving, while trying to elude police. The driver of the car faces charges of vehicular assault, eluding, motor vehicle theft, DUI-Drugs, and several other traffic offenses.

Henderson was a sixth-round pick last year. He ran seven times for 13 yards and caught two passes for 36 yards and a touchdown in five games during his rookie season.

NFLPA will closely monitor sports betting developments

By Josh Alper
Pro Football Talk
May 15, 2018

The NFLPA has joined many others in the sports world by issuing a statement in the wake of Monday's Supreme Court decision overturning a federal ban on state-sanctioned sports betting.

"The Supreme Court's decision today reaffirms the decision to collaborate with the other sports unions on the issues of player safety, integrity of our games and privacy and publicity rights. Our union will monitor developments closely and address the implications of this decision with the NFL, state legislators and other relevant stakeholders."

The collaboration with other sports unions referred to in Monday's statement included a joint statement with the MLBPA, NBAPA and NHLPA in April focused on "the legal, commercial, practical, and human consequences of allowing sports betting to become mainstream."

That statement ended by expressing the view that "the athletes must also have a seat at the table to ensure that players' rights and the integrity of our games are protected."

After ugly accident, De'Angelo Henderson feels fortunate to be ready to play

By Michael David Smith

Pro Football Talk

May 15, 2018

Broncos running back De'Angelo Henderson is feeling fortunate to be alive — and ready to play football — after he was in what could have been a serious accident.

Henderson wrote on Instagram that he is dealing with only minor injuries and expects to be ready to participate in Denver's Organized Team Activities.

"With OTAs a week a way and a season that I'm competing for a significant role, the most traumatic event I've probably ever had to deal with occurs," Henderson wrote. "T-boned, airborne, flipped, and rolled. I plowed through my jammed door and exit my Jeep on my own. I'm truly blessed that God protected me through this accident. Without his favor I don't know if I would've survived. I'm thankful to only come out with minor injuries and a few scrapes and bruises. Thank you to the Parker Police and South Metro Fire Rescue in Parker for getting to me asap, attending all my needs and transporting me to the hospital safely. Thank you to the doctors at Parker Adventist for treating me as a first class patient also. I'm very grateful and humbled to be alive. My family and I thanks everyone who has prayed for me over the last few days. My thoughts and prayers are with the other victims and I hope they all are safe and doing well."

Henderson told Mike Klis of 9 News in Denver that he feels sore, but it's comparable to the soreness he feels after a hard-fought game.

According to 9 News, the driver of the other car was Rainbow Sunset Espinoza, a 37-year-old woman who is facing 11 charges: stealing a vehicle, driving recklessly, driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, evading police, failing to turn on her headlights, driving a car without plates, driving while her license was revoked, running red lights, criminal mischief, possession of burglary tools and second-degree assault with a deadly weapon.

Henderson was one of four people injured, but all of them have now been released from the hospital.

Gambling will be good for NFL's business, whether league embraces it or not

By Michael David Smith

Pro Football Talk

May 15, 2018

The NFL has officially held gambling at arm's length, with strict rules against players, coaches, owners, officials and anyone else having any business interests in sports betting. But that doesn't mean the NFL has no interest in sports betting.

The Supreme Court's ruling today, opening the door to legal sports gambling in every state, will be very good for the NFL's business, regardless of whether the NFL embraces gambling or continues to distance itself from it.

That's because there's going to be a huge increase in the number of people placing bets on NFL games this year, once they can do so at safe, legal, legitimate businesses in their own states. And an increase in the number of people placing bets on NFL games will lead to an increase in the number of people who care about NFL games.

That could mean a reversal of the league's declining television ratings, if more bettors translates to more viewers, and even if it doesn't end the league's ratings slide, it will surely be profitable for the league's network partners from an advertising perspective. Remember that brief time when Draft Kings and FanDuel ads were everywhere, before the government started cracking down on those businesses? Expect a return of that kind of advertising environment, as there will be far more sports books advertising their services to fans. An increased demand to purchase advertising time on NFL games and other NFL-related programming is valuable to the NFL, even if the NFL keeps claiming that it doesn't endorse gambling.

Of course, the league may come around on gambling, especially if the states that legalize gambling can be persuaded to pay the much-discussed "integrity fee" to the sports leagues, which would mean some of the money from betting on sports goes directly to the leagues themselves. It's hard to imagine NFL owners turning down a chance to get a percentage of the gambling revenues.

Even if the integrity fees don't come to fruition, however, the reality is today's news is good for the NFL's business. The NFL has officially stood against sports gambling for many years, but privately the league's owners have to be pleased at the prospect of making a lot more money, thanks to the Supreme Court allowing Americans to bet money on games.

NFL plans to lobby Congress for a “regulatory framework” for sports betting

By Mike Florio
Pro Football Talk
May 15, 2018

The NFL has lost in the judicial branch (even if the NFL actually has won at the every branch of every bank with which it does business). The league now will take the gambling fight to the legislature.

In its first statement issued in the aftermath of Monday’s landmark ruling paving the way for nationwide sports betting, the NFL makes clear its intention not to lobby individual states but to lobby Congress for a law that protects the NFL’s interests.

“The NFL’s long-standing and unwavering commitment to protecting the integrity of our game remains absolute,” the league said. “Congress has long-recognized the potential harms posed by sports betting to the integrity of sporting contests and the public confidence in these events. Given that history, we intend to call on Congress again, this time to enact a core regulatory framework for legalized sports betting. We also will work closely with our clubs to ensure that any state efforts that move forward in the meantime protect our fans and the integrity of our game.”

The NFL may have a hard time getting Congress to pass any laws that would regulate state-by-state gambling, given that Monday’s ruling arises from the rights of states to determine whether they want to have sports wagering, without interference from the federal government.

At the state level, the reference to the protection of fans and “the integrity of our game” could be another way of phrasing the money-for-nothing “integrity fee” that the sports leagues are seeking. Regardless, the NFL will have little or no leverage to make that request in the states where the NFL currently doesn’t do business. In the states where NFL teams currently reside, the league will have slightly more leeway when it comes to getting a cut, ostensibly to protect fans and ensure the integrity of the game.

Still, it would be far more effective to get a favorable federal law that applies to all states. The NFL apparently will give that a try initially, even if anything that restricts the ability of states to determine the scope and breadth of sports gambling programs will presumably fail for the same reason that the law prohibiting any sports wagering finally has been scrapped.

David Tepper's deal to buy Panthers to be signed today

By Darin Gantt
Pro Football Talk
May 15, 2018

Even with some thinking the value of sports teams is about to skyrocket with the addition of potential gambling revenues, the sale of the Panthers is proceeding as planned.

According to Seth Wickersham and Adam Schefter of ESPN, Steelers minority partner David Tepper is expected to sign the deal to buy the Panthers from Jerry Richardson today.

That keeps the transaction on track to be approved at the owners meeting in Atlanta next week.

Tepper didn't lodge the high bid in the process, but he did have the biggest stack of cash, and the blessing of a group of owners who had already invited him into their club. And with Richardson still being investigated for workplace misconduct after last year's reports of sexual and racial harassment, that gave the league a bit of leverage to nudge the process in a certain direction.

There were reports that other bids were in the \$2.5 billion range, while Tepper's was in the \$2.1 billion to \$2.2 billion range.

Lawyers were still going through the final points of the sale yesterday in Charlotte, and no speed bumps are expected in the deal.