

We got some conflicting news this morning from the Plain Dealer as to the nature and severity of Willie McGinest's back injury/surgery, and the Rhino was all over the discrepancy. How much time will Willie miss? And how did the PD Sports Editor miss this one? The Rhino hits on Willie and the PD in his latest



Some days, I think that The Plain Dealer's sports section should only be read while listening to [The Doors](#). On those days, the paper's stories and columns are so downright bizarre that the only plausible explanation is that the sportswriters have taken some magic mushrooms, and readers should be prepared to get their own psychedelic groove on in order to better appreciate their work.

Today was definitely one of those days.

I know that information can be murky when it comes to player injuries, and that sportswriters are frequently hustling to get their stories filed on a deadline, but you'd think that somebody at The Plain Dealer could manage to get the story straight on Willie McGinest's injury, at least when it comes to two stories about it that appear on the [same page](#) of the newspaper.

Readers of Mary Kay Cabot's ["Browns Insider"](#); [column](#) this morning learned that McGinest would be out at least six weeks following his back surgery, and at best ["would be back in time for the Sept. 23 game in Oakland."](#) However, Tony Grossi's ["Training Camp Log: Day 13](#)

" that appeared immediately below Cabot's piece also noted McGinest's injury, but said that he "won't begin rehab for seven weeks."

So, according to The Plain Dealer, McGinest will either be nearly ready to return to the Browns or still lying flat on his back six weeks from now. Thanks, I'm much better informed now.

I then flipped over to Bill Livingston's [column](#) . That was a good move, because it turned out to be vintage Livingston. Instead of writing about the Browns, Indians, Buckeyes, Cavaliers, or even the Lake Erie Monsters, Livingston had another one of those odd, rambling columns in which he mentioned Abraham Lincoln, Paul Newman, Hank Aaron, Barry Bonds, Mark McGwire, Sammy Sosa and Bob Beamon--all before the fold.

I think the column eventually turned out to be about steroids, but the highlight to me was when Bill professed his love for track & field, and field events in particular, with this paragraph:

"I was the one who liked the field events more as a kid. The shot put, with men who were giants exploding across the ring and firing steel with a war cry; the long jump, with Bob Beamon pioneering unassisted flight before anyone ever heard of Michael Jordan; the pole vault, with airborne aces dueling on blue battlefields -- I loved them all."

There are a couple of things that really struck me about this paragraph. The first, of course, was how simply dreadful it is. Shot putters are "firing steel with a war cry?" Pole vaulters are "airborne aces dueling on blue battlefields?" Wow! That's incredibly baaad stuff!

The other thing that struck me about this paragraph is that Livingston cannot possibly have meant it. Nobody "loves" field events as Livingston purports to love them. Look, I threw the discus in college, and even I don't find field events particularly fascinating to watch. They are mildly interesting at best, which is why you see them only once every four years for about 30 minutes during the Olympics.

When I read stuff like this, I wonder what the PD's sports editor must be like. When I try to picture him, I see a cross between Col. Kurtz in Apocalypse Now and Hunter S. Thompson in

Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas

. You know, a combination of "The horror...The horror..." and "when the going gets weird, the weird turn pro."

I know bloggers are supposed to bitch about The Plain Dealer, and I've done my share of that. But in my heart of hearts, I've got to admit that it's one of my guilty pleasures, and mornings like this are the reason why.