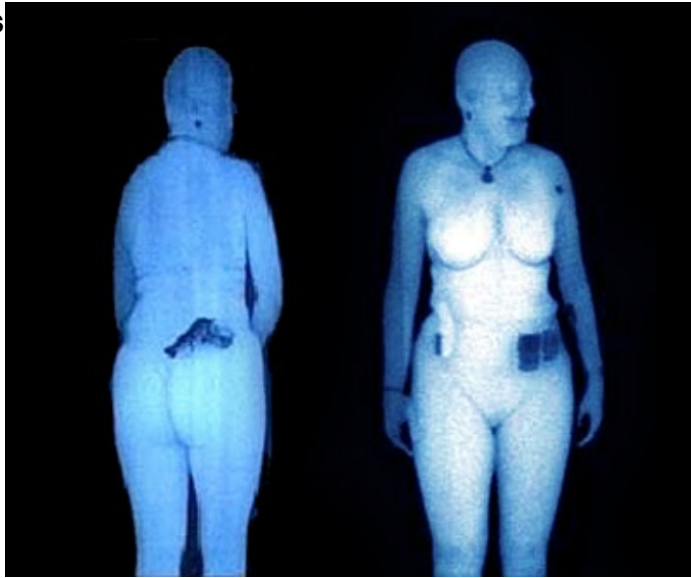


Regarding Shaun Rogers



Here's what you want me to say:

1. Shaun Rogers is a horrible human being for carrying around a gun.
2. Professional athletes are spoiled, out-of-touch individuals with a huge sense of entitlement.
3. Laws are laws, and he should suffer the extreme consequences of his actions.

The day this happened, I was listening to a radio show and a caller called in and made the observation that "*We don't know how many times he's gotten away with carrying a gun on a plane, and maybe this is just the first time he got caught* ."

"*Mmmm hmmm!*" said the host, like something brilliant had just been said.

I could be naive (wouldn't be the first time), but I was under the impression that airports had these things called metal detectors and scanning devices, where if you were packing heat in your carry-on, they'd see it and ask you "*Hey, what's that?*"

I've flown numerous times where I had to pry open my carry-on and explain the various contents simply because they looked "suspicious" (*it's a hookah, sir, not a bong!*), so I find it hard to believe that Rogers got through the bag scan "many times" with his piece, and - Whoops! - he just got nabbed this time.

So my guess would be that Mr. Rogers forgot about his piece in his bag, was in a hurry, and made a mistake.

Is it a big one? Well, duh. He got arrested, didn't he?

But I ain't gonna crucify the guy for being stupid. IQ Tests weren't designed for Defensive Linemen.

Judge not lest ye throw stones at glass houses.

Regarding The Trade

As you know, the Browns shipped Alex Hall, a 4th, and a 5th to Philly this week for CB Sheldon Brown and LB Chris Gocong. Brown is a Pro Bowl caliber CB, but he's 31 and wanting a new contract. Gocong is a 26 year old former starter that was benched last season.

At first glance, getting 2 (one high quality) starters for Hall and some later round picks seems

like a steal. Hall showed some flashes his rookie season, but, under Mangini, couldn't find the field, falling behind guys like Jason Trusnik and Blake Costanzo on the depth chart. Hall has some pass rush skills, but never really warmed up to the multiple responsibilities that come with a 3-4 OLB, especially under a coach like Mangini that worships versatility like a prehistoric Sun God.

So Hall is really no loss to the Cleveland Browns, because it was pretty clear he wasn't part of their current or future plans. He would've been lucky to make the 2010 team.

But the same could be said of Gocong in Philly.



Phil Savage, who now works for the Eagles in some capacity (I'm too lazy to look it up, and I can't believe it matters), probably had a hand in this. Savage scouted Hall personally before the 2008 draft, and he loves Hall's potential (not to mention Hall's success would make him look like the genius he so desperately wants to be re-considered as). I'm sure he sold Andy Reid and new Eagles GM Howie Roseman that Hall could thrive as a 4-3 rushing End, that all he needed was a switch in Defensive scheme and a chance to play.

And Browns GM Tom Heckert probably feels exactly the same way about Gocong, whom he drafted in the 3rd Round in 2006. He's probably been spending hours telling Mangini how Gocong's skill set is probably better suited to a 3-4.

So let's consider the Hall and Gocong parts of the deal as a wash, a player-for-player swap.

In other words, the real deal was a 4th and 5th for Sheldon Brown. That's where the debate on who got the best of the trade starts.

Browns is good. He fills a big hole. He's very durable, and is a strong tackler. Plus, when he does eventually lose that step, he can move to Safety and probably still be effective for a couple more seasons after that.



Starting-grade CB's don't grow on trees, so it seems that coughing up a mere 4th and 5th for him is a robbery. After all, how often do 4th and 5th Rounders become Starters? And even if they do, it might be several years down the line.

It also frees the Browns up to perhaps go a different direction than the popularly-believed Safety/Cornerback combo in the first 2 Rounds.

However, I can see why Philly made this deal. They're trying to get younger. Mr. Roseman wants to put his stamp on this team (the Eagles just made another trade involving their QB - you might have heard something about it). Brown wanted a big, new, career-finishing contract, and the Eagles didn't want to oblige him. And I'm sure that new GM is eager to accumulate draft picks to show everyone just how incredibly brilliant he is on Draft Day, thus explaining why the Eagles were fine with trimming the GM, the starting QB, the starting CB, and the starting RB from a perennial playoff team.

Howie, you'd better hope you're right.

But Howie and the Iggles aren't my problem, so I don't care about their fate. I care about the Browns, and this trade made them better. The massive makeover continues - how many players from the 2008 Browns will be left come Training Camp? Six? Ten?

By the way, I consider that a GOOD thing. I know a lot of you get pissed when the Browns trade away their former high picks and fan favorites, but I don't know why we should mourn the exodus of bad players from bad teams built by bad regimes.

Regarding A Mock Draft

Philly's activity this week has changed the face of the top quarter of the NFL Draft. By sending McNabb to Washington, it is now assured that the Redskins won't be trading up for Sam Bradford or taking Jimmy Clausen. By sending Brown to Cleveland, it is now somewhat less likely that the Browns will be selecting one of Eric Berry/Joe Haden (although, still pretty high on the list). Let's see what we've got here:

1. St. Louis - Sam Bradford, QB. If I were them, I'd be taken Ndamukong Suh, because I'm convinced that Suh is the best player in the draft and has the highest success likelihood. Then again, if you're gonna shell out the kind of dough that you have to shell out to sign the #1 overall, then you might as well make it a QB. Especially since they don't have one.

2. Detroit - Ndamukong Suh, DT. Don't look now, but Detroit is building a pretty damn talented team. I'm not sure that will stop them from sucking, but stranger things have happened. Like M. Night Shyamalan still having a career.

Some have tried to argue that trading for Corey Williams means that the Lions don't have to draft DT. That is funnier to me than [George Carlin](#) (and I love Carlin). Just mentioning Williams' name in the same sentence as Suh's is freakin' hysterical. If Suh falls to them and they don't take them, then it will be Same Ol' Lions for this next decade. Again.

3. Tampa Bay - Gerald McCoy, DT. A bunch of Mocks have him falling, but I don't buy it. The Bucs could go OL here, but I think they'll take the guy that some (foolish) pundits had as a better prospect than Suh.

4. Washington - Russell Okung, OL. This one is a slam dunk now after the Skins got McNabb. If Okung is gone, then pencil in the next best OT.

5. Kansas City - Bryan Bulaga, OL. If Eric Berry is to get nabbed before the Browns have a chance, this is likely where it will be. But I think that Scott Pioli will flinch at the idea of taking a Safety so high and will go for the much safer bet, the Offensive Lineman that can start at Guard right away as a Rookie and shortly thereafter man one of the Tackle positions. Plus, this helps give Matt Cassel a better chance to prove he's worth his umpteen billion dollar contract.

6. Seattle - Trent Williams, OL. The run on O Linemen continues, as everyone needs good ones and those picked in the Top 10 are safer-than-normal bets. I don't see the Seahawks going Clausen here because they just traded a liver and a spleen for Charlie Whitehurst, but I wouldn't be shocked if they jumped at a Dez Bryant or a CJ Spiller.

And that leads us to...



7. Cleveland - Eric Berry, S.

An impact Safety can be the most important part of a Defense. Just look how mediocre the Steelers Defense is without Troy Polamalu. How far with the Ravens Defense fall after Ed Reed finally hangs 'em up?

Plus, it's a huge need. So it just makes too much damn sense for it not to happen.

Which probably means it won't.

I'm going to assume that Berry is the pick if he's there, but what if he ain't?

Well, there are several other names that I've heard that make sense.

[Joe Haden](#) , **CB, Florida** - Until the Sheldon Brown trade, it was considered a no-brainer that the Browns would take whichever of Berry-Haden that fell. But there's no reason that can't still happen. If you draft Haden at this spot, then you expect him to start, and he can. You just move Brown to Safety, then you've already massively improved the DB depth and you still have your 2nd Round pick for... whatever (they need GD everything).

[CJ Spiller](#) , **RB, Clemson** - Maybe not a huge need, but he's a dangerous Offensive weapon that could really add further dynamic to the Browns attack.

[Dez Bryant](#) , **WR, Oklahoma State** - Yeah, I doubt it too, but the dude is very skilled, and this is really one of the Browns' weakest areas. When Mo Massaquoi is your #1 WR, then you need some help pronto.

[Earl Thomas](#) , **S, Texas** - If you can't get Berry, maybe you get the next best thing, a guy some have insisted is actually better. I haven't watched him enough to know, but if Heckgren thinks he's worth it, then I wouldn't be sad.

[Jimmy Clausen](#) , **QB, Notre Dame** - This guy might be looking at a Quinn-esque fall if the Browns don't take him, and I kind of doubt they will. But - and tell me if you've heard me say this before - if you don't have a Franchise QB, then YOU NEED ONE.

[Rolando McClain](#) , **LB, Alabama** - It seems like we've got 30 Linebackers on the roster already, but it would be easy to argue that none of them is a "star". McClain could be that in the middle.

[Jason Pierre-Paul](#) , **DE/OLB, South Florida** - This gent scares the fecal matter out of me, being a late-comer good-measurables kind of guy that will have to switch to LB in a 3-4. He's a big risk. I thought we just traded this guy to Oakland. I'd much rather the Browns go after these

boom-or-bust guys when they're a more established team picking later in the 1st Round.

Jared Odrick , DT, Penn State - He's more of a late-riser, his name coming into the top-half-of-the-first discussion only as of late. However, we don't know how long Heckgren have had him there. He would play DE in a 3-4, and we do need one of those. Grossi had an interesting piece about him [here](#) .

As far as the rest of the 1st Round picks... I don't really care. Once the Browns have made their selection Thursday, April 22nd, my mind will feel free to annihilate itself.

Regarding My Pet Peeve

What is this pet peeve, you ask? Why, it's the old Trade Down scenario. Someone will invariably say something like "*If Eric Berry isn't there, then I think the Browns should Trade Down* ", as if it's just that easy.

It ain't.



It drives me nuts when someone just tosses it out there like it's as easy as scratching their ass. It makes me want to boil them in their own earwax.

To pull off a trade down from a Top 10 pick, you have to find a trade partner, which means there has to be a player available that's so great that a team will give you a king's ransom to move up and pay a king's ransom to sign the player to a contract. That's not that easy. No one wants to pay those exorbitant Top 10 rates.

And if you do manage to find a trade partner, then the same people that suggested that you should just "trade down" will be whining that you didn't "get enough" in the trade and that you gave up your chance to draft the guy that someone else just traded up to get (that guy is now bound to be a Hall of Famer just because we passed on him).

We saw it last year. Mangini managed to Trade Down, which was a coup enough, but then came the complaints that the Jets didn't give up enough and boo hoo hoo we didn't take Mark Sanchez this will haunt us for centuries (never mind that Sanchez was almost as bad as DA/BQ last year).

To make it clear, Trading Down isn't just an alternate option. You can't just do it because it sounds like a good idea. Lots goes into it, and the odds of pulling it off are low. So when the Browns are on the clock, put it out of your mind as even being a possibility, and be as surprised as you should be if it gets pulled off.

Regarding The NCAA Tournament

1. The first weekend of the Tourny is probably the best thing in all of Sport. Expanding it to 96 teams would water it down significantly and really be a horrible, horrible, awful, horrible idea.

2. The fact that the NCAA is even flirting with expanding the Tournament to 96 teams just further proves that their opposition to a Football Playoff has absolutely nothing to do with their professed concern for "the kids being out of school too much".

3. It's all about money, and that's where I don't understand how the NCAA doesn't see how they would make more money with a Playoff. I thought these people were supposed to be intelligent.

4. College basketball can be very exciting, but it's amazing how inferior the skill level is compared to their NBA counterparts. It's like the difference between the Yankees and a softball team from Mo's Tavern.

5. Having watched so many games on CBS, and having watched all those commercials, I can only come to the conclusion that every single show on CBS programming must suck.

6. Ice Ages are shorter than the last minute of a college basketball game.

7. There's no such thing as a moral victory.

Regarding How To Train Your Dragon

It was awesome.

Regarding A Nightmare On Elm Street

I thought it just looked terrible until I saw these three words:

Director Michael Bay.

Now I know it's terrible. That thing would have to be wall-to-wall nudity and gore for me to bother, even on video. Michael Bay films are the opposite of awesome.