

Concussions in the nfl

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Concussions in the NFL have become much more prevalent, and the effects of these concussions appear to have become more severe, as this is a direct result of the development of player training systems. Over the past decade there has been vast improvements made in the training equipment and techniques used to train NFL players. This has inevitably resulted in players getting much stronger, faster, and bigger. Over the same period of time concussions have also systematically become more frequent as well.

This has led many people to believe that there is some type of relationship between the improvements in player training and the increase of concussions over the course of a NFL season. The focus of the first paragraph of this essay will be on the overall increase of strength and size of players and how this relates to concussions. The second paragraph will focus on the amount of season and career ending concussion that have occurred this last season opposed to the amount before it.

The third paragraph will focus on the studies, which have been conducted on past players that have showed they have some sort of brain damage, which has resulted from football related activity. The overall strength and size increase is most obvious on the offensive and defensive lines. Consider this in the mid 1970's Randy white starred at defensive tackle for the Dallas Cowboys. White weighed 257 pounds, he lined up across from centers weighing 240 or 250 pounds and guards who were considered huge if they weighed 265.

Last year's Super Bowl featured defensive tackles B. J. Raji who weighs 337 pounds and Casey Hampton who weighs 330 pounds versus guards Chris

Kemoeatu who weighs 344 pounds and Josh Sitton who weighs 318 pounds. To put it in perspective Randy White who played Defensive Tackle and weighed 257 pounds weighs almost 20 pounds less than Baltimore Ravens rookie outside linebacker Courtney Upshaw who weighs in at a whopping 271 pounds. Upshaw is also much faster than White was. This is a prime example of how players have increased in size and strength over the years, and have become more effective in there positions.

Which means that players at certain positions will have programs specifically designed for them to get bigger and stronger. But players have not just gotten bigger they have also gotten faster. This increase in weight, overall strength, and speed is clearly a result of the developments that have been over the years in player training systems. With players looking more like modern day Roman Gladiators than football players, there is no wonder why concussions have been occurring more frequently. Over the past decade there has been a drastic increase in recorded concussions over the course of an entire NFL season including practice.

From pre-season week 1 of the 2011-12 of the NFL season until week 17 regular season 2011-12 there was 167 concussions 12 of those resulted in players being placed on IR (Injured Reserve) which means they are inactive for the entire season (season ending). Over the exact same period of time in the 2007-08 season there were only 115 documented concussions and only 4 of those resulted in Players being placed on the IR. That is a 48% increase in total concussions and 33% in season ending concussions, in just 4 seasons.

So one can only imagine the increase that you would see from the early 1990's to now, if concussions were documented as thoroughly then as they are now. This increase in concussions over such a short period of time is a direct result of player training systems, because in 2008 most NFL teams ran 5 2 a day practices per week in training camps, which only included 3 2 hour weight training sessions. But heading in to 2011-12 season most teams were running 5 2 a day practices and 1 3 a day practices, and the majority of those camps ran 4 3 hour weight training sessions.

There have been several studies conducted on brains of ex-NFL players the most recent of those players is Junior Seau. Seau committed suicide on May, 2, 2012 after a lengthy 19 year NFL career. Junior Seau suffered from chronic traumatic encephalopathy CTE, which is believed to have been partially induced by all the blows to the head that he has taken. Junior started showing symptoms of CTE at the conclusion of the 2007-08 season these symptoms include impulsivity, forgetfulness, depression, and sometimes-suicidal ideation.

The time period in which Seau's family said he started showing signs of CTE is coincidentally the same period of time that NFL teams started to increase the length of practice and conditioning exercises. Throughout the course of Seau's 19 year playing career he played at least 13 games in every season up until the 2004-05 season and up until his retirement after the 2008-09 season he only managed a measly average of 8 games per season. He suffered 3 undocumented concussions according to his family and 2 more documented ones over the same time period.

Junior is not the only ex-NFL player to be diagnosed, more than 30 NFL players have in recent years been diagnosed with CTE, a condition once known as "punch drunk" because it affected boxers who had taken multiple blows to the head. The increase of player's size and strength in the NFL in recent years has a direct correlation with the increase in concussions. This is evident by the 48% increase in total concussions since the 2007-08 season, and the 33% increase in season ending concussions.

The facts that Junior Seau was virtually concussion free his entire career, which spanned 19 years up until the 2004-05 NFL season. Despite the advances in medical sciences and protective player equipment, it is just not enough to protect these mammoth NFL players from concussing one another. The first of two literary devices that I used was a metaphor "With players looking more like modern day Roman Gladiators than football players" This sentence suggests modern NFL players exhibit many of the same traits that Roman Gladiators once exhibited.

This sentence supports my argument because; the increase in player training technologies has essentially turned players into gladiators. The second literary device that I used was Irony "he started showing signs of CTE is coincidentally the same period of time that NFL teams started to increase the length of practice" this is ironic because it is not a coincidence at all there is clearly a direct correlation between length of conditioning/weight training exercises and amount of sustained concussions.