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SSUNS

### Topic 1: Expansion

Expansion of the National Football League is a very important task that must happen in the near future. The Houston Texans are greatly in favor of expanding the league to other cities, as well as countries, especially to Mexico City and to Toronto. With millions of international fans looking for opportunities to support the NFL, we need to begin to expand even further to grow the game even more.

One possibility would be the relocation of the Jacksonville Jaguars. Because this team suffers from such poor attendance, some have suggested that permanent move to a new city, such as London, would be a good choice. However, the Houston Texans believe that a move to London should not be the first choice as it is a very long flight and would require much readjustment for teams traveling there or for them to travel here. The Houston Texans believe that a move to either Mexico City or Toronto would be much better choices for the relocation internationally or to Las Vegas to keep the team in the US.

Another possibility for league expansion would be to keep the Jaguars in Jacksonville and create a new team in the another city such as Mexico City, Toronto, London, or Las Vegas. With a possible move of the Oakland Raiders to Las Vegas next season, perhaps a new team in Mexico City or Toronto would be a better option. Adding one new team to the league would be difficult to do with scheduling, so adding two may be the best choice. Adding teams to these two cities would be very doable due to a large number of NFL fans in both cities as well as the presence of stadiums. Estadio Azteca in Mexico City has hosted NFL games in the past as has Rogers Centre in Toronto.

The NFL's top choice for a new city with an NFL team following the Rams move to Los Angeles is London. However, this would require some major accommodations and considerations for the teams. Travel time would be around 11 hours for some teams to travel and the difference in time zones could also prove to be problematic. Block scheduling of games with the London team having four games at home followed by 4 games away would be the most likely solution to this problem if a team were to move to London.

### Topic 2: Concussion and Head Safety

Concussion and head safety is a top priority for the National Football League. With the recent increase in concussion awareness the league has implemented many new policies and rules to try and combat head injuries. However, the Houston Texans believe that many of these head safety rules have gone too far and have greatly decreased the entertainment value of the NFL and the players abilities to compete to their full abilities. The Houston Texans believe that it is extremely

important that the league soon finds a way to decrease concussions while maintaining a hard hitting league that is entertaining to watch as well as preventing further injuries that may result in lawsuits against the league.

One strategy would be to introduce a new advertising campaign that will showcase the “big hit” plays that are part of the reason the NFL is so popular as well as a separate campaign to demonstrate how we are changing the rules to improve safety for all players. The Houston Texans believe that the first part of this campaign be done through TV ads showing “big hits” in the NFL overtime. Beginning with black and white footage from the early days and slowly progressing to the present, this would demonstrate how big hits have been, and always will be, an important part of this league. The second ad would also be a TV ad that would showcase a family watching their son’s football game and talking about all the new safety equipment and rule changes there were. These ads would be aired during NFL games and pre and post game shows.

The Houston Texans believe that any new rule changes should not be to prevent these “big hits”, but to better protect the players during these plays. Finding a very protective helmet and requiring all players to wear it, for example, would be one very important rule change that could help to decrease concussions greatly. A second way to decrease concussions would be to place padding under at least the turf fields if not all fields. A company called Viconic produced these mats to protect military vehicles but they can be placed under the fields to greatly soften the blow that can be caused by the head hitting the field.

A final strategy would be to create grants and give this money to institutions and universities so that they could study the effects of concussions and methods to reduce the likelihood of concussions. These ways, as well as many others, are great strategies towards decreasing concussions as well as maintaining the “big hit” plays in the game.

### Topic 3: Players and Criminal Offences

As members of the NFL, players are put in the spotlight and must act as role models to the millions of fans who watch them every week. When players commit criminal offences this not only looks bad for them, it reflects poorly on the league as a whole even if the vast majority of players have never committed a crime in their life. The league has to take a look at these recent offenses and work to create a new method of dealing with criminal offences.

An important step in this reform is to reevaluate the NFL’s policy on marijuana use. Marijuana is a non-performance enhancing drug that is widely used by NFL players both for medical and recreational purposes. According to a survey of players around the league, 40% say that they use marijuana as a pain reliever and that it works better and has fewer negative side effects than prescription painkillers such as Percocet or Vicodin. The NFL also has a more strict policy as to what constitutes a failed drug test than both the MLB and The World Anti-Doping Agency, the

committee used to regulate Olympic athletes. The Houston Texans believe that at the very least the NFL should increase the amount of THC needed to fail a drug test to 150 ng/ml (the same as the WADA), if not entirely remove the ban on marijuana based on the fact that it is now legal recreationally and/or medically in many states. This will decrease the number of drug related offences and improve the image of the league (and the happiness of many of the players).

Confronting violent crimes is another problem that the NFL has to face. The Houston Texans believe that it is very important to crack down on these offences as well as instate a better structure on how to reprimand these offenders. There needs to be much more clearly defined regulations on how these offenders are dealt with and what the punishment is for each offense. Simply judging each offense on a case by case basis is not good enough and can lead to distrust in the league and its officials. Scandals, such as the Ray Rice incident, are extremely detrimental to the league but the mishandling of this case by the NFL lead to even more attention and unnecessary bad publicity.

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