

PSR

# THE PENN SPORT REPORT

SPRING 2013

THE OFFICIAL SPORTS MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA



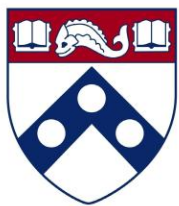
## HAVE WE REACHED THE END OF THE KOBE BRYANT ERA?

---

### ALSO INSIDE:

- » EMMY-WINNING REPORTER ANDREA KREMER REFLECTS ON HER STORIED CAREER
- » MALCOLM GLADWELL AT PENN: SHOULD COLLEGE FOOTBALL BE BANNED?
- » AN INTERVIEW WITH HOPE AKPAN, RISING STAR OF THE ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

NFL | NBA | MLB | SOCCER | NCAA | ANALYSIS | INTERVIEWS | PREDICTIONS | STATS



# PSR

## Executive Board

**Daniel Lewis:** Founder & Editor-in-Chief

**Reuben Hampton:** Executive Columnist

**Imikomobong Ibia:** Executive Columnist

**Dipesh Patel:** Executive Columnist

**Nicholas Greiner:** Director of Marketing

## Featured Columnists

**Nicholas Greiner, Vincent Sangiuliano,**  
and **Zahed Al Saifi**

## Advisory Board

**Andrew Brandt:** ESPN NFL Business  
Analyst, ESPN Columnist, and Lecturer at  
the Wharton School of Business

**Scott Rosner:** Practice Assistant  
Professor of Legal Studies and Business  
Ethics at the Wharton School of Business

**Dick Polman:** Political columnist for *The  
Philadelphia Inquirer*, blogger for WHYY,  
and Professor of Journalism at the  
University of Pennsylvania

## Special Thanks

Hope Akpan, Malcolm Gladwell, Avery  
Johnson, Andrea Kremer, Center for  
Programs in Contemporary Writing

I thank you for reading the Spring 2013 issue of *The Penn Sport Report*, the official sports magazine of the University of Pennsylvania. It has been a real pleasure to work directly with a number of writers in bringing together this second issue. Our writers have gone to great lengths to produce quality content for this issue, a key reason why this 27-page compilation features articles that use professional sports figures such as Hope Akpan, Malcolm Gladwell, Avery Johnson, and Andrea Kremer as primary sources.

I originally founded this student-run organization in October 2012 with a vision of connecting the sports fans in the Penn community to their favorite teams and sports. Now, as I move onto my graduate studies, I am excited to hand over the primary leadership to Reuben Hampton, Imikomobong (Micky) Ibia, and Dipesh Patel. I could not be more confident in the ability of these three individuals as they take over the leadership and production of this magazine. I admire the way they always keep up with the latest news in sports, seemingly watching every game on television, observing the X's and O's of every play, reciting obscure statistics, and constantly debating about some arbitrary sports-related topic. They have been instrumental in making this magazine a reality. In all, I greatly appreciate the efforts these individuals, our superb writers, and our advisors have so generously provided in enabling *The Penn Sport Report* to become a premier magazine at the University of Pennsylvania.

We hope you enjoy the Spring 2013 issue of *The Penn Sport Report*. It is our hope that we spark a sense of curiosity in our readers as well as a desire to explore the subtleties of sports beyond what we discuss in our magazine. Thank you again for reading our magazine.

Best regards,

Daniel Lewis  
Founder and Editor-in-Chief

## JOIN US: WRITE FOR THE FALL 2013 ISSUE OF PSR.

All students at the University of Pennsylvania who are interested in sports are welcome to write for *The Penn Sport Report*. Visit our website at <http://www.pennsportreport.org> to sign up for our electronic mailing list. A student interested in writing for the magazine should be one who is capable of creating articles that are analytical, informative, and entertaining. In addition, all writers must demonstrate the following attributes:

**Expertise:** Deep knowledge of sports and demonstrated superior writing skills

**Enthusiasm:** Passion that clearly comes across in each piece of work

**Eloquence:** A unique voice and an ability to produce engaging, high-quality articles

If you feel that you have what it takes, submit an article for the Fall 2013 issue of *The Penn Sport Report*! Details about deadlines and guidelines will be sent out through our electronic mailing list. We appreciate your interest in writing for the next issue of *The Penn Sport Report*.



# contents



# PSR

## FEATURED ARTICLES:



**04 » Penn Alumna, Emmy Winner Andrea Kremer Reflects on Her Career**



**21 » A One-on One Interview with Hope Akpan, a Rising Star of the EPL**



**07 » Malcolm Gladwell at Penn: Does College Football Really Deserve a Ban?**



**14 » Avery Johnson's Speech at Penn: The NBA Small-Market Disadvantage**

## OTHER ARTICLES:

**10 » NBA MVP Race: Is the Award LeBron James' to Lose?**

**12 » NBA Roundtable: Have We Reached the End of the Kobe Bryant Era?**

**17 » By the Numbers: Examining Three NBA Power Forwards Who Have Been Miscast as Centers**

**19 » Is Brittney Griner Worthy of a Shot at the NBA? A Brief Look at the History of Women in Sports**

**23 » Super Mario Balotelli: Milan's Signing of the Season**

**24 » José Mourinho: Will Chelsea Witness the Return of "The Special One?"**

# EMMY WINNING REPORTER, PENN ALUMNA ANDREA KREMER REFLECTS ON HER STORIED CAREER

BY: DANIEL LEWIS

*In a one-on-one interview with Emmy-winning sports reporter Andrea Kremer, Daniel Lewis listens to Kremer as she reflects on her storied career.*

When Andrea Kremer set foot onto Raymond James Field in Tampa ready to begin her pre-game broadcast for Super Bowl XLIII in 2009, the veteran sideline reporter felt a stomach full of butterflies. It was not the fervor of 70,774 clamoring fans that led to Kremer's nervousness, nor was it the pressure of representing NBC during its first Super Bowl in twelve years.

Kremer's jitters stemmed from the breaking news she was about to reveal. She was about to report that Hines Ward, the Pittsburgh Steelers' injured wide receiver, would play in the game after undergoing platelet-rich plasma therapy to repair a sprained MCL in his right knee.

"You're live on television," Kremer recalls, "and you're trying not to remind yourself that 103 million people are watching you on their screens."

As the camera focused on Kremer, her breaking news spread across an estimated 98 million households around the world, which was the largest TV sports audience at the time.

Though she has logged over 30 years of experience in sports reporting and earned a résumé full of awards and honors, Kremer still recalls how, that evening, her heart raced faster than ever before. A wily veteran reporter, though, Kremer found a clever way around her nervousness.

"My producer suggested this to me...He told me to think about that little girl who used to sleep in NFL sheets with the team logos all over them. Think about being that little girl at the age of 11 who used to sleep in those sheets...and now you're standing at the Super Bowl."

That positive image of her as a young child made her smile and washed away her nervousness almost entirely, and she masterfully delivered the breaking news.



"By the time the Super Bowl is about to kickoff, there is usually nothing new or revelatory that I can say about the game," said Kremer. "And here I was on the biggest stage in sports, and I had big news that nobody else had, and I nailed it. I felt pretty great."

Although she appears a natural now, Kremer never really dreamed of being a television sports reporter. The football bug bit her early as she grew up in the 1970s, though the sport was more of a novelty at the time, according to Kremer.

"Some little girls played with Barbie dolls, but I idolized Larry Csonka of the Miami Dolphins."

Before each Super Bowl, she would clip out all the preview articles from newspapers and present her parents with a scouting report. Her father took her to her first Philadelphia Eagles game in 1971 at Veterans Stadium, where she became an avid fan of the visiting Miami Dolphins.

"I loved the Dolphins and followed them, and the most important thing is that my parents thought it was great that I liked football. They were very supportive of me."

Kremer, who currently resides in Massachusetts, graduated from Friends Select School and entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1976. As an undergraduate, she continued to develop her love for writing but had no





real idea what she would do after graduation.

At no point did I ever think that I would be able to grow up and turn into a profession what I really loved. Because truthfully, there were no women when I was growing up that did it. There was no woman to look to and say, 'I want to be a sports journalist like her.'"

Kremer wound up earning a place at the *Main Line Chronicle*, Pennsylvania's largest weekly newspaper, where she soon became the editor of the sports section. After she wrote a story on NFL Films, her mother urged her, "Send them your resume!" She heeded her mother's advice.

She was hired as a producer and on-air reporter for the nationally syndicated show, "This is the NFL." She earned an Emmy nomination for one special and soon after began contributing to Philadelphia radio station WIP's Eagles pre-game show.

Then ESPN approached her in 1989 to recruit her talents. Kremer began serving as ESPN's Los Angeles-based correspondent, providing in-depth reports for studio shows such as "SportsCenter," "Sunday NFL Countdown," and "Monday Night Countdown."

Kremer loves covering football, citing a palpable "electricity" on the field during games. She has experienced this energy firsthand for five seasons, which she spent as the sideline and feature reporter for the Emmy Award-winning "Sunday Night Football" on NBC.

Though football is still her first love, she admits that the Summer Olympics is actually her favorite event to cover because of its rich history and relevance on the world stage.

In the 2008 Olympics at Beijing, Kremer was front and center for NBC Sports as she covered swimming. She was lauded for her reporting of Olympic icon Michael Phelps' dramatic pursuit of a record eight gold medals that year.

"For me to be part of history and witness Michael Phelps' historic run was just amazing. On the morning of the day that Phelps would win his eighth gold medal, I remember waking up, and thinking, 'Wow, of all the things I have done, there's just nothing like witnessing history.'"

Four years later, Kremer stood on the pool deck once again, this time observing Phelps and Ryan Lochte compete and witnessing Phelps become the most decorated Olympian of all time.



"There is a difference between the Olympics and the NFL. When the Super Bowl ends, the confetti comes down and the stadium is crazy, but the players have time to regroup before I finally have the chance to interview them. But in the Olympics, they get out of the pool and walk right over to you, and the immediacy of it is pretty stunning."

Having covered the NFL and the Olympics, Kremer is a versatile reporter. She has also covered the NBA Finals and All-Star Game, Major League Baseball's All-Star Game and League Championship Series, college football bowl games, Stanley Cup Playoffs and Finals, NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, U.S. Olympic basketball trials, and the PGA Championship.

Kremer's forte is breaking news stories, and she has provided investigative pieces on social issues relevant to sports, such as sexual assault and substance abuse.

Among her many accolades, including two Emmy Awards, Kremer succeeds in covering these issues because of her interviewing skills. After all, she has been called "the best TV interviewer in the business of covering the NFL" by *Los Angeles Times*. TV Guide said that Kremer is "among TV's best sports correspondents of either sex" and that her work is "distinguished by her eagerness to calmly ask tough questions and her refusal to pursue the same old story."

Kremer presents these social issues so artfully in large part because she has developed a public trust with the players. In fact, Kremer had once made a trek to Minnesota to do a semi-routine story on former Vikings receiver Cris Carter, but he instead decided to talk about his drug and alcohol addiction publicly for the first time. He made himself vulnerable, yet he felt comfortable

pouring out his struggles to Kremer.

"He was really entrusting me with something meaningful and important to him, and I took that very seriously. It is easy to say, 'Oh my god this is such a great story' and run away with it, but really what you're reporting is somebody's life. And you have to respect that."

Kremer experienced this same dynamic in her longtime work with NBA legend Michael Jordan. When Jordan announced his return to basketball in 1995, all the networks wanted the first in-depth interview. But Jordan specifically chose Kremer, with whom he had built up trust.

"I'm not like, 'Ooh, aah, Michael' when I interview Michael Jordan. Because every time I sit and talk with him about his glory days, I know there's another time when I have to stand in front of him and bring up his gambling."

Jordan has always been Kremer's favorite athlete to cover. She appreciates how he always made time for interviews, even though his accomplishments left no need for extra media attention.

"He was always cooperative, patient, and engaging. I worked with him in the best of times, when he won six championships, and in the worst of times, when his father died. I dealt with questions about his gambling habits and even followed him to the courtroom in North Carolina."

Her success and interest in covering the Summer Olympics and the NBA aside, Kremer still focuses on covering football, her childhood pastime.

In October 2012, she joined the NFL Network as the Chief Correspondent for Player Health and Safety. In this role, Kremer serves as the face of the network's coverage and in-depth reporting on one of the most glaring issues facing football. Kremer is also a correspondent for HBO's "Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel."

As she continues her football reporting, she lives with a constant reminder of what helped her find her love for the sport: her border collie, named Zonk.

"If it wasn't for Larry Csonka, I cannot see myself being where I am today," she laughs. "The least I could do is name my dog in honor of him."

# DOES COLLEGE FOOTBALL DESERVE TO BE BANNED?

## BREAKING DOWN MALCOLM GLADWELL'S SPEECH

BY: DANIEL LEWIS

*On February 14, Malcolm Gladwell presented a lecture at the University of Pennsylvania in which he discussed head injuries in college football. As a member of the audience, sports journalist Daniel Lewis delves deeply into the issues raised during Gladwell's speech.*

British-Canadian journalist Malcolm Gladwell, author of four *New York Times* bestsellers including *The Tipping Point*, *Blink*, and *Outliers*, raised a storm of controversy during a guest lecture he delivered at the University of Pennsylvania Museum on Thursday, February 14.

Presenting the hour-long lecture as part of Penn's "Year of Proof" program, Gladwell began by asking, "What level of proof do we need about the harmfulness of some activities before we act?"

Naturally, he explained, we search for evidence, and rightfully so—it would be imprudent to act in the absence of evidence.

However, his second question was far more intriguing: Are there instances in which we ask for too much proof before acting?

This question encapsulated Gladwell's main theme for the lecture, which focused on humankind's peculiar tendency to cite the need for absolute proof as an excuse not to take action. This behavior, he asserts, often leaves people suffering unnecessarily.

*The New Yorker* journalist detailed an early 20th-century study conducted by statistician Frederick Hoffman, who investigated the high numbers of American miners dying of black lung disease due to inhaling high levels of coal dust. In 1917, he discovered a clear correlation between the fatal disease and the poor working conditions in American coal mines.

Gladwell lamented how neither mine owners nor legislators took action to remedy the problem at the time. Indeed, Hoffman's findings were largely ignored due to private interest groups who denounced the evidence since it originated from a small-scale study. It



was not until 1975—several decades after Hoffman's work—that working conditions finally improved.

According to Gladwell, we are no more empathetic or enlightened than we were a century ago. In a somewhat unanticipated turn, he illustrated that this desire for "too much proof" is also manifest in American football, especially at the collegiate ranks.

Gladwell outlined the risks of playing football, many of which have become very clear in recent years. For example, he noted that, the average football player sustains 1,000 blows to the head each season. This repetitive trauma is conducive to the development of chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a degenerative neurological disease that can lead to dementia and death.

The disease is not a new topic among scientists, nor is it among players. In fact, the list of former footballers with the disease who later committed suicide is growing ever longer; Penn's own ex-football captain Owen Thomas too is on that list. Thomas committed suicide as a junior in 2010 with no history of depression. The autopsy revealed that he too was a victim of CTE.

In a more controversial argument, Gladwell admonished universities for standing relatively still in light of the



dangers of brain injuries to their football players, singling out Penn as an offender because the school, according to him, failed to address the core issues behind Thomas' death.

The apparent dangers of football, Gladwell suggested, calls for action. He urged the Penn audience in front of him to boycott the university's football games. He believes that if universities truly care about their students, then football and higher education have no option but to file for divorce.

He maintained that the costs and risks of the sport outweigh its benefits, insisting that universities ought to suspend their football programs until the complex, entangled web of brain trauma, CTE, and concussions in football is researched thoroughly and resolved.

Though his books primarily cover topics in sociology or psychology, Gladwell is actually an avid football fan, as evidenced by many of his previous works, including articles about the NFL in *The New Yorker* and a number of intelligent pieces co-written with ESPN columnist Bill Simmons. So it would be downright unfair to dismiss Gladwell as a sort of anti-sports nerd.

Still, even considering Gladwell's football acumen, should

college football really be banned?

This question has been posed much earlier than most would guess. Questions about the safety of football first made waves in 1905, when President Theodore Roosevelt grew alarmed by a series of student-athlete deaths and subsequently convened a collection of professors at the White House to debate the future of college football. One University of Chicago representative decried the sport, calling it a "boy-killing, man-mutilating, money-making, education-prostituting, gladiatorial" disgrace.

Today, the game faces its most serious scrutiny since Roosevelt's presidency. Is college football too violent for students? Does it deserve a place at institutions of higher learning?

At a basic level, it is hard to believe that fans still defend football as it is. Science is merely a luxury in proving that bashing heads can pose harm to a football player's brain. Any sane person would not repeatedly bump his or her head against a wall—it goes against common logic. Doing something similar in the bright lights of a stadium makes it no better.

Gladwell echoed this sentiment, pronouncing the continuation of college football "a moral abomination."





He also compared colleges' disregard of warning signs and recent player deaths to the callous indifference of the coal mining industry toward black lung disease.

He did make it clear, though, that his words represented more of an indictment of colleges as opposed to football in general. He feels that football detracts from the mission of universities, which he believes should dedicate themselves entirely to higher learning.

Gladwell certainly has a point. Universities that spend millions on football at the expense of professors and classroom resources are, in effect, failing in their main mission to educate their students. This bungled value system poses a grave danger to young American men and women, whose education is only growing more important in an increasingly global economy.

These negatives aside, football does confer a number of benefits: building character, promoting diversity, and fostering a sense of community among students and fans.

Most importantly, whereas Gladwell casts college football players as victims, these same individuals graduate at a higher rate than the general student body. In addition, each year, football allows 23,000 students—many of whom are low-income young men who otherwise could not afford college—to obtain a quality education as they play football on athletic scholarships.

Moreover, the dangers of football, though serious, are overblown. Less-popular sports such as baseball, equestrian riding, female downhill skiing, lacrosse, and water polo all result in more direct fatalities each year than football. To boot, the non-stop discussion about the dangers of football in the media is in many ways a



product of its immense popularity.

That said, Gladwell's speech does have its merits. Aside from his misguided attempt to mobilize a boycott of college football, Gladwell is accurate in recognizing that we have reached the point at which we are asking for too much proof before coming to the protection of our country's football players.

But instead of banning the sport at the collegiate level, the appropriate step would be to continue walking the sport backwards as scientists unearth more definitive truths about head injuries in football. Universities could, for example, arrange for students to play fewer games and participate in fewer full-contact practices.

Considering his extreme stance, Gladwell's argument comes off largely as a Utopian vision. It is fair for him to say that America might be a safer place sans college football, but then if we heeded his advice, should we not also ban other popular yet hazardous items such as alcohol or cigarettes?

**"Gladwell's argument comes off largely as a Utopian vision. It is fair for him to say that America might be a safer place sans college football, but then if we heeded his advice, should we not also ban other popular yet hazardous items such as alcohol or cigarettes?"**

Of course, then we would not be America. Freedom and capitalism define our nation, often for the better but sometimes for the worse. Football is deeply woven into the fabric of American freedom. As a result, young men should be allowed to suit up in a uniform and helmet if they wish and fans should be allowed to cheer them on from the stands for entertainment if they desire.

Therein lies the answer to the century-old question, "Should we ban college football?" Indeed, the uncovering of everything dangerous, scandalous, and unscrupulous about the sport in recent years has yet to undermine interest among players, universities, and fans in the slightest.

Minus Gladwell, no one really wants to see college football go away. So why should it?

# NBA MVP RACE: IS THE AWARD LEBRON'S TO LOSE?

By: VINCENT SANGIULIANO

Coming into this NBA season, there were already favorites for the Most Valuable Player award on the minds of most people. Among those favorites were LeBron James of the Miami Heat, Kevin Durant of the Oklahoma City Thunder, in addition to Chris Paul of the Los Angeles Clippers and Kobe Bryant of the Los Angeles Lakers.

Now that we are nearly three quarters of the way through the NBA season, the race has been narrowed down to just a couple of players. The race would have also included Tony Parker of the San Antonio Spurs, but due to his ankle injury, his candidacy will not be as nearly as impressive as that of the other two candidates.

The first candidate is the reigning MVP, LeBron James, who seems to be in complete control of whether he will be able to win his fourth MVP award. James has been having his finest season of his illustrious career by far.

He has surpassed many of his averages by a large margin. He is ninth in the NBA shooting 56.2% from the field, a career-high for him, and he is also fourth in the league in scoring, averaging 27.0 points per game. James also has a

career-high three-point percentage of 40%. His overall shooting has increased phenomenally as he has developed a much better shot from mid-range and from behind the three-point line.

James also adds 8.1 rebounds/game, another career-high, and 7.2 assists/game with only 2.9 turnovers/game, yet another career-best. He is having one of his most efficient years of his career, and it is on full display in his statistics and in his team's performance. After all, the Heat have the second best record in the NBA.

LeBron currently has his team on a 16-game win streak, and during this streak, he has come up big in almost every win. He even scored, as a member of the Heat, his first game-winner with fewer than five seconds remaining.

King James also leads the NBA in Estimated Wins Added (EWA) at 23.6 and Player Efficiency Rating (PER), clocking in at an otherworldly 31.4. He now is the full package as he has added a great defensive game to his repertoire now, which makes him the best all-around player in the NBA. He is difficult to stop inside without fouling, and his





opponents cannot give him too much space because he is able to make jump shots consistently now.

He was already the best player in the NBA, but now he is solidifying his status as the league's premier player and swaying many of the doubters' opinions. Simply put, LeBron has everything going for him, and he will win the MVP award unless his game falls off drastically.

The only other player that may be able to prevent James from winning his fourth MVP award is Kevin Durant.

Once again, Durant is leading the league in points/game with 28.6. KD is also having a career year in nearly every category. He has a shooting percentage of 50.7%, a three-point percentage of 42.1%, a free-throw percentage of 90.6%, 4.6 assists per game, 1.3 blocks per game, and 1.6 steals per game, all of which are amazingly career-highs. He also is adding 7.9 rebounds/game, which nearly ties his career-high of 8.0 rebounds/game.

KD is also having one of his best all-around years, as he has brought his offensive play to greater heights, while also raising his defensive play to new levels. Like James, Durant has also become one of the most complete players in the NBA, in addition to being one of the best.

In terms of EWA and PER, Durant is second to James by only a small margin. He has led the Thunder to the second seed in the Western Conference and the third-best record in the league. He is on his way to his fourth consecutive scoring title and fourth straight All-NBA First Team.

KD can become the sixth player all time to join the 50-40-90 club, a select group of players who post season numbers exceeding a 50% field-goal percentage, 40% three-point percentage, and 90% free-throw percentage. If Durant can continue playing at this pace, he will have a chance to surpass James for the MVP award.

Ultimately the award for MVP may be decided based on their team's record at the end of the season. However, LeBron's recent stretch of games during which he has shot over 60% and scored over 30 points may very well have been the turning point in the MVP discussion. Besides, James and the Heat were able to defeat KD and the Thunder in both meetings this year, though Durant was able to outscore James both times.

Luckily, this two-man competition for MVP will be just as exciting in the years to come as Durant and James further refine their craft and grow even more talented.





# NBA ROUNDTABLE: HAVE WE REACHED THE END OF THE KOBE BRYANT ERA?

BY: REUBEN HAMPTON, IMIKOMOBONG IBIA, DANIEL LEWIS, AND DIPESH PATEL



*With the NBA set on fire by younger superstars such as LeBron James and Kevin Durant, many fans feel that Kobe Bryant and the Lakers are done winning rings. Four of our PSR writers debate whether the Kobe Bryant era is over.*

**Reuben Hampton:** In reality, the Kobe Bryant era ended years ago; this season's failure is just the nail in the coffin. For a while now, Kobe has been a borderline volume scorer who makes just enough shots to justify all the bad ones he takes. Almost two decades in the league has robbed him of his legs, and outside of last season, his attempts per 40 minutes at the rim have dwindled and his number of long two-pointers has increased. With so much mileage on his body, Kobe is turning into a one-

into a one-dimensional scorer. He has always been a good from midrange and in particular posting up smaller guards along the baseline, but he is a career 33% shooter from beyond the arc, a statistic that will not improve as he increases his number of outside shots. His defense was also fair at best and will only worsen with his diminished mobility; don't let the All-NBA designation fool you, it's a lifetime achievement award in his case.

More importantly, as he slows down, Kobe needs to be willing to take a reduced role in the offense as a second or third scoring option, something in the past he has been unwilling to do. With the Lakers cap situation in dire straits, Kobe needs a strong supporting cast to make one



last title run, but his team does not have the tools in place to make that happen.

**Daniel Lewis:** Reuben, I could not agree with you more, particularly about his defense. On that end of the court, Kobe has not just been bad. His presence on the defensive end of the court has actually become a severe detriment. Although he cannot be expected to exhibit the lockdown defense of his twenties, this Lakers team has struggled so mightily because he no longer even tries. As the leader of the team, Bryant needs to be held accountable for his appallingly bad defensive effort. In fact, his poor defense is the chief reason for the Lakers' struggles. The team's defense is so bad because its leader is very clearly showcasing that defense does not matter. Their chemistry is off because it is because it is tough to respect and listen to a player so clearly leaving you out to dry on the defensive end. The team's level of energy is inconsistent because its leader is only trying half the time. From a defensive standpoint, Kobe is flat-out tanking.

However, as much as he is responsible for the mess that is this season, Kobe is far from the only cause of the Lakers' struggles. In fact, I'd list the inability of Dwight Howard to compensate for the roster's defensive weaknesses, an unbelievable rash of injuries, and Pau Gasol's decline as other reasons for L.A.'s season of failure.

**Micky Ibia:** The Lakers need to begin "reloading," as opposed to rebuilding, which the Lakers never do. Kobe Bryant, Steve Nash, and Co. are simply too old to lead this team past more athletic teams such as the Oklahoma City

Thunder and Miami Heat, two teams who can run the Lake Show out of the building. If Howard heads to Atlanta, Dallas, or Houston this offseason, the Lakers need to seriously consider tanking next year. Besides, Gasol has an expiring contract this upcoming season that could be traded for draft picks, Metta World Peace could be amnesty'd to minimize luxury tax penalties, and Steve Nash could be traded to a contender for a somewhat decent return. Theoretically albeit unlikely, the team could also amnesty Kobe to save \$80 million in salary and tax penalties. These types of moves would give the Lakers a fair shot at getting a future superstar-in-the-making such as Andrew Wiggins or Jabari Parker in the 2014 NBA Draft.

**Dipesh Patel:** Micky makes some great points. Snagging Wiggins or Parker with a little luck would give the Lakers a much-needed cornerstone for the future. The bottom line is that the Lakers will not be an elite team again until they move on from the Bryant era and start anew. It may sound ludicrous, but it is true. Love him or loathe him, for the 17 years he has been in the league, he has carved out a legendary career. He can still play at an elite level, but his age, impatience, and giant contract continue to hamstring the franchise. Unlike their last rebuilding effort, L.A. does not have the time to develop a young player as they did with Bynum without angering their 34-year-old superstar who wants to win now. Any NBA fan who argues otherwise is denying the fact that Kobe is too old to care about the future of this team and only lives in the now. Simply put, the Lakers are stuck. I predict that Gasol will be sent packing this summer, but the move will not lead to more than another short-lived playoff appearance.



# THE SMALL MARKET DISADVANTAGE: REFLECTING ON A SPEECH AT PENN BY AVERY JOHNSON

BY: DANIEL LEWIS

*On March 11, Avery Johnson presented a guest lecture at the University of Pennsylvania in which he discussed the business of basketball. As a member of the audience, Daniel Lewis explores Johnson's discussion of the financial problems that small-market teams encounter as part of the NBA.*

Avery Johnson, a former NBA player and head coach as well as a former ESPN analyst, visited the University of Pennsylvania on March 11. Once the starting point guard for the San Antonio Spurs and the head coach for the Dallas Mavericks and Brooklyn Nets, Johnson delivered a speech at an event entitled "Coach Avery Johnson: The Business of Basketball."

When the NBA schedule was first released in August, Johnson remarked that he had planned to be in the City of Brotherly Love on the evening of his speech—just not at Penn.

"I didn't know that I would be in Philadelphia at Penn giving a speech," Johnson said jovially as he poked fun at himself for being fired as head coach of the Brooklyn Nets in December. "I thought that I would be at the Wells Fargo Center tonight coaching against the 76ers."

Indeed, Johnson provided a humorous yet insightful glimpse into the world of playing, coaching, and understanding basketball not only as a sport, but also as a business. In fact, he even outlined the many intricacies of the NBA's collective bargaining agreement (CBA).

In particular, the former NBA champion focused on how the league's CBA inherently works against small-market teams, though the new CBA in 2012 constitutes progress in this regard.

"They have to have really comprehensive, strategic marketing strategies," he said of smaller market teams. "They must be really creative, really strategic—they can't waste any dollars. They are at a disadvantage."

The opposite of a small-market team is, of course, a large-market team—a team from a big-name city such as New



York, Los Angeles, Chicago, or Boston. Coincidentally or not, one team from each of these cities is a lock to make the playoffs, including two representatives from New York.

Fielding a team in a large market represents a huge competitive advantage, so much that the promise of the bright lights of a big city transformed the Nets almost instantly. After a decade of non-profitable and downright ugly basketball in New Jersey, the Nets' planned relocation to Brooklyn enabled them to make some quick blockbuster deals, sign some big-name free agents, and



and hear the best center in the league begging to be traded there.

The single most important reason large-market teams have an advantage is that players want to play for these teams for a variety of reasons—fame, bright lights, and higher earning power. Or, in the case of the Miami Heat, they want to play in a locale with beautiful weather, sandy beaches, and exciting nightlife. In effect, no superstar really finds Milwaukee or Toronto appealing, and even if a lesser-known free agent truly does, the Bucks or Raptors would have to overpay to sign him.

Therefore, simple logic suggests that star players want more money to play in Milwaukee than they would to play in New York. However, the salary cap prevents the Bucks from offering a single penny more than the Knicks or the Nets. There is no provision in the current CBA that enables a small-market team to offer a player more income than a large-market team.

As a result, an offer from a small-market team cannot compete against the large sum of money a superstar can earn in a large market from external sources such as endorsements. Small markets, in essence, stand little chance of attracting superstars in free agency.

Small-market teams fare only slightly better building a roster through the draft. If one such team is fortunate to draft a player that deserves a maximum deal after their rookie contract expires, the team would still be hard-pressed to convince the player to turn down the opportunity to play in a large market. Though the Bird exemption does offer the home team additional leverage,

the extra money that it allots hardly accounts for a player's desire for a championship and the external income available in a large market. The result, as Cleveland and Toronto know all too well, is that small-market teams often lose their star draftees to free agency.

These two reasons support research elucidating that small markets have historically fared poorly in the NBA compared with those in other professional sports leagues. In fact, NFL teams from small markets have actually outperformed their large-market counterparts.

What makes this phenomenon seemingly exclusive to the NBA? For one, the rosters of basketball teams are very small, and thus a superstar has a more noticeable effect. Big-city teams also have both the money and media markets needed to attract superstars.

In his speech at Penn, Johnson noted that not only is a large city more enticing for the player, but the big-city team has more money to spend on its players. He pointed out that the L.A. Lakers signed a \$3 billion deal last year with Time Warner Cable, making the team the centerpiece of two new sports networks. He also highlighted the huge ticket revenue disparity between large- and small-market teams: the Lakers earn \$3 million in tickets per game at Staples Center, a number that dwarfs the \$750,000 to \$1.5 million the Charlotte Bobcats pocket per game.

He then explained that this extra revenue allows large-market teams such as the Lakers to dig deeper into their pockets. The salary cap as well as the luxury tax—a monetary penalty for exceeding the salary cap—are, in essence, weak restrictions that are ignored by these teams with such deep pockets. Because of their monstrous television deal, the Lakers can exceed the salary cap and comfortably pay hefty luxury tax penalties year after year because their TV revenue allows them to do so. In this sense, the luxury tax represents an annoyance rather than an impediment for large-market teams.

He also contrasted the harsh realities of an NBA small-market team with its NFL counterparts, which live in a vastly different financial landscape. All NFL teams share money made from television rights and ticket sales. In fact, according to Johnson, an NFL team visiting an opponent's stadium even receives 40% of the home team's ticket sales. Conversely, revenue sharing is absent in the NBA, forcing small-market teams to stay afloat



entirely on their own.

As a result, small-market teams must conceive creative ways to earn or save money. Johnson described how, during his tenure in San Antonio, the Spurs held numerous player and coach public appearances to bring in additional revenue. He also recalls sharing airplanes with fans—specifically those willing to pay the Spurs for the opportunity to fly alongside the team's players.

Even with all these shrewd financial measures, Johnson acknowledged that small-market teams often have no option but to cut costs and offer their own players less money. As he witnessed firsthand, some teams such as the Spurs are somehow able to convince their players to accept less money than the market dictates. But while Tim Duncan, Manu Ginobili, and Tony Parker all took below-market deals, James Harden adamantly refused to do so, making the small-market Oklahoma City Thunder scramble to trade away the young superstar guard they drafted and developed.

Johnson stressed that, whereas big market teams can attract free agents, small-market teams have to draft extremely well to compensate for their inability to lure free agents. The cruel irony for the Thunder is that despite the incredible restraint and discretion GM Sam Presti demonstrated in constructing a championship-caliber team with minimal dips into the waters of free agency, he simply found it too difficult to keep the core pieces of his roster together.

Lacking big-market ticket prices and massive local TV deals the Lakers and Celtics recently signed—with Miami and Dallas next in line—the Thunder saw the bottom line and found it unreasonable to spend the money that high-revenue teams can justify.

That said, small-market teams do have a chance—Johnson and the Spurs are evidence—but they clearly face a disadvantage. The margin for error is incredibly small—they must find gems in free agency, make correct draft selections, and convince their own players to sacrifice money.

It speaks volumes that Johnson, who played primarily for a small-market team in San Antonio that has won four championships since 1999, concedes that the NBA's salary cap rules and lack of revenue sharing puts small-market teams at a severe disadvantage.

Why does the league seem so reluctant to rectify this apparent and unfair disparity? Simply put, an L.A. Lakers-Boston Celtics NBA Finals matchup earns the league millions of dollars more than does one showcasing the Memphis Grizzlies and Indiana Pacers.

As a result, as long as big-market teams can hoard their local revenue, they will be able to poach stars from smaller markets. As New York and Los Angeles stockpile talent like fantasy squads, the 20 or so smaller-market teams search for a way to win an unfair game.





# BY THE NUMBERS: EXAMINING THREE NBA POWER FORWARDS MISCAST AS CENTERS

BY: REUBEN HAMPTON

As the NBA enters a transition period during which the lines between the five standard positions are blurred, there is now a tendency for conventional power forwards to play the center position instead.

For clarification, the differences between a four and a five generally concern physical stature and technical skill; a four usually has a little less meat on his frame, though he can be just as tall. In exchange, he usually has greater dexterity, shooting touch, and ball handling skills.

The problem with this setup is that while a power forward miscast as a center is able to take advantage of his opponent offensively, he faces a severe disadvantage defensively. In turn, having to compete with additional intensity on the defensive end to make up for his shortcomings can be quite difficult and in some scenarios makes him less effective on offense.

Examples that come to mind when examining miscast power forwards include Al Horford, Chris Bosh, and Pau Gasol, to name a few. The lattermost, though, had the pleasure of playing with a true five behind him in Andrew Bynum, which helped him tremendously on the defensive end and left him free to work in the high post on offense.

Three fours have had a similar opportunity during the 2012-2013 season, with different effects on their games.

## David Lee and Andrew Bogut, Golden State Warriors

Prior to the start of the season, the Golden State Warriors' trade for Andrew Bogut appeared as though it might be one of the potential steals of the offseason, primarily because of its potential in terms of lineup configuration.

Prior to incurring two freak injuries, the former first-overall pick was arguably the best defensive center in the league. He has the potential to make up for the shortcomings of the smaller power forward in Lee, who has never shown any interest in playing defense.

Unfortunately, injuries have provided a small sample size so drawing a conclusion at this point is tricky. However,



there are two notable trends worth examining.

Playing with Bogut, Lee's defensive numbers have improved from a year ago. Last season, Lee gave up a Player Efficiency Rating (PER) per 48 minutes of 22.6 to opposing centers; this year this statistic is down to a more reasonable 18.8. This difference is likely a consequence of Lee spending fewer minutes guarding fives, and thus he now surrenders a slightly higher PER to opposing fours, now that they are his primary defensive assignment.

Secondly, the five-man-floor-unit statistics show that, this season, the team's primary lineup with Lee at center (Curry-Jack-Thompson-Landry-Lee) gives up a whopping 1.12 points per possession. The three other most frequently used lineups, none of which feature Lee at Center, give up 1.05 (Curry, Thompson, Barnes, Lee, and Ezeli), 1.08 (Curry, Thompson, Barnes, Lee, and Bogut), and 0.95 (Curry, Thompson, Barnes, Lee, and Biedrins) points per possession. This numerical difference lends credence to the idea that Lee is better suited as a four.

## Greg Monroe and Andre Drummond, Detroit Pistons

Though he does not get much love up in Detroit, Greg Monroe has become a force to be reckoned with down low playing only his third year in the league.

As John Hollinger so aptly noted, Monroe is a "tween defensively. Lacks muscle for 4 but slow for a 5. Struggles in help D." With the offensive skill set of a four, he has

found the Robin to his Batman in 2012 first-round pick Andre Drummond, a physical specimen at the five.



Though he struggled to earn minutes at the beginning of the year and is now out with an injury, Drummond had a dramatic effect on the court when paired with Monroe. The five-man unit of Knight, Stuckey, Prince, Monroe, and Drummond gives up 0.97 points per possession, lower than any other top 10 five-man units for the Pistons and markedly lower than the same lineup with Jason Maxiell at the four and Monroe at the five, which yields 1.08 points per possession. Monroe still gives up the same PER to opposing fives, but he holds opposing fours to a PER of 16.1, a number just above the league average. This trend certainly bodes well for a team that has not had much to look forward to in recent years.



## Al Jefferson and Enes Kanter, Utah Jazz

Al Jefferson is the classic example of a big man who is too big for opposing fours and too quick for opposing fives, but who struggles to guard either position.

Moving from Minnesota to the Jazz, he was still forced to play the five despite being better suited for the four, even though the low PER he gave up to opposing centers last year (15.8) appears to dispute this fact. Instead, the evidence is the 1.9 points per possession that the team surrendered with him off the court as well as a low foul rate, the latter a result of the fact that he just mailed it in most of the time.

This year, the Jazz have had the opportunity to pair him with a true center and future cornerstone in Enes Kanter, freeing up Jefferson to move to the four.



Except head coach Tyrone Corbin and his assistants did not make the move, nor did they even give it a chance. Simply put, their decision has not paid off. Jefferson still has the same foul rate per 48 minutes against opposing fives, but he is giving up a PER of 18.3 and is being annihilated by opposing fours to the tune of a PER of 26.6.

While Millsap and Jefferson may no longer play for Utah next season, a 3-4-5 lineup of Paul Millsap, Jefferson, and Kanter or even Derrick Favors, Jefferson, and Kanter is worth putting on the floor to see if it would put the team in a better position to succeed.

Besides, Kanter, along with Favors, is a promising young player who will need more playing time to grow into the franchise centerpiece the front office envisions him becoming.



# BRITTNEY GRINER WORTHY OF A SHOT AT NBA? A BRIEF LOOK AT THE HISTORY OF WOMEN IN SPORTS

BY: NICHOLAS GREINER



Baylor women's basketball player Brittney Griner was recently selected No. 1 overall by the Phoenix Mercury in 2013 WNBA Draft. She finished her collegiate career as the only player to have 2,000 career points and 500 career blocks. Standing 6'8" tall and possessing a 86" wingspan, the center projects to dominate the professional league just as she did for four years in Waco.

Controversy surrounded the period leading up to the draft when outspoken Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban remarked that he would look at Griner, a woman, as a potential draft prospect for his NBA franchise. These words prompted a response from Connecticut women's head coach Geno Auriemma, who claimed that if Griner were given the opportunity to try out for the Mavericks, it would be a sham, calling the idea that she could compete with the men "absolutely ludicrous."

In modern day, the idea of women competing on the same level as men is not well received by the media, coaches, or fans. There is an inherent bias against women and, as a result, few are given the opportunity to attempt to play with men. The two shining examples of women competing against men today are Danica Patrick in auto racing and Kelly Kulick on the PBA tour. However, neither one of these sports requires direct, physical activity in opposition to a male athlete. The fact of the matter remains that male vs. female situations are rare in modern sports even though many male athletes are open to the idea of allowing women to compete with them.

Much of the argument against women competing is that they would not be able to compete physically with their male counterparts. This argument can be a little head-scratching since it is difficult to know for sure whether or

not women could match up with men unless they are given the opportunity. What most people do not realize is that history has shown that women may very well be able to compete. The problem here is that most people do not know the story.

The great Babe Ruth once said, "I don't know what's going to happen if they begin to let women in baseball. Of course, they will never make good. Why? Because they are too delicate. It would kill them to play ball every day." The irony in this story is that Babe Ruth himself once faced a female pitcher. The result? He was struck out. And if that is not enough, the next batter she faced was "The Iron Horse," Lou Gehrig. The second Yankee legend swung and missed on three straight pitches and followed his future Hall-of-Fame teammate back to the dugout.

Jackie Mitchell, a 18-year-old girl, had just recorded back-to-back strikeouts for the minor league Chattanooga Lookouts against the big, bad New York Yankees and their super stars. Mitchell was born in Fall River, Massachusetts on August 29, 1912. Her neighbor, Dazzy Vance, taught her to throw one pitch. It was a "drop ball," or "sinker." Vance himself went on to pitch in the major leagues and was eventually inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

In 1931, the Chattanooga Lookouts owner Joe Engel offered the left-handed pitcher a one-year contract in order to boost ticket sales by promising that his team was the only team with a female pitcher. Although Mitchell was indeed the only female pitcher of her time, she was not the first. Lizzie Arlington pitched in 1898 for the local team in Reading, Pennsylvania against their rivals from Allentown.

The Yankees would go on to win the game 14-4, and Mitchell was pulled out of the game in favor of Clyde Barfoot after walking the next batter. But Mitchell's claim to fame was forever solidified. She would forever be the woman who struck out Ruth and Gehrig.

Her contract was declared void a few days after the game by the league commissioner who claimed that baseball was "too strenuous" for women. Instead, Mitchell went on to pitch for teams in other men's leagues for another five years. Major League Baseball officially banned the signing of women on June 21, 1952.

The point of this story is that almost a century ago, a woman did the unthinkable. Before she had even peaked physically, she struck out two of the greatest hitters of the

era. If an 18-year-old could compete in the 1930s, then why is it so crazy to believe that women today can do the same? We have all heard arguments that they are not the same physically, but that did not seem to stop Mitchell.

If anything, the institution of Title IX a few decades ago has empowered women in athletics to achieve new heights and reach for loftier goals. If an 18-year-old girl throwing just a sinker can strikeout Ruth and Gehrig, doesn't arguably the best women's NCAA basketball player ever deserve a shot to prove she belongs with the boys?





# HOPE FOR THE FUTURE: INTERVIEW WITH HOPE AKPAN, A RISING STAR IN THE ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

BY: IMIKOMOBONG IBIA



Hope Akpan is a 21-year-old British Nigerian who plays midfield for Reading F.C. of the English Premier League. Akpan started his career in Everton's Youth Academy before being loaned away to Hull City, and eventually signing with Crawley Town in League One. He signed with Reading in January 2013, returning to the Premier League for the first time since his Everton days.

## What has this experience been like for you?

*It's definitely a dream come true for me. It was always one of my goals, one of my ambitions, to play in the Premier League. I joined Reading from Crawley, who were in League One, so I had to adjust to Premier League life. It has been a good transition. Obviously, the Premier League is the best league in the world. There are a lot of really good, amazing players in the Premier League. So every*

*week it is good to be testing myself against the likes of those.*

## How did you feel leaving Everton?

*It was hard leaving. I had been there for ten years and it was all I knew as a kid growing up.*

## What did you learn while in the lower leagues?

*I think it was for the best, and it taught me a lot in the lower leagues, showing me the ugly side of the game, which I think I needed. A lot of young players who stay around the big clubs don't get that. Now I'm a stronger player and person. After the knockback of leaving Everton, my attitude and the way I train has improved tenfold.*



### **Did you expect to be back in the Premier League so soon?**

*My ambition at the beginning of the season was to get promoted with Crawley or to be playing in the Championship come January or at the end of the season. It was a little bit of a shock that the Premier League came calling so soon. But I'm taking it in stride.*

### **How was it returning to Everton this season?**

*Going back to where I started my career from a young age was exciting, definitely, but I'm a Reading player now and I wanted to do well for Reading. We showed signs at Everton that we are a good team. We created quite a few chances but the timing of their goals was bad. Everton took their chances and we didn't, but we showed some positive signs.*

### **Can you guys survive?**

*We can stay up, 100%. It is very tight, there are a lot of games left to play and a lot of points to play for, and we still have that belief. All the teams around us in the table*

*need to go into the game with the belief we can win it. We are under pressure to stay in the Premier League, so we can't use pressure as an excuse. We've just got to go out there, look to win the points every game, and take it from there.*

### **How do you feel about your upcoming games?**

*All the games against the teams around us are going to be big from here on. There are a few coming up at home so the emphasis will be on us going out there trying to win the game. That's what we will try and do. QPR and Southampton have to come to our place and if we win those two games alone we will have a much greater chance of staying up. There are still 24 more points to play for so who is to say we can't stay in this league?*

**You're at that point in most players' career where they start to think about their international careers. You were born in Liverpool, but your parents are from Nigeria. Have you made up your mind about who you're going to play for when the call comes?**

*That process is going on as we speak. Both of my parents are Nigerian, so to play for Nigeria would definitely be an honor. I was born in the UK so to play for England would be an honor too but for me, Nigeria at the minute is where my heart lies.*

**Have you been pushed to make this decision to play for the Eagles by their recent success at the Nations Cup?**

*Definitely. Watching Nigeria in the African Cup of Nations was...I was really delighted that they managed to win that. It has been a while since Nigeria have been at the top of the tree in Africa and to see a young player who was brought up in the UK like Victor Moses, play for the team, do well for the team, and be one of the outstanding players in the tournament for Nigeria, has inspired me to want to do the same.*

**Has anybody from the Nigerian Football Association, or even Stephen Keshi, the coach, been in touch with you yet?**

*Not particularly, no. It's something that I would like, for some contact to go on. Because it is one of the things in the future that I want to do...play for Nigeria.*



# SUPER MARIO: MILAN'S SIGNING OF THE SEASON

BY: ZAHED AL SAIFI



Adriano Galliani, CEO of AC *Milan*, was clearly taking a huge risk by signing Mario Balotelli from Manchester City a few months ago. Despite the striker's immense talent and potential, he is mostly known for his off-the-pitch antics and controversial actions, the latest of which had led to a public training ground bust-up with his former coach Roberto Mancini. Opinions were divided as to whether the £17m young forward would be able to rescue Milan from a disastrous season, with many fearing that he would be an additional burden to the team.

However, it did not take Balotelli much time to silence his critics as he netted twice in his debut to secure Milan a 2-1 victory over Udinese. Balotelli seemed to form an almost-telepathic understanding with his teammates, particularly El Shaarawy, who directly contributed to Mario's first goal. Since then, Balotelli has scored seven goals in six games for his new club and has led the team to a top three position in the league.

Defenders have found it quite difficult to contain Balotelli for the full 90 minutes and his presence upfront has given El Shaarawy and M'Baye Niang more space to maneuver

forward. Furthermore, his physicality and stature has definitely provided Milan with an additional aerial dimension that had been lacking prior to his arrival.

Balotelli's consistency with Milan has brought him great accolades from leading figures in the soccer world. Italy coach Cesare Prandelli has labeled him as an extraordinary player, while Galliani has tabbed him to claim the Ballon d'Or in the future. His teammates have also been very impressed by his performances and his growth as a player and as a man.

Zlatan Ibrahimovic's move to PSG last summer had clearly left a void in the Milan side. The club's leading figure, star player, and motivator was no longer there and the club was at fault for not replacing him earlier with another quality forward. However, with the late signing of Balotelli, Milan has certainly found a new leader to guide the team for the remainder of the campaign. His presence in the squad has undoubtedly motivated both the players and the fans and assured them that the club is still able to attract the world's finest footballers and fight for Europe's premium competitions.

# A QUICK TAKE: WILL CHELSEA WITNESS THE RETURN OF "THE SPECIAL ONE?"

BY: ZAHED AL SAIFI



Reports have emerged in England that José Mourinho, currently in charge of Real Madrid, is set to return to his former club Chelsea at the end of the season. His former colleague at *Porto Rui Sa Lemos* recently claimed that the move is definitely taking place. Additionally, when asked about his future, Mourinho responded:

*"It's not easy to choose a new destination after working in England, Portugal, Italy, and Spain. Maybe I could return to somewhere I've already been. Watch out for surprises."*

This possibility certainly does not come as a surprise to many, as "The Special One" has expressed his desire to return to England on many occasions. He has not enjoyed a close relationship with the Spanish press and has come under severe criticism from the fans after dropping iconic club captain Iker Casillas from the squad and clashing with

vice-captain Sergio Ramos more than once. Furthermore, it is understood that some of the board members are unhappy with the degree of power Mourinho holds at the club and would prefer a change in coach.

Nevertheless, Mourinho has not allowed the continuous rumors about his future to affect his team's performances, as he has recently guided Real Madrid to back-to-back victories over archnemesis Barcelona and to a famous victory over Manchester United to ensure a spot in the champions league semifinal.

With the Spanish cup and UEFA champions league still in play, Mourinho would certainly prefer to focus his attention on adding more trophies to his cabinet rather than discussing his own future.



# REFERENCES:

*The Penn Sport Report* does not claim ownership of any images posted. Credit for images is posted when the author is known. No copyright infringement intended. Apologizes in advance if a photo has been displayed without the proper credit.

*The Penn Sport Report* also does not claim any ownership rights in the text, files, images, video, sounds, works of authorship, or other materials that you submit to the magazine (collectively, "Content"). After submitting Content to this publication, you continue to retain all ownership rights in such Content. By submitting Content to the magazine, you hereby grant to us a license to use, modify, publicly perform, publicly display, reproduce and distribute such Content for any purpose without compensation to you. The license to us is nonexclusive, fully paid, royalty-free, sub-licensable, and worldwide.

## Cover

Kobe Bryant:: Game 1, 2009 NBA Finals/NBA Media Ventures

## Table of Contents

Andrea Kremer Photo: Kirby Lee/US Presswire

Avery Johnson Photo: Associated Press

Hope Akpan Photo: PA Photos

Malcolm Gladwell Photo: Associated Press

## Emmy-Winning Reporter, Penn Alumna Andrea Kremer Reflects on Her Storied Career

Andrea Kremer Sideline Photo: Kirby Lee/US Presswire

Andrea Kremer with Randy Moss and Tom Brady Photo: provided by Andrea Kremer

Andrea Kremer with US Men's Swimming Team Photo: provided by Andrea Kremer

## Does College Football Really Deserve to Be Banned? Reflecting on a Speech by Malcolm Gladwell

Clint Carter. "Should College Football Be Banned?" *Men's Health News*.

Katy Waldman. "Should College Football Be Banned?" *Slate Magazine*.

Malcolm Gladwell at Penn Photo: Kathryn Landsman/*The Daily Pennsylvanian*

Malcolm Gladwell Photo: Associated Press

## NBA MVP Race: Is the Award LeBron James' to Lose?

Kevin Durant and LeBron James Photo: Isaac Baldizon/Getty Images

LeBron James Photo: Getty Images

"LeBron James Sets NBA Mark: Six Straight with 30-Plus Points, 60 Percent or Better from Floor." *Sporting News*.

## The Small-Market Disadvantage: Reflecting on a Speech by Avery Johnson

Avery Johnson and Penn Audience Photo: Raquel MacGregor/*The Daily Pennsylvanian*

Avery Johnson with Deron Williams Photo: Brooklyn Fans Photography

Avery Johnson Photo: Daniel Lewis/*The Penn Sport Report*

Ken Berger. "Given New Rules of CBA, Thunder May Find Keeping Core Together Difficult." CBS Sports.

Richard Florida. "The NBA's Small-Market Disadvantage." *The Atlantic Cities*.

## NBA Roundtable: Have We Reached the End of the Kobe Bryant Era?

Kobe Bryant Photo: Alea Jo/Getty Images

Los Angeles Lakers Team Photo: The Associated Press

### **By the Numbers: Examining Three NBA Power Forwards Who Have Been Miscast as Centers**

Andrew Bogut and David Lee Photo: Ben Margot/Associated Press

Andre Drummond Photo: David Kelly/Getty Images

Greg Monroe Photo: LeSea Photography

Enes Kanter Photo: Melissa Majchrzak/Getty Images

### **Is Brittney Griner Worthy of a Shot in the NBA? A Brief Look at the History of Women in Sports**

Brittney Griner Photo: Sue Ogrocki/The Associated Press

Jackie Mitchell, Lou Gehrig, Joe Engel, and Babe Ruth Photo: The Library of Congress

Michael Aubrecht. "Jackie Mitchell: The Pride of the Yankees." Baseball Almanac.

"Nine Inspirational Sports Stories." Total Pro Sports.

### **An Interview with Hope Akpan, a Rising Star of the English Premier League**

Hope Akpan in Red Photo: PA Photos

Hope Akpan in Blue Photo: PA Photos

### **Super Mario: Milan's Signing of the Season**

Mario Balotelli Photo: John Super/Associated Press

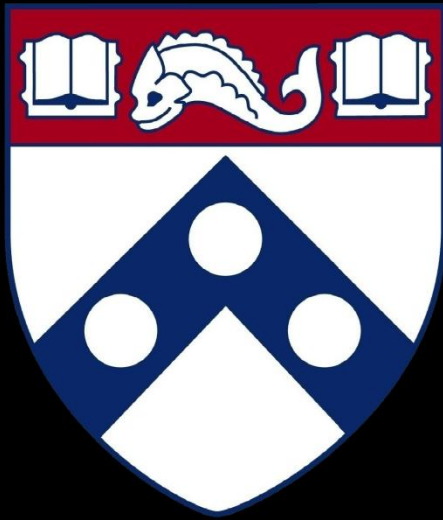
### **A Quick Take: Will Chelsea Witness the Return of "The Special One?"**

John Drayton. "Mourinho Hints at Stunning Chelsea Return as Madrid Boss Ponders Next Move." Mail Online.

José Mourinho Photo: Manchester Images

---





PSR

[www.pennsportreport.org](http://www.pennsportreport.org)

[www.facebook.com/thepennsportreport](https://www.facebook.com/thepennsportreport)

[www.twitter.com/pennsportreport](https://www.twitter.com/pennsportreport)