

# PATRIOTS: Case for 'Deflategate' weak in spots

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They could have inflated them with colder than room temperature air, causing the temperature and psi to drop more slowly during the outdoor game. They could have reinflated their footballs slightly after receiving them back from locker room attendant McNally. They could have had handwarmers in their plastic game ball bags, or kept their footballs close to heaters during the game, as the Patriots allege that the Colts actually did. Wells ignores or glosses over all these possibilities, while wallowing in every nefarious suspicion against the Patriots.

Meanwhile, for the opposing side, Anderson recalls that the Patriots' footballs measured at exactly the low end of the legal limit, at 12.5 psi. Here it's worth noting that there is no prohibition against footballs falling below that level during a game, and any first-year physics student could tell you that based on a 50-degree kickoff temperature, 10-15 mph winds, and steady rain during the first half, psi drops for both teams' footballs were entirely predictable according to the Ideal

Gas Law. In fact, the intercepted football that caused the NFL and its Inquisition Team to leap into action at halftime behaved precisely as the Ideal Gas Law predicted it would, by falling to approximately the range of 11.32-11.52 psi. But that hit squad of league officials knew nothing about physics and very little about making consistent measurements, so from there on, everything went downhill.

Wait Anderson had brought two gauges with him to check the footballs, one with a long needle that the report calls the Logo gauge, and the other gauge with a shorter needle and with no logo. The troubles for baseline measurements began not just with psi readings that started about .5-.6 psi apart, but also with two gauges that read differently by about .45 psi. Anderson's "best recollection" was that he used the higher-reading Logo gauge for his pre-game measurements, but Wells and Exponent discounted that particular recollection in favor of the lower gauge whose readings were more incriminating against the Patriots, suggesting yet again that Wells' real mission was to help the NFL

CYA, if you interpret my abbreviations correctly.

The problems of measuring got compounded at halftime when a third gauge was used briefly for measuring the intercepted ball, and that gauge, last seen in the hands of NFL officials, mysteriously vanished, never to be seen since, according to Wells. Then we add the complications that Anderson can't recall which team's footballs he measured first; that officials and higher-ups are sure that they measured the 12 Patriots' footballs first at halftime, but aren't sure whether they reinflated Patriots' footballs before or after measuring only 4 of 12 Colts' balls (which becomes an important point because Exponent claims that the passage of mere minutes can contribute significantly to a rapid rise in temperature and psi in locker room conditions).

Oh, and the NFL dream team "ran out of time" to measure all Colts' balls at halftime; failed to reinflate any Colts' balls at halftime, even though 3 of 8 measurements showed those balls to be lower than the legal psi; switched gauges among officials at the end of the game; misrecorded at least two Colts' measurements; checked 4 of 12 Colts' balls at the end of the game without being sure whether they were actually the same 4 balls they measured at halftime; and so on, ad nauseam. I kid you not, these foul-ups are all there in the 243-page report, and that's the "scientific" basis for determining that hanky-panky occurred in the AFC Championship

game.

Meanwhile Wells paid little or no attention to the fact that the Patriots dominated time of possession in the first half (thereby exposing their footballs more to the elements), or that the Patriots employed a much more bruising running game, rather than a passing game, which might also have accounted for additional football deflation.

As NFL reporter Mike Florio has suggested, at some point Ted Wells morphed from being an "independent" investigator to being a prosecutor determined to convict the Patriots on whatever flimsy statistical or circumstantial evidence he could piece together. The important question was not whether Patriots' footballs dropped below 12.5 psi, but whether the drop was consistent with the expectations of the Ideal Gas Law, or whether the drop suggested "tampering" on the part of the Patriots' staff or players. Since the data on which the tampering charge rests is utterly unreliable, the tampering allegation remains unproven to this day, and so should be considered, contrary to Wells' conclusion, "more improbable than not."

As of today, the Patriots have decided not to appeal the NFL's million dollar fine and loss of two draft picks, while Tom Brady is moving ahead with his appeal against the NFL. Personally, I hope Brady's appeal winds up in federal court, where it might get a truly impartial hearing for the first time.

John McColgan, a resident of Joseph, is a proud member of Patriots Nation.



John Howls, 16, demonstrates how a wind turbine goes together for Karlee Wentz, 5, and Taylor Johnson, 7. Next, the girls put the turbine together for themselves.

## Rendezvous in Wallowa Schools features energy

Students from Wallowa Schools got a day off from traditional schoolwork in favor of the much-anticipated, annual Rendezvous last Friday.

The event has been going strong for decades. This year the theme chosen by teachers was Energy and mixed student groups grades K-6 visited eight learning stations and then gathered in the high school gym for a special presentation by Pacific Power.

"We felt (the program) fit in really well with STEM (Science Technology Education and Math), which a lot of us are focusing on," said event organizer Jennifer Gibbs. "I feel like we have such great resources and people are so willing to come in and talk to the kids. It's a nice change for them to have some new teachers. The sixth graders are the team leaders and they take charge of the groups. All the big kids help the little kids."

Older students assisted

younger ones as they engaged in the many hands-on experiments throughout the day. Among the many activities, students made pinwheels to understand wind power, assembled wind turbines in Mr. Journigan's science room and measured the electrical output of their engines, assembled solar-powered light jars or built solar-powered ovens, and experimented with hydro-power.

Stations were manned by volunteers as follows: Jeff Journigan and numerous high school volunteers, windmills; Tom Osborn of Bonneville Power, hydroelectricity; Ann Bloom, food as energy; Susan Badger-Jones of Energy Trust, hydro-water power; Jeanette Hibbert of Community Connection assisted by Teresa Henke, solar jars and hands-on electricity; Brent Wydrinski of Wallowa Resources, solar power; Debbie Lind of Summer Reading Program, pinwheels; and a fun film by Bill Nye the Science Guy.

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## RACING: Hayes brothers rev up for second year

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Among the improvements were dropping 200 pounds off the vehicle's weight as well as muscling the 2300-cubic-inch engine up to 300-310 horsepower, a rebuild that included installing a new camshaft.

The team races about once per month on its circuit, six races per year, traveling as far as Twin Falls, Idaho, and Wenatchee, Wash. "We consider the Hermiston track as our home track," Hayes said.

The Hayes team has competed at two races so far. A May 23 race in Twin Falls was canceled due to rain after only a few laps, but a May 24 race in Meridian, Idaho, garnered the brothers a ninth-place finish.

Having a month between races truly helps. "That way you have time to repair your car, and it helps keep costs down," Hayes said.

The length of track the Hayes race on varies from one-quarter mile to five-eighths of a mile. "All the tracks are NASCAR-sanctioned tracks, and it's all asphalt racing. We do not do dirt track racing," Hayes said. Most races include 75-100 laps depending on the size of the track.

The team has a num-

ber of local and semi-local sponsors, and even a family from Albany. "Of course, we sponsor ourselves as well ... We're always looking for more, any sponsorship is welcome," Hayes said with a laugh.

The Hayes racing team is mostly a family affair. This consists of a three-man pit crew, including the driver, James Hayes. "I work on the car, and James works on the car, but our head mechanic is Brian Finch of La Grande, and he's really good. When he says, 'do this,' we do it. Hayes added that Sarah Weston performs the photography and keeps the crew fed and watered, while Hayes' mother and sister handle assorted tasks.

Hayes said the team doesn't have plans to compete at the highest levels of the sport. "Our series is really popular, and we like what we're doing at the level we're doing it. This is really family friendly, and we encourage fans to come down and see our cars and talk to us. That's what we're about," Hayes said.

The next race for the Hayes team is June 27 at Monroe, Wash. For more information, see the "Hayes Brothers Racing" page on Facebook.

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of Enterprise.  
Grandparents are Teena  
and Marc Stauffer,  
Paul and Connie Turnbull,  
and Duane and  
Mary Miller.

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## FISHING: Weekend events fun for all ages

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The lake has just been stocked with 6,000 legal-length rainbow and fishers have hauled in record-setting kokanee in addition to monster lake trout. The lake is stocked all season.

Rangers at Wallowa Lake State Park have lined up some special events to make the fishing experience even more fruitful — they've scheduled free fly-fishing lessons, taught by Grande Ronde Fly-Fishing

Club, for 7 p.m. Saturday evening. All ages are welcome and there will be a fly giveaway and lots of opportunity to practice your cast.

The fly-fishing lessons will be held near the new amphitheater by Ice Creek Shelter. A campfire and hot chocolate gathering will follow the lesson at the fire pit.

Free fishing weekend extends to all bodies of water normally open for fishing, so consult your fishing guide as usual.