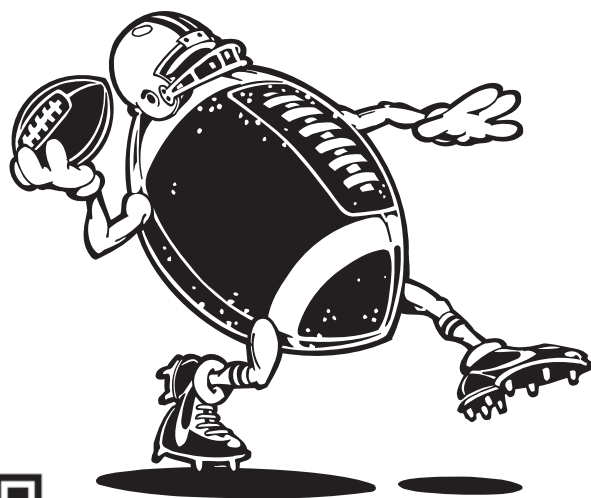


# Upfront

For a while, we went without sports. Public safety concerns, they said. But, as is predictable for any complicated issue (when humans are involved), economic incentives and irrepressible self-interests win. So, although we can't gather in groups more than 50 (or 25, or 10, or 6, or pick-an-integer-any-integer...depending on the "science-driven" assessment of whomever is the protector-in-chief in your particular jurisdiction), let's play ball – all kinds of ball, at once. Baseball and basketball playoffs, and the beloved NFL. College football on campuses restricted to remote, digital learning. Tennis (except Wimbledon...who knows why the English do what they do?). Golf...the PGA Championship, then pumpkin spice latte season, a US Open in America's former pandemic Ground Zero, checkbook-padding stops in the Dominican Republic, Las Vegas and Bermuda, among others, leading to Thanksgiving azaleas in Augusta, if you like. (By the way...no Open Championship this year, which YOU call the British Open, because that's what it is...and calling it "THE Open Championship" is analogous to the horrible Buckeye pretension: "THE Ohio State University," which suggests an odd insecurity that someone might imagine there is another one out there hiding somewhere...and, if you wonder why there's no 2020 (British) Open Championship, see my Wimbledon note above...i.e. the English can be a little uptight). And hockey (I'll bet you even money you don't know the Tampa Bay Lightning won the Stanley Cup last night...as I write...in Edmonton, Alberta, by beating the Dallas Stars).



To contact The Skinnie with your ideas, responses, letters and more, email us at [mail@theskinnie.com](mailto:mail@theskinnie.com)

Don't mistake my cynical tone for displeasure. I LOVE that we have permitted the games to re-begin, notwithstanding the heartbreak associated with my Celtics' demise.

Competition is good for mankind. It breeds innovation. It satisfies primal urges. It promotes the pursuit of excellence. It demands Darwinian evolution. And it ensures we have plenty of options for killing three hours eating potato chips on a well-worn couch.

It's in celebration of these basic truths that we commemorate the return (in the global sense) to the (metaphorical) field. The instrument for our gratitude song: The Skinnie Pick 'Em Football Pool. It's an annual tradition; it will not be undone by a virus...not this autumn, anyway. Find it on page 30. Participate. Let's see hundreds of entries. Beat your neighbors and win a prize: A handsome and rather valuable gift card to Sandfly coffee shop and community meeting place, Cutters Point. I know the owner, so the cross-promotion works pretty well.

Anyway, we aim to engage our readers. And the football pool is a particularly interactive manifestation of this aim; one that is significantly less toxic than the now-infamous notion of "anonymous ads."

Circle your winners, send your sheet, and enjoy the games.

*Scott A. Lawrence*



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