LEAGUE OF DENIAL

THE NFL, CONCUSSIONS, AND THE BATTLE FOR TRUTH

MARK FAINARU-WADA AND STEVE FAINARU
Congressional report says NFL waged improper campaign to influence government study

Steve Fainaru and Mark Fainaru-Wada
May 24, 2016
Latest studies: Brain disease from contact sports more common
Youth football participation drops

Steve Feinaru and Mark Feinaru-Wada

The nation’s largest youth football program, Pop Warner, saw participation drop 9.5 percent between 2010-12, a sign that the concussion crisis that began in the NFL is having a dramatic impact at the lowest rungs of the sport.

According to data provided to "Outside the Lines," Pop Warner lost 23,612 players, thought to be the largest two-year decline since the organization began keeping statistics decades ago. Consistent annual growth led to a record 248,899 players participating in Pop Warner in 2010; that figure fell to 225,287 by the 2012 season.

Pop Warner officials said they believe several factors played a role in the decline, including the trend of youngsters focusing on one sport. But the
For the NFL and all of football, a new threat: an evaporating insurance market

From the NFL to roo leagues, football is facing a stark, new threat: an evaporating insurance market that is fundamentally altering the economics of the sport, squeezing and even killing off programs faced with higher costs and a less stable risk landscape. Congress, the NFL, and state officials must find a way to keep the sport afloat.
“Basically the world has left the marketplace. If you’re football, hockey or soccer, the insurance business doesn’t want you.”

-Alex Fairly, CEO, The Fairly Group
“Insurance coverage is arguably the biggest threat to the sport.”

- Dr. Julian Bailes, medical director for Pop Warner football
“Overall, I think that there is a real threat to the viability of contact sports.”

- William Prims, veteran insurance lawyer and former Yale fullback