

Will Deflate-Gate Lead to Micro-Chipped Footballs?



Peter Silva, 2015-27-01



Photo Courtesy: Wilson.com

Last summer I wrote about some of the cool technology that the NFL was going to use during the 2014/15 season. There were sensors in the player's shoulder pads tracking all their on field movements. It measured player acceleration rates, top speed, length of runs, and even the distance between a ball carrier and a defender. Next year they'll add sensors for breathing, temperature and heart rate. More stats than ever and could change the game for-ever. The yardsticks had chips along with the refs and all that data was picked up by 20 RFID receivers placed throughout various stadiums. Those, in turn, were wired to a hub and server which processed the data. 25 times a second, data was transmitted to the receivers and that then

went to the NFL 'cloud' and available in seconds.

The only thing without a sensor was the football. Will that change now due to Deflate-Gate?

No doubt if you are a NFL fan (or maybe not since it has dominated the news) you have heard of Deflate-gate. Apparently during the AFC Championship game, the New England Patriots' footballs were under inflated during the first half. With a pound of pressure missing, those footballs were slightly easier to grip and, in theory, supposedly gave New England an advantage. If not an advantage, just the simple fact that they were not inflated to the proper pressure per the rules. Personally, I really don't care as I'm a Miami Dolphins fan and anyone else in the AFC East (Jets, Bills, Patriots) can kiss my KISS tattoo. Deflate-gate has gotten so blown up that even science folks like [Bill Nye the Science Guy](#) and [Neil deGrasse Tyson](#) has gotten into the mix and of course, there is a [SNL skit](#) about it.

But it got me thinking. If they had [sensors or chips in/on the footballs](#), none of this would have occurred. The sensors would have alerted the officials that certain footballs were not at regulation air pressure - just like your car tires do with that dashboard indicator. If, somehow, the sensors didn't go off, they could have played back the football's GPS and movements leading up to the kickoff and this whole case would have been solved by the end of halftime. Imagine the replay booth, instead of showing the first half highlights, would be showing a layout of the stadium along with 24 little dots making their move from the locker room to the officials to the field and everything in between. I would bet that most of those All-Access passes people hang around their necks have some sort of chip that provides authenticity, you could add 'location' and then see all the people dots mingling with the football dots....and voila, who was near the equipment when this happened. As part of their internal investigation, the Patriots apparently re-created their entire pre-game routine to absolve themselves from any wrongdoing. Maybe next year they'll just pull up the 'Where's my Football' app during the post game press conference - *'See! My dot is here and the football dot is over there...I did nothing.'*

Go Hawks!

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