

Outwitted?

By Reg P. Wydeven
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When I was in fourth grade, our class watched an episode of 'Slim Goodbody.' Slim was a kind hearted fellow who wore a skin-tight suit and taught us about our bodies. The suit had accurate depictions and locations of his bones, muscles and organs. While educational, the suit was moderately unsettling.

Slim Goodbody taught me a very important lesson: I am not a fan of the sight of blood. On this particular episode, Slim thought it would be edifying to show us an actual beating, human heart. Our teacher asked if I was doing okay, because I was sweating profusely and was turning greener than the Incredible Hulk.

My classmates laughed at me, but I didn't respond. It required every ounce of my concentration to keep the insides of my body *inside* my body (unlike Slim).

A few weeks later our teacher told us we would be watching another episode of Slim Goodbody the next day. That evening I told my mom that I wasn't feeling well and would probably have to stay home from school.

My mom almost certainly saw through my scheme, but since the teacher told her about my incident, she sympathetically let me stay home. Faking totally paid off.

The Fairmont Premier insurance company is now accusing former NFL player Brad Culpepper of thinking like me. The company is currently suing Culpepper for allegedly defrauding them by collecting a \$175,000 disability payment.

Culpepper played defensive tackle for nine years in the NFL after being drafted by the Vikings in 1992 out of the University of Florida. The 46-year-old made a claim for the disability benefit explaining that he had "low back pain and stiffness which is almost always present." According to the suit, Culpepper also claims he had "quite a bit of difficulty... getting into or out of the bath and performing heavy activities around his home." He listed a litany of injuries from head to knee traumas and also vision problems.

Fairmont Premier agreed and issued the payment in 2013. They had second thoughts, however, after watching Culpepper compete on 'Survivor,' the reality show where contestants try to outwit, outlast and outplay one another.

Culpepper competed on the show in 2013 alongside his wife, Monica, who actually ended up taking second place. Brad finished 15th and was voted off the island after 14 days. During that fortnight, however, Fairmont Premier watched Culpepper perform several physically challenging tasks during the show, including lifting heavy crates and paddling canoes.

In response, the California-based insurer sued, claiming Culpepper "willfully and deceptively provided false information" to the medical professionals who examined him. The company insists the former pro athlete is "exquisitely fit and conditioned" and "not disabled."

The lawsuit, filed in Orange County, California, further alleges that "Culpepper's conduct was fraudulent, deceptive and designed to inflate the value of his claim and to take advantage of and abuse the California workers' compensation system." The suit even contends that he failed to inform doctors that he competed in mixed martial arts.

Culpepper, who is ironically now a personal injury attorney, calls the suit "ludicrous." He asserts that while he remains active, he is still in constant pain and relies on medication.

Culpepper better hope there are no moms on the jury.

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