

# The Juice Loses a Deuces of Court Hearings

**By Reg P. Wydeven  
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Football season is finally upon us. My junior year of college, my buddies and I started our first Fantasy Football League. We were all well versed in our NFL knowledge, as we played lots of Madden Football on my roommate's Sega Genesis.

Madden Football was instrumental in preparing for our fantasy draft, for we familiarized ourselves with team rosters by hours of studying through play, and we also looked at the cover to know who not to draft.

Known as the Madden curse, players who appear on the cover of the game's package invariably have a bad season. Past examples are Donovan McNabb, Michael Vick, Shaun Alexander and my heartbreaking No. 1 overall pick, Marshall Faulk.

This year's cover features Tennessee sophomore quarterback Vince Young, who will most likely not be a member of my beloved San Jose Long-Haired Yaks. "Madden NFL '08" is celebrating its 18th season and is the top-selling video game of all time. One reason for its popularity is its monopoly of the NFL: in December of 2005, EA Sports, the game's manufacturer, signed a licensing agreement with the NFL giving "Madden" exclusive rights to NFL logos and players' names and likenesses.

To compete, video game rival Take-Two released "All-Pro Football 2K8," which features 241 retired players. Take-Two signed individual licenses with the retirees, who aren't bound by NFL rules. The cover of "All-Pro Football 2K8" is graced by John Elway, Barry Sanders and Jerry Rice, three players I tried to draft in college. Also in the game is O.J. Simpson, who plays for a team called the Assassins, whose mascot wields a knife.

In his licensing contract, Simpson is entitled to an undisclosed amount of royalties. However, a Los Angeles Superior Court judge ordered that any of Simpson's royalties be turned over to the family of the late Ronald Goldman. While Simpson was acquitted of murdering his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and Goldman in 1995, he was found liable in civil court and ordered to pay the Goldman family \$38 million.

That's not the only good news for the Goldmans. A federal bankruptcy judge also awarded the family the rights to Simpson's canceled book "If I Did It." The family hired Martin Literary Management to broker a deal to publish the book with Beaufort Books, a small publisher in New York.

In the book, Simpson purportedly explains how he might have committed the murders, but HarperCollins did not release it last year as originally planned because of public outrage. Beaufort will publish "If I Did It" with Simpson's original manuscript intact and include key commentary. Portions of sales proceeds will go to the newly formed Ron Goldman Foundation for Justice to help victims of violent crime.

Denise Brown, the sister of Nicole Brown Simpson, has since called for a boycott of the book. She was "shocked and horrified" to learn about the Goldmans' deal to publish the controversial book, and called Goldman's father Fred a hypocrite since he called the book "disgusting and despicable" when it was originally going to be published. According to David Cook, Fred's attorney, Brown's statements were inconsistent because lawyers for her and her family also sought a share of possible profits from the book for themselves.

Sometimes I wish more aspects of football were fantasy.