

KEVIN CULLEN

NFL is ignoring the cold reality of science

By [Kevin Cullen](#) Globe Columnist, June 22, 2015, 5:29 p.m.

When Tom Brady arrives at the NFL offices on Park Avenue on Tuesday [to appeal his four-game suspension](#) for his alleged role in Deflategate, he's going to be better protected in Manhattan than he is on a typical Sunday at Gillette Stadium.

He'll have more lawyers than offensive linemen, and at this point Brady needs an attorney like Jeff Kessler more than he needs a guard like Ryan Wendell.

Too bad Brady didn't bring along Mike Greenway. Greenway is a retired research scientist who lives in Westwood. He grew up in England, where football means a very different thing. He considers himself more an empiricist than a partisan. His research was always based on science.

"If I had carried out an investigation in the same manner as the NFL," he says, "my reputation would have been ruined."

Greenway carried out his own experiment. And his conclusion was devastatingly simple: Because the footballs the NFL tested were not allowed to return to room temperature before their pressure was measured, every conclusion by the NFL is meaningless.

"Nothing was constant and the temperature of the football was not known and all you are left with is a complicated mess where it is impossible to prove anything," he said. "Even the NFL can't change the laws of nature. Temperature affects pressure."

Greenway's findings are contained in a nine-page report he drew up on his own time and on his own dime. It is far easier to digest and understand than the 243-page report by the NFL investigator Ted Wells that cost untold millions.

Greenway took an NFL game ball and inflated it to 12.5 psi at a room temperature of 72 degrees. Then he put the ball in a refrigerator where he controlled the temperature to what it was on the field during the playoff game

in question. The pressure drops were similar to what NFL officials found. Unlike the NFL officials, however, Greenway let the ball return to room temperature, and when it did, it was the same pressure as it was before it was exposed to the cold.

“The assumption was made that the Patriots must have deflated the footballs,” Greenway said. “But the pressure drop was due entirely to temperature changes.”

While Wells cited incriminating text messages from Patriots employees, Greenway says that’s circumstantial evidence that is open to interpretation. The science, he says, is irrefutable.

Unlike many Patriots fans who believe the NFL is maliciously targeting Brady and the Patriots to assuage the rest of NFL teams and fans who consider the Patriots serial cheaters, Greenway believes the NFL is simply incompetent.

“They were totally unprepared for what happened,” he said. “They run football games, not science experiments. The referees and officials are great at what they do and collecting information for an investigation of this type is not part of their job description. They did their best with the equipment and resources they had but it was totally inadequate for an investigation of this type.”

Greenway said the pressure gauges used by the NFL produced different, conflicting measurements because they were faulty. He reviewed photos of the needles included in the Wells report.

“The needles are bent and bowed,” he noted, making the accuracy of the measurements questionable.

Greenway says if the NFL continues to test footballs the way it did in the Patriots case, teams that play in cold weather will be constantly, and wrongly, accused of cheating,

If the NFL had any brains, they would call all this nonsense off immediately. Then the NFL could donate the \$1 million fine the Patriots paid for Deflategate to the [Pat Tillman Foundation](#), to honor an NFL player who walked away from the field to serve his country. Then the Patriots and the other NFL teams could take the nearly \$7 million they were paid to promote the National Guard and donate it to [Home Base](#) and other groups that help our wounded warriors. Kevin Cullen is a Globe columnist. He can be reached at cullen@globe.com. Follow him on Twitter [@GlobeCullen](#).