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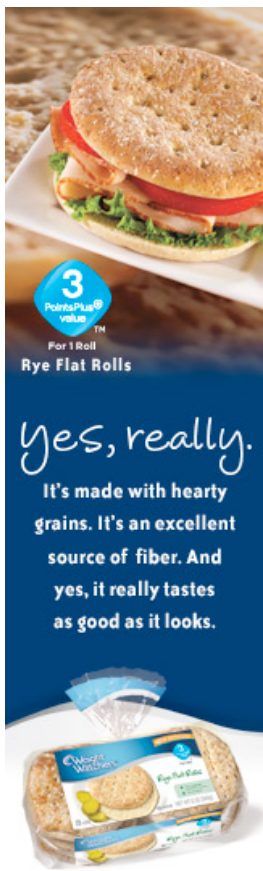
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Sports Stack

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Cutler Deserves More Respect

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Written by [kylestack](#) on 1/28/2011 1:52 PM

Everybody seems to have an opinion on Jay Cutler. The Chicago Bears quarterback has been the subject of much scorn for sitting out the second half of last weekend's NFC Championship Game with a knee injury. I was among those who criticized Cutler, but now I'm actually going to make the case for why I was wrong.



Cutler's injury has been reported as a grade II sprain of the MCL in his left knee, although details from the Bears have been vague. Stephania Bell, a physical therapist who evaluates player injuries for ESPN, made the point that an injury to the MCL "can render the knee unstable, particularly for lateral mobility, but can also make it difficult to plant full weight through the leg."

Cutler said that after he hurt his knee in the first half, he tried throwing on the sidelines. He explained he couldn't plant his left leg; team trainers recognized that, and kept him sidelined. Most of us might think a player should take a pain killer and go back out there. How many of us consider the increased injury risk of returning to the field?

It's possible he could have damaged that left MCL even more seriously or injured another ligament. Maybe he would've hurt his right leg by compensating for the injury to the left. Cutler had already sacrificed his body in the game; it didn't make sense for him to do it twice.

I blamed Cutler because I didn't think he showed leadership. I figured he could've at least rallied his teammates on the sideline. Instead, he sat alone on the bench. My fault was assuming what he was thinking and how he felt. None of us can do that.

Only Cutler knows how his knee felt. We can't put ourselves in a player's situation, so why should we bother? Considering how painful a knee injury probably is, and how much toughness Cutler has displayed in past games, we should give the man the benefit of the doubt.

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1/28/2011 2:01 PM

He's a diabetic also. I don't question his decision to sit out or his toughness. But his own NFL peers seem to have thrown him under the bus with an attitude that can only be