

Athletes say, do, drink, buy, pee, and smoke the darndest things

When the tabloids are full of armed robberies, racial slurs, and white-collar crime, it's fun to recall the bad things athletes do that hurt only themselves



SPORTS
STAFF

Group
Commentary

There's nothing funny about violent crime, but the rest of it? Come on, that shit can get pretty funny, especially if the perpetrators are household-name athletes. Maybe it's the spotlight, maybe it's the testosterone, or maybe it's all the electrolyte-enriched sports drinks they've been guzzling, but it seems that when athletes commit non-violent crimes, they do so in spectacularly hilarious ways. What follows are our picks for most ridiculous appearances that athletes have made on the police blotter.

Marc Affeld

The personal life of current Memphis Grizzlies point guard Damon Stoudamire is basically one continuous stoner comedy. In fact, two examples of Stoudamire's marijuana-laden shenanigans could have been pulled straight from a couple of Hollywood classics.

Remember the opening scene of the film *Super Troopers*, where the police pull over three stoners because of a noticeable cloud of smoke being emitted from the vehicle? Well, replace those three stoners with Stoudamire, a driver buddy, and then-fellow co-captain of the Portland Trail Blazers Rasheed Wallace, and you have an incident that occurred in November of 2002.

Stoudamire and Wallace were busted in the middle of the night for living up to their team's name by blazing and driving back to Portland from a game in Seattle. All of this was done while speeding in a not-so-inconspicuous yellow Hummer. Hilarity undoubtedly ensued.

Then in July of 2003, Stoudamire took a tip from the bass player in *This is Spinal Tap* by trying to smuggle something past airport security on his person. Only instead of hiding a cucumber wrapped in aluminum foil in his pants, Stoudamire tried to sneak past the metal detector with one and a half ounces of pot wrapped in aluminum foil. Yes, Stoudamire's strategy for tricking security was to wrap the marijuana in foil, which the machines were designed to detect.

And they say stuff like that only happens in the movies.

Nick Frost

Although he may have been overshadowed in the last few years by the grotesquely large number of other athlete-criminals around, former MLB player Darryl Strawberry trumps them all. He spent most of the '80s, '90s, and early 21st century either in a prison cell in Florida, in rehab, or staring down the envelope of a subpoena for child support.

It would take way too long to try and explain each individual wrongdoing that Mr Strawberry has committed since 1987, but, in case you were wondering, I'll summarize: he's been accused of breaking his first ex-wife's nose, arrested for slapping

around his second ex-wife (while she was pregnant, no less), failed to make child support payments, been arrested for cocaine and painkiller possession on numerous occasions, been thrown out of rehab for having sex with an inmate, solicited sex from an undercover cop, and faked a police report that his vehicle had been stolen and that he was being kidnapped, and "pistol-whipped," in order to get the police to arrest his "kidnapper."

I don't think there really is much more you can say about this guy—his track record pretty well speaks for itself. And yet, somehow, he managed to remain one of the more popular stars in baseball throughout most of his career, garnering eight straight starts in the MLB All-Star Game, which is voted on by the fans, not to mention a wealth of merchandise bearing his name.

He even guest-starred in one of the greatest *Simpsons* episodes of all-time, displaying his ten-foot vertical leap, his knack for hitting nine homers off of the Shelbyville Power Plant softball team, and his ability to take nerve tonic without suffering the ill-effects of gigantism. Although, now that I think about it, it makes sense why Mr Burns pinch-hit Homer for Darryl: he probably tried to solicit sex from Smithers.

Ben Carter

In Edmonton, when we see a pair of drunk, unruly, hockey-playing brothers acting like idiots on the side of the road, we call it Saturday night outside the Oil City Roadhouse. When it happens in the United States in the year 2007, however, that shit is a big deal.

Earlier this summer, in a hotel in rural Minnesota, Eric Staal of the Carolina Hurricanes and his younger brother Jordan, of the Pittsburgh Penguins, were arrested at the elder Staal's bachelor party. They were charged with a count each of disorderly conduct, and Jordan was charged with underage drinking.

Apparently, the Staals heeded the original police warning that the bachelor party had been getting out of hand (but not before being threatened with deportation), and went to bed for the night. But the party continued without them, and later that night they were woken up and kicked out of the hotel. The group then "gathered on Highway 61 and began harassing passing motorists" according to the police report, where they were then arrested. A pair of \$500 fines later, and the matter seemed to be resolved.

The most amusing detail of this case was the ensuing media coverage in Canada: in a summer in which athletes were arrested regularly for crimes ranging from the mundane to the truly horrific, many reacted as if this was the NHL's equivalent of Michael Vick running a dogfighting ring. Their mugshots even appeared on the cover of the *Toronto Sun*.

If members of the Canadian media are surprised that hockey isn't taken seriously in the United States, perhaps they should consider the ramifications of turning a non-story featuring two of the game's young stars into a massive affair such as this one. Because really, if you can't get wrecked and yell at passing cars at your bachelor party, when can you do it?

Paul Owen

He may not have committed a crime in the strictest sense, but Onterio Smith belongs in any discussion of professional athletes who are criminals. Suspended from the NFL for two years following his third violation of the league's Substance Abuse Policy in 2005, Smith isn't memorable so much for being a bit of a dooper as for the way in which he was caught.

In May of 2005, while travelling through the Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport, Smith was detained passing through security because his carry-on contained some suspicious items: the first being a jar of his dried urine, the second being a device known as the "Original Whizzinator."

The Whizzinator comes with a pure urine sample, a couple of syringes, a latex penis, and a handy instruction manual explaining how to make it look like you're peeing when you're not. Apparently the device does a poor job, as Smith was caught three times breaking the NFL's anti-drug policies. If you're going to cheat, you should at least do it so you don't get caught.

Of course, Smith's detainment became a punchline in the American media, as well as spawning infinite fantasy football teams named the Whizzinators. With Smith gone from the NFL and unsuccessful in his stint with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers, the former Oregon star's legacy will remain as the dude who got caught with the fake piss in the airport.

Robin Collum

If there's one thing funnier than fake penises (or is that peni?), bachelor-party shenanigans, and hot-boxing a moving SUV, it's hypocrisy exposed.

In 1999, Eugene Robinson was a free safety for the Atlanta Falcons who made it all the way to the Super Bowl. He was also widely respected as a person and considered an excellent role model—so much so, that on the morning before the Super Bowl, he was awarded the Bart Starr award by the Christian group Athletes in Action. The award is given to the athlete that year who is seen to best exemplify moral leadership, strong character, and other good Christian virtues.

You can imagine, then, how non-plussed Robinson's supporters were when his extracurricular activities were revealed—though the Bart Starr award has never earned more publicity before or since. The night before the Super Bowl, Robinson left his hotel and went looking for a \$40 blow job. Unfortunately for him—but luckily for those of us who love pure comedy—he chose entirely the wrong prostitute to ask—instead of an authentic lady of the night: Robinson solicited an undercover cop.

Sometimes karma's right on time, though, and this was one of those occasions. The next day, Robinson played horribly in the Super Bowl. He missed important tackles, messed up defensive coverage, and generally made an ass of himself on the field. Many people blamed him—and his after-hours escapades—for the Falcons' 34-19 loss to the Denver Broncos, and he was lodged in the public consciousness not for his Super Bowl ring, but for oral sex gone wrong.

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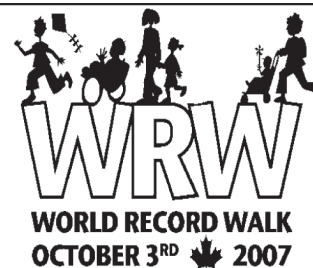
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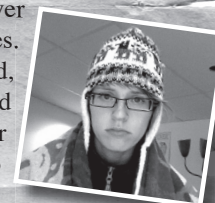
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