

# The real story of Manning's weird endorsements

BY DREW HARWELL  
THE WASHINGTON POST

There was so much for Denver Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning to talk about after winning Super Bowl 50 Sunday night — becoming the oldest quarterback to win a Super Bowl, his rumored retirement — that it seemed a bit odd when he instead started giving big, sloppy kisses to Budweiser, brewed by the world's biggest beer conglomerate.



In the seconds after the game ended, he told a sportscaster, "I'm going to drink a lot of Budweiser tonight, Tracy, I promise you that." Then, early Monday, he told CBS This Morning, "I've had a few Budweisers and it's been a special night."

It wasn't the first time Manning paid homage to the King of Beers: After a playoff win in 2014, when asked if retiring was weighing on his mind, Manning said, "What's weighing on my mind is how soon I can get a Bud Light in my mouth."

The NFL bans players from officially endorsing alcohol brands. But Anheuser-Busch InBev spokeswoman

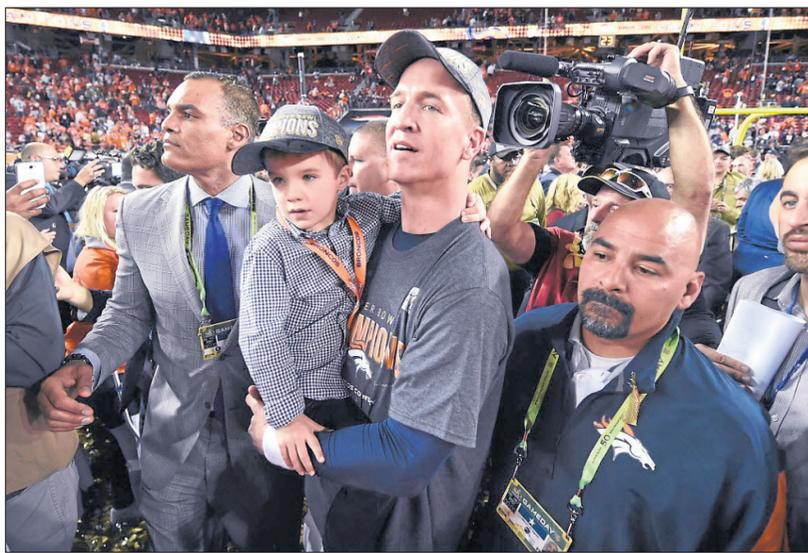
Lisa Weser said Sunday night the Belgian-based beer empire didn't pay Peyton to keep mentioning its brew, adding, "We were surprised and delighted that he did."

But Manning's shilling was still business: He owns a stake of two of the megabrewer's distributors in his native state of Louisiana, according to trade publication Beer Business Daily.

Companies paid an average of \$5 million for 30 seconds of super-saturated airtime during Super Bowl 50, just for a chance to compete with every other company forking over the same cash. Yet Manning flipped the script by delivering Bud one of the game's most valuable marketing goldmines: A sterling endorsement from the mouth of a champion, embedded in the post-game coverage, before all the confetti had even hit the ground.

The Super Bowl is not exactly known for marketing purity. In 1987, after the New York Giants beat the Denver Broncos for Super Bowl XXI, Disney paid quarterback Phil Simms \$75,000 to tell the on-field cameras five words: "I'm going to Disney World," a phrase that has been repeated ad nauseam ever since.

But Manning's glowing endorsement, in the age of social media, could prove



KYLE TERADA | USA TODAY

Denver Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning leaves the stadium with his son Marshall Manning after the game against the Carolina Panthers in Super Bowl 50 at Levi's Stadium on Sunday night. The Broncos won 24-10.

far more valuable. Apex Marketing Group, a sponsorship research firm, said Peyton's Bud love had generated more than \$3 million in "brand recognition value" for the multinational beer brand.

The ads also helped Bud dominate social media: People tweeted about Budweiser 265,000 times in the 12 hours after kickoff, data from Amobee Brand Intelligence

found — more than the next three most-mentioned brands (T-Mobile, Mountain Dew and Pokemon) combined.

Manning is the NFL's highest-paid endorser, making \$12 million a year — twice as much as New England Patriots star Tom Brady — through off-field deals with Buick, DirecTV, Gatorade, Nationwide and Papa John's Pizza, according to Forbes. That may help

explain why, before the game, Manning was seen guzzling Gatorade while sitting near some well-placed cases of delicious Gatorade.

On the field after the win, Manning also tenderly embraced Papa John's founder John Schnatter, whose pizza chain Manning has shilled for in commercials. Manning also owns 21 franchises around Denver, in the legal-weed state of Colorado:

"Pizza business is pretty good out here, believe it or not, due to some recent law changes," he said in 2014.

Anheuser-Busch InBev is used to pouring gobs of money into America's most-watched sports event: In the last decade, it has spent \$278 million just on Super Bowl ads, Kantar Media data show. Bud Light is also the official beer sponsor of the NFL — part of Anheuser-Busch InBev's six-year, \$1.2 billion deal with the league — and Anheuser-Busch sent 1,200 bottles of Bud to the Broncos' afterparty.

The beer giant also ran three pricey ads the old-fashioned way, during commercial breaks: A Helen Mirren anti-drunk-driving ad; a booming volley at craft and import brewers; and a quasi-political ad featuring Amy Schumer and Seth Rogen stumping for the "Bud Light Party."

Whether any of this stuff will make people drink more Bud remains to be seen: Bud and Bud Light sales have been slowing for years as drinkers move more toward craft beers. Wall Street, for what it's worth, was not clearly won over by Manning's hugs for Bud. Anheuser-Busch InBev's share price slid more than 2 percent Monday morning amid a broader stock selloff.

# Results don't tell whole Bruins story Miller

BY STEPHEN HARRIS  
BOSTON HERALD

Longtime Bruins general manager Harry Sinden once made an especially disparaging observation about the Boston media's analytical abilities: "Whenever we lose, the press says we played badly. And whenever we win, they say we played well."

The reply to that, then and now: Nonsense.

There will always be nuances in this game that define a team's performance, good or bad, beyond the mere final score.

To examine the Bruins of today, well, the results have been quite good lately — five of a possible six points since the All-Star break.

As for the quality of the team's play, there is still plenty of room for improvement. The B's got an off day on Super Bowl Sunday and practiced Monday to prep for the long-anticipated return of Milan Lucic, who comes to town Tuesday night with the big and rough Los Angeles Kings.

The B's then hit the road for a potentially pivotal six-game trip, opening on Thursday night in Winnipeg.

The Bruins have ended up in extra time in each of these last three games against a pair of teams (Toronto and Buffalo, twice) that, while very improved, are not likely to be taking part in this year's playoffs.

All three games were quite competitive. But to end up with an OT loss, a shootout win and an OT win — on the controversial penalty shot call in Saturday's 2-1 victory over the Sabres — suggests a B's team that just isn't making enough plays. The chances are there; the finish is not.

On the plus side, their team defense and effort have been acceptable lately, and



KEVIN HOFFMAN | USA TODAY

Boston Bruins head coach Claude Julien watches play from the bench during the first period against the Buffalo Sabres at First Niagara Center recently.

the accrued points were good enough to keep the team in third place in the Atlantic Division and fifth place in the Eastern Conference.

"I don't think we need to be negative here all the time on the hockey club," coach Claude Julien said shortly after Brad Marchand's confident penalty shot goal won Saturday's game.

"We come back from a two-goal deficit in Buffalo (Thursday), (and) we don't get that many accolades. But when we blow a two-goal lead (vs. Toronto last week), we hear about it."

One thing that's improved recently is the Bruins' third-period play. There had been far too many slips in the final period, leading to numerous squandered points. But it's been somewhat better recently, with the B's continuing to compete and avoid the costly mistakes.

"There's been no panic," said Julien. "When you don't blow those kinds of leads, you can't complain about your team. And when you don't blow them, but you also had some (scoring) opportunities, that's be-

cause we're doing something right."

Julien noted that his team had ample opportunities to score late in Saturday's game and avoid the situation where the poor call on the penalty shot proved the difference.

"Maybe if we score on two of those really top-notch opportunities we're sitting here and we didn't even go into overtime," Julien said. "We got a 3-1 win (and) everybody's happy, nobody's talking about that. So you've got to live in the moment."

Goalie Tuukka Rask would understand better than most that a win doesn't mean a team played great — and a loss doesn't necessarily mean the opposite. He thinks the B's remaining 30 games could all be like the last couple.

"After that Toronto game, we really wanted to tighten up defensively and eliminate the mistakes and (opposition) scoring chances," Rask said. "These last two games we've done that for the most part and been able to get the wins. As long as we keep things tight (in the defensive zone) and guys are

not wide open all the time, that's fine.

"But hopefully our confidence keeps building and we're going to be able to make more plays from our end and in the offensive zone. I think we could've made more plays breaking out and in the offensive zone."

**NOTES:** Goalie Malcolm Subban is in stable condition after fracturing his larynx before Saturday's Providence Bruins game in Portland, Maine, when he was hit in the throat by a puck in warmups. "He was transported to Maine Medical Center and was diagnosed with a fractured larynx," the Bruins said in a statement. "He stayed overnight at Maine Medical Center and was transported to Mass General Hospital on Sunday for further evaluation. He is in stable condition and will be sidelined indefinitely. The team will provide additional details when they become available."

he sealed it. Late in the fourth quarter, the Panthers trailed, 16-7, and desperately needed a drive. Newton dropped back from his own 30. Remmers tried to block Miller one-on-one, an unfair fight the entire game. Miller shoved Remmers in the chest, stepped around him and swatted the ball from Newton's hand as he cocked to the throw.

When the Broncos recovered, the faint hope Carolina held had evaporated. Newton may have held the ball too long — the rush took 3.25 seconds. But again, he may have not anticipated Miller being able to reach him that quick on a deep drop.

In between Miller's book-end sacks came perhaps his most dazzling rush of the night. Late in the third quarter, he helped set up a third-and-long by stopping a running play with defensive tackle Derek Wolfe and then beating Remmers one-on-one to force a scramble and incompletion. On that third down, Tolbert lined up to Remmers's left, giving Miller a longer path to Newton.

Miller sprinted around Tolbert, darted inside, spun around Remmers — the only spin move he used all night — and dove to grab Newton's legs. An offensive line coach grading the film would have a difficult time telling Remmers what he could have done differently. Miller was too freakishly fast to stop. Miller hadn't just unleashed a move he'd kept holstered all night. In a rush that last three seconds flat, Miller took 13 steps, his feet pumping like twin jackhammers.

Miller wrecked the Panthers' attack beyond his pass rushing. Miller was primarily responsible for eliminating

Olsen, Newton's most important offensive weapon. Olsen finished with four catches, only two of which came with Miller in the game, for a total of 14 yards and no first downs. The Broncos lined up Miller over Olsen constantly, and Miller limited him in three ways. On some pass plays, Olsen stayed in to help block Miller, his presence alone removing Olsen from the pattern. On others, Miller bumped Olsen at the line to disrupt his timing. Twice, Miller covered Olsen on a pattern. He blanketed him both times, once with a safety helping behind.

At times, it appeared Miller was showing off. On the Panthers' first drive of the second half, they marched into Denver territory. Wide receiver Jericho Cotchery lined up in the right slot, and Miller drifted out to cover him. With no safety help, Miller clung to Cotchery as he ran an out-and-up down the sideline. Newton threaded a pass to Cotchery's hands, but Miller knocked it away as Cotchery neared the goal line.

The Broncos prevailed for reasons beyond Miller. Newton seemed overly amped early, and he missed several open throws high. No quarterbacks thrive under pressure, but Newton's accuracy and poise suffered dramatically in the face of Denver's rush. The most overlooked quality of Denver's defense may have been the tackling ability of its secondary and the scarcity of Carolina yards after catch. Left tackle Michael Oher had an atrocious game — one of his two false start penalties came on one of the rare occasions Miller lined up over him.

All night long, though, the best player on the field was Miller. There was no other possible for choice for MVP, a fact that only became more clear the more you watched.

## Cimbollek

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C. The Eagles have good size, are well coached by Dwayne Carter and have been tough all season. A possible upsetter could be Schenck of East Millinocket, with high scorer Justin Thompson leading their way.

Class D boys is another tough one to pick as the top four teams have all have lost two to four games. I'll flip a coin on this one and go with the Easton Bears, and as a upsetter I'll go with Machias.

In the North girls tourney, I like Edward Little as the champ in Class AA with Bangor lurking to be the upsetter.

In Class A North girls, the pick has to be unbeaten and defending Class A state champion Lawrence. A pos-

sible upsetter is Gardiner.

Class B is another tough pick and features parity. The winner could be Houlton, Mount Desert Island or Winslow. I'm going with No. 1 seed Houlton as the Shiretowners have the chance to win two championships in two different classes after winning in Class C last season. Because of its tourney experience the team that could have the best chance to be the upsetter is Presque Isle.

In Class C, Fort Fairfield and Narraguagus each only have one loss and are the one and two seeds, respectively. I like Fort Fairfield and my upset special in this class is the always well-coached Dexter Tigers under Jody Grant.

In Class D North girls, there are again several evenly-balanced teams. Of the top four teams, two have four losses and two have five

losses. There's little pressure on a very young Southern Aroostook, which still has plenty of good basketball in the seasons ahead, so the Warriors are my pick to win. Central Aroostook is the underdog as the Panthers split with Southern Aroostook in the battle of the County rivals.

Here are some other factors that can determine the winners in each class:

— A team will have to survive a poor shooting game to win all three games  
— A team peaking in February will be tough to beat, as will a team playing good defense

— How well a team will deal with foul trouble, unexpected illness or injuries  
Good luck to all the teams and enjoy the tourney.

Bob Cimbollek is a retired high school basketball coach and athletic director.

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