

LA'ROI GLOVER



On the field, in the violent world of professional football, time as we know it is altered. When NFL rookies compare professional play to college play, the most common difference they cite is how fast the game is, how everything seems to speed up. To get a take on how an NFL player perceives time, both on and off the field, I talked with La'Roi Glover, defensive tackle of the St. Louis Rams and six-time Pro Bowl player.

"On the football field, you are taught not to look at the clock or the scoreboard," Glover says. "You are supposed to live in the moment and take advantage of the opportunities in the now. On the other hand, off the field, our time is really structured. This time is lunch; this meeting is at that time. Off the field, I need to wear a watch so I

don't get fined."

Glover's appreciation of timepieces started early, after his father began buying him Mickey Mouse souvenir watches. The first watch he bought for himself, however, was a Casio that could take pictures. "I thought that was pretty cool," he remembers. "In my rookie year in the NFL, I really started buying watches. I like bigger watches, and over the years I have become familiar with the different brands. My first real watch was a Rolex, probably because everyone else had a similar watch."

"Then, I was at a jewelry store in New Orleans, and I saw a watch that caught my eye, an Hublot—it was a classic style with a diamond bezel," he continues. "I was younger then, so I liked the



La'Roi Glover in action on the field and the Royal Oak Offshore Arnold Schwarzenegger chronograph in 18 karat yellow gold by Audemars Piguet.



bling. I never bought another diamond bezel watch. Now, I feel it's too flashy, and I don't want to draw that much attention to myself."

Glover has about 25 watches, some of which he plans to trade when purchasing a new watch. "I usually wear different watches for different occasions; it just depends on how I am feeling," he says. "One day it might be a Panerai, then an Audemars the next day, and then it might be my white gold IWC Big Pilot. I keep most of my watches in a watch winder, and I keep others in my safe. Also, I have a Nike watch that controls my iPod, so I can work out and listen to my music."

For Glover, who doesn't like jewelry, watches are the only accessory he can wear to showcase his sense of style. "A watch says a lot about the man who wears it," he concludes. Some people buy watches as investments, others because they enjoy wearing them. Glover buys them for the joy of ownership and for the prospect of keeping them for generations to come. "Hopefully, one day I can pass them down to my son, and he can pass them along to his sons, make them real family heirlooms," he says.

During football season, time rules Glover's life, so a watch is critical. In the off season, he is actively involved in the foundation he started in 1999, the La'Roi Glover Foundation, which provides scholarships to students in San Diego and aids community organizations that help children. The foundation also provides two

annual scholarships to graduates of Point Loma High School, Glover's alma mater.

Since arriving in St. Louis (he was first drafted by the Oakland Raiders, then played in New Orleans and Dallas), Glover has been working with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri in the "Tackle the Issues" campaign. In other words, on the field or off, Glover is a busy man. "I always set my watches five or ten minutes fast, so I am never late," he says. "That is one of the benefits of appreciating time. I don't like it when people are late; it's a sign of disrespect."

What's Glover's next watch purchase? He's on the fence, looking at a few brands—Audemars Piguet, IWC and Panerai. "I am just learning more about the history of the watch brands I like," he says. "My love of fine watches started with Audemars Piguet, in particular the Arnold Schwarzenegger limited edition pieces. I have a perpetual calendar, an Audemars Piguet, which I really love. I have also been really taken with Panerai. Now, I am really liking the IWC Big Pilot watches. I prefer mechanical watches. I really like tourbillons, but I haven't decided which one to buy."

No matter which timepiece Glover chooses, it will undoubtedly signal his character and good taste. ❖

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