

RENO HAPPENINGS

Corley retires from pro football

HEMPSTEAD, N.Y.--Former University of Nevada-Reno running back Anthony Corley announced his retirement from the National Football League Monday.

Corley, who was recently signed by the New York Jets, originally was signed by the Pittsburgh Steelers as a free agent in 1984 and gained 89 yards on 18 carries. Released by the Steelers, he was picked up by the San Diego Chargers last year and played in four games, mostly on special teams.

Corley was the Big Sky Conference's leading rusher in 1982 and 1983, gaining 2,677 career yards. As a junior, he rushed for 1,198 yards and added 1,006 as a senior.

Richie: Degree comes before contract

Some stories linger in the news. The Texas Rangers' scout wanted to make sure that this was a story that didn't stick around beyond its time.

All-America outfielder Rob Richie of the University of Nevada-Reno won't be signing with the Rangers.

"We're not going to sign him," said Rangers' scout Jack Hays of Portland, Ore.

Only something drastic, unforeseeable could change that, Hays said.

The Rangers selected Richie, a first team The Sporting News All-America who batted .407 with 48 runs batted in this year, in the fourth-round interest, and reportedly, offered him second round-type bonus money, maybe in the

\$50,000 range, although it can't be officially confirmed.

It's a classic story of two sides that couldn't meet in the middle. It wasn't money. Richie has said that all along.

"We've met every demand he's had," Hays said.

"Everything he told us he wanted we've given him. It wasn't that easy. I had to keep going back to my club to do those things. He more or less committed to us he would go play if we would do those things.

"From our point of view, I misread his intention from the beginning. We came to the top of the pyramid. It's either time to go out and play or not."

Hays said he became convinced that Richie didn't want to play professional baseball, that it wasn't his top priority.

It turned out that the scout was correct.

All along, Hays said he had believed that Richie could be signed. But now, the left-handed batting Richie will return to UNR to play his senior season.

"The whole situation baffles me," Hays said. "I've never run into a situation like this."

The scout said Richie had a variety of reasons for not

signing. One had been an injury to the player's left shoulder, his non-throwing shoulder. But then Richie was given approval by a doctor to play, the scout said.

Richie listens politely when he's told that the Rangers didn't believe he wanted to play pro baseball.

"That's interesting," Richie said Thursday. "I didn't say one way or another. I just said I was going back to school."

"To me, I've always had the desire to graduate. After three years, I just feel I have to graduate."

The criminal justice major is expected to graduate in May. If he does, he will have earned his degree in four years. In an era when college academic careers often last longer, four years is applaudable for an athlete or non-athlete.

As the discussions with the Rangers wore on, Richie, a former Hug High School athlete, said earning his degree as quickly as he could was increasingly on his mind.

He had always anticipated going to the university for four years and graduating. He hadn't thought about going to school for three



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years, signing a pro contract and then finishing when he could.

"Basically, it was professional baseball versus a degree. It didn't have anything to do with the Rangers."

Nothing personal. In the days before the draft, it appeared likely that the Chicago Cubs would draft Richie. Their scout, Wally Walker or Reno, closely followed the player's career, knew him well and was impressed with Richie's talent.

In the days after the Rangers chose Richie, there was speculation that Texas might find the player more difficult to sign than Chicago would have because of the foundation the Cubs had laid.

But Thursday, Richie said if Chicago had drafted him he probably wouldn't have signed with the Cubs, either.

He was comfortable with the Cubs. But as he pondered the Rangers' offer, he became more uncomfortable with the idea of leaving school.

"That's what it came down to, the feeling was, 'What's important to me?' The more time I had to think about it, the more it was important to go to school."

Now, he's a college player for another year. After batting .407 this year, an encore performance as a senior would seem difficult.

"I'm just really looking to play hard. I'll take what happens from there."

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