

STRAWBERRY ENTERS REHAB CENTER

Mets' Star Still Faces Misdemeanor Charges

NEW YORK — Darryl Strawberry entered a treatment center for alcohol rehabilitation Saturday, the latest chapter in the story of the New York Mets struggling star.

Strawberry jailed last week in a dispute with his wife, voluntarily checked into the Smithers Center in New York shortly before noon. It is the same facility that treated teammate Dwight Gooden for cocaine trouble in 1987.

Last week, Strawberry was arrested at his home in Los Angeles after allegedly hitting his wife and threatening her with a pistol. He spent a short time in jail before posting \$12,000 bond, and a hearing will be held Friday to determine if misdemeanor charges will be filed.

Two days before the incident, blood tests showed Strawberry was the father of



Darryl Strawberry

a child born to a Missouri woman in 1988. He did not dispute the finding, and a court is determining how much support he will pay.

The Mets said it was too early to tell how long their five-time All-Star would be at Smithers. The average length of stay there is approximately 28 days. Gooden

spent a month there and Mets reserve catcher Mackey Sasser was admitted for a month last year because of an alcohol problem. "Our first concern is for Darryl's welfare," Mets executive vice president Frank Cashen said. "Dr. —Allan) Lans has worked closely with Darryl and has spent several days with him in Los Angeles this week, and we are confident this will be the best thing for Darryl."

Lans is director of the Mets' employee assistance program. He is associated with Smithers.

Lans went to Los Angeles on Wednesday and returned to New York with Strawberry on Friday night. Strawberry spent the night at Lans' home in Teaneck, N.J., and was admitted to Smithers in the morning.

"I don't really know if Darryl's had a drinking problem for any length of time or not," Mets vice president Al Harazin said. "I've seen Darryl take a drink, but I've seen lots of other people take a drink, too."

Strawberry, 28 next month, was the National League rookie of the year in 1983 with the Mets. He was touted

as baseball's next superstar and has played that way at times, although his talent has often been tainted with trouble.

He has feuded with teammates and Manager Davey Johnson, fought with opponents and been fined several times by the Mets. His disputes with his wife Lisa, 25, have been well publicized and the couple briefly separated in 1987.

"We know what he has been through during the off-season this winter, and we just hope things can start to get better for him now," teammate Ron Darling said.

Strawberry currently is in a contract dispute with the Mets. He is seeking a four-year, \$12 million deal, but Cashen recently said Strawberry has not lived up to his potential and has not performed like a \$3 million-a-year player.

Strawberry slumped to .225 last season with 29 home runs and 77 RBI. In 1987, he hit 39 homers with 104 RBI and stole 36 bases. In 1988, he led the league with 39 home runs and had 101 RBI, although he batted just .238 in the second half of the season after hitting .301 in the first half.

Notre Dame Joins NBC

Notre Dame bucked the College Football Association and became the first college to sell its home football games to a major network when it agreed Monday to a five-year contract with NBC

that begins in 1991.

ABC had ESPN thought they had acquired rights to Notre Dame home games when they agreed to exclusive contracts with the CFA, which consists of 64 schools.

Ware Didn't Break Rules

HOUSTON — Heisman Trophy winner Andre Ware's weekend trip to the Super Bowl as a guest of Houston Oilers quarterback Warren Moon did not violate NCAA rules, nor did Ware's attendance at a party hosted by Moon's agent, the NCAA says.

Rick Evrard, legislative services director of the NCAA said none of Ware's actions, including acceptance of Super Bowl tickets, would jeopardize Ware's eligibility at the University of Houston.

Books Favor Jordan

If Magic Johnson of the Los Angeles Lakers and Michael Jordan of the Chicago Bulls meet in their proposed one-on-one shootout, there is little doubt who will be the odds-on favorite to win the event.



Michael Jordan

Art Manteris, vice president of the Las Vegas Hilton Race and Sports Super Book, said Jordan will be a 2½ to 1 favorite to win such a competition against Johnson, whose abilities are better suited to a team-oriented style of play, according to many basketball experts.



Andre Ware



Talking Violence

It has been a strange year in the National Football League. We've seen a lot of great football games and the debuts of some exciting rookies. But when folks look back at this season, they might remember it more for the words of a few head coaches than for great plays! It is talk that could really hurt professional football.

"Bounty hunting" suddenly became a football term. Dallas Cowboys head coach Jimmy Johnson accused Philadelphia Eagles head coach Buddy Ryan of offering cash bonuses to his players for putting the Cowboys' kicker, Luis Zendejas, out of a game. Harsh words flew back and forth between the two coaches on nightly sports reports, forcing NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue to order an official inquiry into the charges.

The league looked, but found nothing. That the league came up empty-handed didn't surprise me, since I feel that there never was any bounty hunt. Players have always been awarded for great plays. In college, we would get a star to stick on our helmet or a malt at film sessions. NFL teams like to give out game balls for great efforts. But cash? I've never heard of it. Let's face it, a couple hundred dollars is small change to these guys. As for the hit on Zendejas, it was clean. He was one of 22 players on the football field and was wearing the opposing team's jersey. He should have been hit.

But it was Buddy Ryan's image as a tough talker with little respect for other teams that helped make the "bounty hunt" a big deal.

Then we had Sam Wyche and his Cincinnati Bengals purposely running up the score on the Houston Oilers, all out of spite for Houston head coach Jerry Glanville. The 61-7 score didn't bother me much. Everything was going right for the Bengals that day. I can't blame them for wanting to score touchdowns—I still share the NFL record for most touchdowns in one game. But when Wyche kept going after the game, criticizing every aspect of the team he had just defeated, he crossed the line. Now I guarantee that the next time those two teams meet, there will be at least four fights. And it will be over Wyche's comments, not the score.

The media has been blamed for egging coaches on, for trying to get guys like Mike Ditka to say something outrageous that will look great in print or on television. There is some truth to that. But there's a point when the talk by head coaches starts to distract from the game of football. It creates a mood that can only hurt the NFL. Football has always been a rough game, but now all the talk is threatening to make it into a violent game. **ll**

Gale Sayers is considered one of the greatest running backs of all time. The former Chicago Bear is a member of the National Football League's Hall of Fame.

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