

# Contrite Owens apologizes

MOORESTOWN, N.J. (AP) - For once, Terrell Owens put aside his pride, admitted he was wrong and pleaded for a second chance with the Philadelphia Eagles.

The team appeared unmoved.

A contrite Owens, hoping to overturn his dismissal from the Eagles, on Tuesday apologized to coach Andy Reid, quarterback Donovan McNabb, the team's owner and president, and fans.

"The mentality that I have, my greatest strength can also be my greatest weakness," Owens said, reading a statement outside his house. "I'm a fighter. I've always been and I'll always be. I fight for what I think is right. In doing so, I alienated a lot of my fans and my teammates."

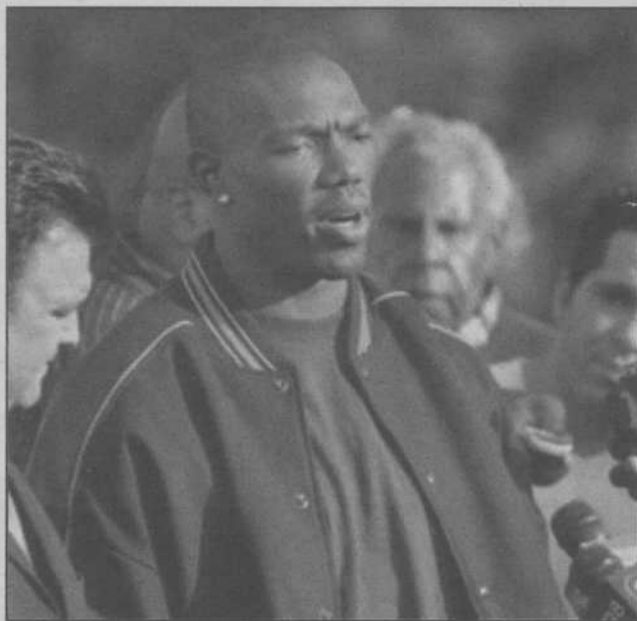
"This is very painful for me to be in this position," he said. "I know in my heart that I can help the team win the Super Bowl and not only be a dominant player, but also be a team player. I can bring that."

His agent, Drew Rosenhaus, said Owens made a public apology in hopes of returning to the Eagles immediately.

"We hope he plays again for the Philadelphia Eagles," Rosenhaus said. "We hope he plays right away. We hope he plays against the Dallas Cowboys" on Monday night.

Team spokesman Derek Boyko said the Eagles had no comment.

A day earlier, Owens was



Philadelphia Eagles receiver Terrell Owens reads a statement to the media outside his Moorestown, N.J., home Tuesday after being suspended by the Eagles the day before.

told by the team not to return this season because of "a large number of situations that accumulated over a long period of time," Reid said.

He said Owens had been "warned repeatedly about the consequences of his actions."

The All-Pro wide receiver didn't play in Sunday night's 17-10 loss at Washington, and will remain suspended for three more games without pay. After that, the Eagles plan to deactivate him for the rest of the season.

NFL spokesman Greg Aiello said Tuesday that the players' union has filed a grievance on behalf of Owens seeking to overturn the suspension. It will be heard Nov. 18 before

arbitrator Richard Bloch.

Owens was suspended Saturday, two days after he said the Eagles showed "a lack of class" for not publicly recognizing his 100th career touchdown catch in a game on Oct. 23.

In the same interview with ESPN.com, Owens said the Eagles would be better off with Green Bay's Brett Favre at quarterback instead of McNabb.

Owens apologized to the organization for making those comments, but didn't address McNabb, even though the statement he read from included a direct apology to the five-time Pro Bowl quarterback.

This time, Owens said he was sorry not only to Reid and

McNabb, but also to Eagles president Joe Banner and owner Jeffrey Lurie.

"I would like to reiterate my respect for Donovan McNabb as a quarterback and as a teammate," Owens said. "I apologize to him for any comments that may have been negative."

The Eagles are 4-4 this season and last in the NFC East. Last year, they were the top team in the conference, going 13-3 on the way to the Super Bowl.

"It really hurts me not to be part of the team anymore," Owens said. "I came here to help the Eagles get to the Super Bowl and win the big game."

Owens' relationship with the Eagles took a drastic turn after he fired longtime agent David Joseph, hired Rosenhaus and demanded a new contract just one season into the seven-year, \$48.97 million deal he signed when he came to Philadelphia in March 2004.

While Rosenhaus spoke to reporters and refused to answer several questions, Owens stood stoically alongside a burly bodyguard.

He flashed his trademark smile and winked at a reporter

## Lakers star Bryant, wife expecting second child

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Los Angeles Lakers star Kobe Bryant and his wife, Vanessa, are expecting the couple's second child in May, spokesman Rob Pelinka said Tuesday. The Bryants have a daughter, Natalia, who turns 3 in January.

"In addition to their excitement, Kobe and Vanessa have been sharing a lot of laughs because after hitting game-winning shots for the Lakers, Kobe has been making late-night food runs for his wife's pregnancy cravings, only to get home with the food and find out her craving has changed," Pelinka said.

The story was first reported by "Entertainment Tonight." The 27-year-old Bryant is beginning his 10th season with the Lakers.

who asked Rosenhaus what he's done for his client other than have him kicked off the team.

Rosenhaus skipped over that question and criticized the media for being "unfair" to Owens.

"There are players in the NFL that are arrested who violate the program when it comes to drugs and substance abuse and they are not punished as severely as him," Rosenhaus said.

Owens clashed with management this summer and earned a one-week exile from training camp after a heated dispute with Reid that followed a shouting match with offensive coordinator Brad

Childress.

Owens forced a trade to the Eagles last year after eight seasons with the 49ers and invigorated the offense with his superior skills. He had 77 catches for 1,200 yards and 14 TDs in 14 games.

Soon after Philadelphia lost to New England in the Super Bowl, Owens took his first shot at McNabb, suggesting he was tired in the fourth quarter of the loss.

McNabb responded harshly and the two didn't speak for a prolonged period in training camp. They eventually reconciled their relationship and performed well together on the field - Owens has 47 catches for 763 yards and six TDs this season.

## Minority hiring assessment gives campuses black eye

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) - More than half of the 30 schools making football coaching changes last year received grades of "C, D or F" when this year's minority hiring report card was released on Wednesday.

This is the third year the Black Coaches Association has issued the report card.

Grades are based on results in categories that include the percentage of minorities involved in the hiring process, the number of minority candidates who received interviews and the schools' contacts with either BCA executive director Floyd Keith or the chairman of the NCAA's Minority Opportunity and Interests Committee. Seventeen schools are expected to receive average, below average or failing grades.

But the report showed little change among the number of high-scoring schools in Division I-A. The 2004 report card showed that although only one school actually hired a minority coach, six received overall grades of "A." This year's report card indicates the number of schools receiving an "A" remained about the same, while the number of schools receiving a "B" increased.

Grades for individual schools were expected to be made available Wednesday.

In Division I-AA, there was a decline among the top-scoring schools. In 2004, two schools received an "A" compared with none this year, and the number of schools getting a "B" also dropped.

Keith is advising student-athletes to use the report card when making decisions about attending college and said in a written statement that if there is not significant progress next year, the BCA would consider legal action against schools based on hiring inequity.

Only three Division I-A football programs have Black coaches - Sylvester Croom of Mississippi State, Karl Dorrell of UCLA and Tyrone Willingham of Washington. Willingham, who was fired by Notre Dame last year, was the only Black coach hired this year after the 2004 season.

Lou West, who was hired by Indiana State in January, is the only Black head coach in Division I-AA at a non-historically Black college or institution.

NCAA President Myles Brand has urged athletic directors to take a closer look at minority coaching candidates.

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7 Teams	92/1	92/1
8 Teams	180/1	180/1

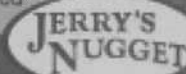


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