

Owens, Eagles part ways amid acrimony

(AP) Terrell Owens is free to play for any team willing to have him.

The Philadelphia Eagles released the exiled Owens on Tuesday, ending a tumultuous, two-year relationship with the wide receiver.

Owens was due a \$5 million roster bonus on Wednesday, so the Eagles had to cut him or trade him before then to avoid paying him the money.

The move was a formality because Owens was kicked off the team in November following a series of incidents and infractions, including repeated criticism of quarterback Donovan McNabb.

The Eagles announced the cut in a one-sentence statement. Team officials said they would not comment.

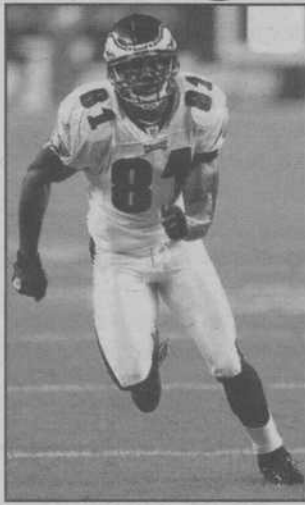
Owens' publicist, Kim Etheredge, and his agent, Drew Rosenhaus, both declined to speculate about his future.

The Eagles gave Owens and Rosenhaus permission to talk with other teams in January.

The former All-Pro met with the Denver Broncos, Miami and Dallas reportedly have interest in Owens, and Kansas City president Carl Peterson has said he'd consider giving him a one-year, incentive-laden deal.

The Cowboys released Keyshawn Johnson on Tuesday, possibly clearing the way for Owens.

Owens helped the Eagles reach the Super Bowl in his first season in Philadelphia, but his problems started



TERRELL OWENS

when he demanded a new contract just one year into a seven-year, \$48.97 million deal.

He criticized management, feuded with McNabb, violated team policies and eventually was banished seven games into last season. An arbitrator upheld the Eagles' decision to suspend Owens without pay for four games and deactivate him the final five games.

Owens was set to earn base salaries of \$770,000 plus \$7.5 million in bonuses in 2006, \$5.5 million in 2007, \$6.5 million in 2008, \$7.5 million in 2009, and \$8.5 million in 2010.

It's unlikely he'll get a similar deal from another team.

The Eagles were 17-5 in games Owens played, including playoffs, and 4-9 without him. They finished 6-10 last year, missing the playoffs for the first time since 1999.

Owens came to the Eagles after eight often controversial seasons in San Francisco

with a reputation for being a playmaker. However, his selfish behavior and flamboyant touchdown celebrations often overshadowed his performance on the field.

He caught 77 passes for 1,200 yards and 14 touchdowns in 2004, and made a valiant return from ankle surgery to play in Philadelphia's loss to New England in the Super Bowl.

From there, it was downhill.

Owens took his first verbal shot at McNabb last

April, suggesting the five-time Pro Bowl quarterback was tired in the fourth quarter against the Patriots.

McNabb responded harshly and the two didn't speak for a prolonged period in training camp.

They briefly reconciled their relationship and performed well together on the field — Owens had 47 catches for 763 yards and six TDs in seven games last year.

Owens was sent home for one week from training camp last August after a heated dis-

pute with coach Andy Reid that followed a shouting match with then-offensive coordinator Brad Childress.

Owens also annoyed the Eagles by breaking the dress code on road trips, parking in coaches' spots at the team's practice facility and sleeping through one team meeting, not bringing his playbook to another and refusing to open the playbook at another meeting.

In early November, the team had enough of Owens' antics after he again criti-

cized McNabb, called the organization "classless" and fought with former teammate Hugh Douglas.

One day after the Eagles told him to go home for good, a contrite Owens pleaded for another chance in a public apology outside his home in Moorestown, N.J., but the team was unmoved.

A five-time Pro Bowl receiver, Owens has 716 catches for 10,535 yards and 103 touchdowns, including two rushing scores, in 10 seasons in the NFL.

Former baseball star Gooden jailed in Fla.

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) - Former baseball star Dwight Gooden was arrested Tuesday on charges of violating the terms of his probation.

The 41-year-old pleaded guilty in November to speeding away from police after a DUI traffic stop in August 2005 and was sentenced to three years probation.

On Tuesday he went to a regular meeting with a probation officer, where he admitted to using cocaine, according to Jo Ellyn Rackleff, a spokeswoman for the Department of Corrections.

"He went to his regular meeting with his probation officer, admitted to the officer that he had used cocaine. She did a drug screen, and he tested positive for cocaine," Rackleff said. Gooden was then arrested and taken to the Hillsborough County Jail, Rackleff said. He is being held without bond, according to Assistant State Attorney Pam Bondi.

"We will be requesting that he remain in jail on no bond because he violated probation," Bondi said.

Gooden was voted the 1984 NL Rookie of the Year and 1985 NL Cy Young Award while pitching for the New York Mets. He went 194-112 with a 3.51 ERA before retiring in 2001. He also pitched for the Yankees, Cleveland Indians, Houston Astros and Tampa Bay Devil Rays.

Gooden will make his first appearance in court Wednesday, Bondi said.

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