

Pacman, Henry tagged with NFL suspensions

(AP) -The punishment was aimed squarely at Adam "Pacman" Jones and Chris Henry. The message went far beyond them, to all NFL players. In suspending Jones for the 2007 season and Henry for eight games, Commissioner Roger Goodell not only cracked down on two of the league's most troublesome players on Tuesday, he also sent a warning to everyone: Mess with the law and your job's on the line.

"I must emphasize to you that this is your last opportunity to salvage your NFL career," Goodell wrote the two players, emphasizing they must end their wayward behavior to have a chance to play in the league again.

He also hit them where it hurts — their wallets. Jones, who plays for Tennessee, will forfeit his \$1,292,500 salary; Henry, who plays for Cincinnati, will lose \$217,500.

Jones and Henry, former teammates at West Virginia, were suspended under the old disciplinary policy.

While he was meting out penalties, Goodell also announced the league's new, tougher personal conduct policy that will allow longer fines and suspensions for players and also could penalize teams, perhaps by taking away draft picks.

"It is a privilege to represent the NFL, not a right," Goodell said. "These players and all members of our league have to make the right choices and decisions in their conduct on a consistent basis."

Jones' off-field conduct has included 10 instances in which he was interviewed by police. The most recent took place during the NBA All-Star weekend here. Police recommended felony and misdemeanor charges against Jones after a fight and shooting at a strip club that paralyzed one man. Police are still investigating.

Henry, one of nine Bengals arrested last season, was arrested four times in a 14-month span, resulting in two benchings by Bengals coach Marvin Lewis and a two-game league suspension.

"The message, I think, is that the league office is very, very serious about conduct in the league, and that it's important for us," said Indianapolis coach Tony Dungy, who spends at least one day

a week counseling his players on staying out of trouble.

"I think it's a good message to send to everyone, not just the players but everyone around the team."

Jones' suspension could be longer or shorter depending on developments in the local case, an official with the knowledge of the details of the suspension said. The official requested anonymity because that case is pending. It could be as short as 10 games, if Jones meets the conditions set by the NFL and is cleared in a pending case in Georgia, as well as locally, where he hasn't been charged.

Jones' attorney, Manny Arora, declined comment.

Jones' mother, Deborah Jones, said: "I just pray that this can be changed. This is not fair for him. It's just not fair."

Goodell's hard line could be trouble for Chicago's Tank Johnson, currently serving four months in jail for violating probation after police raided his home and found six unregistered firearms. League officials said Goodell plans to meet with Johnson when he's released from jail.

While stiff, Jones' punishment is not unprecedented. Approximately two dozen players have been suspended for a year or longer, going back to 1963. That's when Paul Hornung and Alex Karras were suspended for one season by Pete Rozelle for gambling.

Last season, Miami's Ricky Williams sat out the year for violating the NFL's substance abuse policy and Cincinnati's Odell Thurman was suspended for four games for skipping a drug test and then was banned for the entire season after pleading no contest following a drunken driving arrest.

The Titans and Bengals supported the latest suspensions.

"While we regret the circumstances that called for it, it's good for both Chris and the Bengals to have the matter resolved," Lewis said. "Our team will move forward, and now it is up to Chris to acquire a more mature understanding of his responsibilities as a player for the Bengals and a representative of the NFL."

Goodell and Gene Upshaw, executive director

of the NFL Players Association, met with a group of players in February and again last week and agreed the league needed a stronger disciplinary policy.

"The NFL Players Association and the Player Advisory Council believe that these are steps that the commissioner needs to take, and we support the policy," Upshaw said. "It is important (See Pacman, Page 11)

Jackson rare items auction in Las Vegas

LAS VEGAS (AP) - More than 1,100 Jackson family items are set for auction here next month, but a representative for Michael Jackson says the pop star is considering legal action to stop the sale.

"Mr. Jackson was not aware and he is extremely upset that his memorabilia was included amongst the memorabilia that is being auctioned off," said spokeswoman Raymone K. Bain.

The Jacksons Auction is scheduled May 30-31 at the Hard Rock Hotel Resort.

Guernsey's auction house said items include Michael Jackson's gold record for

his "Thriller" album, handwritten lyrics for The Jackson Five hit "ABC" and a "Victory Tour" program signed by Jackson family members.

Arlan Ettinger, founder and president of Guernsey's, compared the sale to an auction of Elvis Presley/Graceland memorabilia he conducted in Las Vegas in 1999.

"It certainly is in that sphere of landmark, high-profile, extraordinary auctions," Ettinger told The Associated Press.

Michael Jackson, 48, has been living in Las Vegas while he evaluates proposals. (See Jackson, Page 7)

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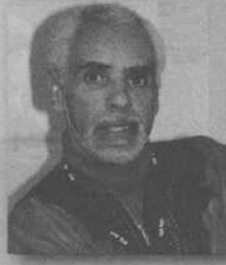
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