

# Manziel To Sit Half Of A&M's Opener Against Rice

HOUSTON (AP) — Johnny Football's season will start a little late.

Johnny Manziel was suspended for the first half of Texas A&M's opening game against Rice on Saturday for what the school called an "inadvertent" violation of NCAA rules by signing autographs.

The penalty appears to have brought a quick end to an investigation that could have ruined the seventh-ranked Aggies' upcoming season.

The school issued a statement Wednesday saying it declared the Heisman Trophy winner ineligible and that the NCAA agreed to reinstate Manziel after he sits out the first half against the underdog Owls.

"I am proud of the way both Coach Sumlin and Johnny handled this situation, with integrity and honesty," Texas A&M Chancellor John Sharp said in the statement. "We all take the Aggie Code of Honor very seriously and there is no evidence that either the university or Johnny violated that code."

The quarterback was being investigated by the NCAA for allegedly accepting money for signing autographs for memorabilia brokers, a violation of NCAA rules that could have led to a much longer suspension. ESPN first reported the allegations against Manziel earlier this month.

According to the state-

ment, Texas A&M and the NCAA "confirmed there is no evidence Manziel received money in exchange for autographs based on currently available information and statements by Manziel."

Conditions for reinstatement include Manziel discussing his actions with teammates and A&M revising how it educates student-athletes about signing autographs.

"Student-athletes are often asked for autographs from fans, but unfortunately, some individuals' sole motivation in seeking an autograph is for resale," said Kevin Lennon, NCAA vice president of academic and membership affairs. "It is important that

schools are cognizant and educate student-athletes about situations in which there is a strong likelihood that the autograph seeker plans to resell the items."

He likely will be replaced in the starting lineup by either junior Matt Joeckel or freshman Kenny Hill. Joeckel has thrown only 11 passes in his college career.

The news of Manziel's suspension was the talk of Twitter on Wednesday afternoon, with many questioning the length of the suspension. Former NFL and MLB star Deion Sanders was incredulous at the brevity of Manziel's suspension, after Dez Bryant was

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## Huskers Award 7 Blackshirts

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Seven Nebraska players have been named "Blackshirts" and awarded the black practice jerseys that traditionally go to defensive starters.

Coach Bo Pelini usually waits until at least the middle of the season to name Blackshirts. Defensive coordinator John Papuchis said Wednesday that some of the veterans deserved the status because of their willingness to help young players, their effort on the practice field and their attitudes in the meeting room.

The Blackshirts are senior defensive lineman Jason Ankrah and Thad Randle, sophomore linebacker David Santos, senior cornerbacks Stanley Jean-Baptiste and Ciente Evans, junior cornerback Josh Mitchell and junior safety Corey Cooper.

Nebraska's defense is known nationally as the Blackshirts. The tradition started in 1962, when Bob Devaney differentiated the defensive starters by putting them in the black practice tops.

## Out Of Step



Los Angeles Dodgers' Yasiel Puig, right, and Adrian Gonzalez dance to salsa music played on the speakers in the ninth inning of a MLB game against the Los Angeles Dodgers at Marlins Park in Miami, Fla., Thursday, August 22, 2013. Puig has danced to his own beat at times for the Dodgers, something columnist Bill Dwyre says has the rookie out of step the the team.

## Dwyre: In Dodgers' Waltz, Puig's Missteps Are Quite Noticeable

BY BILL DWYRE

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LOS ANGELES (MCT) — The Los Angeles Dodgers play very good baseball. Wednesday, they also did some pretty nifty dance steps.

Call it the Yasiel Puig two-step.

On a day when Ricky Nolasco pitched his second straight gem, the Dodgers beat the Chicago Cubs, 4-0, Hanley Ramirez and Andre Ethier hit home runs, and 38,851 braved oppressive heat to watch and celebrate a team cruising toward the postseason, Puig was the story.

Sad it had to be that way. Sad that a 22-year-old Cuban defector with a \$42 million contract and so much talent it defies description can turn a perfect Dodgers day into one with an asterisk.

He started the game in right field, batting leadoff. He walked in the first inning, struck out swinging in the fourth and was replaced in right field in the fifth by manager Don Mattingly.

Yes, replaced in the fifth inning. No injury. A manager's decision. A star player, batting .347 coming in, who was two for five the day before and was 11 for 20 with two home runs against the Cubs this season,

was suddenly on the bench.

Hard to argue that wasn't strange.

The press box buzzed. Those in the stadium paying attention had to wonder.

In the broadcast booth, Vin Scully, who has seen a few things in his 64 years with the Dodgers and is a master at helping viewers understand without shoving it down their throats, tells a story about Gil Hodges managing the New York Mets. Hodges saw something he didn't like about the way an outfielder was playing and took him out of the game by marching onto the field and escorting him back to the dugout.

Hint, hint, listeners.

Those fans who hadn't taken note of Puig's absence couldn't miss it in the Dodgers' fifth. With men on first and third, the leadoff hitter was up; only it was Skip Schumaker, not the now-fabled No. 66. Schumaker singled between first and second to extend the Dodgers' lead to the final 4-0.

Was Mattingly that much of a genius, or just lucky?

The game ended, the media descended and the fancy footwork began. Nolasco, apparently missing one of the dance lessons, said of Puig, "What he did was unaccept-

able. ... He's young. He's going to have to learn."

When asked what it was that Puig did that was unacceptable, Nolasco said he wasn't sure, but he would stand with "the skipper" in doing what he had to do.

After a longer-than-normal delay, the Skipper showed up and did a masterful fox trot. Mattingly said he put Schumaker into the game for Puig because "Skip gave us the best chance to win ... today." He said the same thing about six more times.

He was asked whether Puig's failure to slide into second base to break up a double play in the first inning was the cause of the substitution. Mattingly said he would prefer a slide, but that sometimes, a player going in standing up hinders the play even more than a slide.

The news conference, which clearly would generate little tangible information, prattled on with Mattingly saying things such as:

"I see good in all my players."

"I talked to him (Puig) like I talk to my kids."

"I prefer keeping things in-house."

To be clear, Mattingly is not a reticent quote or an uncooperative guy. This was uncharacteristic, but then, so is much about Puig.

He is exuberant, unpredictable, becoming somewhat of an annoyance to some of his teammates, and generally, a mysterious guy. The fast cars, the occasional tardiness, the hotdogging slides into home plate in a walkoff win, even the body language during a game, can wear thin. So can the number of times the organization, including teammates, can use the "boys will be boys" rationalization with him.

"We were all young here once," Ethier told the *Los Angeles Times* Dylan Hernandez on Wednesday. "You're going to make mistakes. ... You're going to have to let it take its course and let him learn for himself."

The Dodgers' investment in Puig is huge. So must be their concern.

Puig said he was taken out because he "was not prepared properly for some pitches." He said once the manager talked to him, he understood the decision.

Maybe that's all it was. Maybe this was the media making a mountain out of a molehill. Maybe the Dodgers will have successfully waltzed through this one.

Maybe. But don't expect Mattingly to tolerate having to be this light on his feet again.

## Monk, Casper Among Newly Enshrined In College Hall

BY GEORGE HENRY

Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Art Monk is best remembered as a star receiver for the Washington Redskins.

Monk's four-year college career, however, is less recognized outside Syracuse, where he serves on the school's board of trustees.

"What I did in college does get overshadowed, so something like this is great," Monk said. "You get to step back out into the forefront and say, 'Hey, I wasn't just a great professional athlete, but I also did some things in college that were worth being recognized.'"

Monk, Ty Detmer, Dave Casper, Charles Alexander, Art Shell and Jimmy Johnson were among 24 former players and coaches enshrined into the College Football Hall of Fame on Wednesday night.

The hall has moved from South Bend, Ind., but the new building in downtown Atlanta is still under construction and scheduled to open in August 2014.

Atlanta was hosting its first enshrinement ceremony in a hotel ballroom adjacent to what will be a 94,256-square foot museum that organizers believe will host 500,000 visitors each year.

Atlanta is home to the Southeastern Conference championship game, the Chick-fil-A Bowl and the Chick-fil-A Kickoff Classic that this year matches up No. 1 Alabama against Virginia Tech on Saturday.

Other hall inductees included Steve Bartkowski, Jonathan Ogden, Phillip Fulmer and R.C. Slocum.

Monk was a first-round draft pick for Washington in 1980, helped the Redskins win three Super Bowls and was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

For Alexander, getting enshrined in the college hall carried deep meaning.

Alexander left LSU in '78 as the Southeastern Conference's career leader in rushing yards and touchdowns. He was a first-round draft pick by Cincinnati, helped the Bengals reach a Super Bowl, but was never a serious candidate for induction to the pro hall.

The 56-year-old Alexander always longed for the college hall of fame to call, but he wondered if that day would come.

"I wasn't a highly recruited kid coming out of high school," Alexander said. "I didn't start in high school until my senior year. I didn't

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## 21-Year-Old Larson To Drive In NASCAR Sprint Cup

BY JIM PELTZ

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(MCT) — Kyle Larson is about to achieve his goal of becoming a driver in NASCAR's premier Sprint Cup Series.

The 21-year-old racing prodigy from Elk Grove, Calif., will join Jamie McMurray next year on the two-car team of Earnhardt Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates, people familiar with the situation who were not authorized to speak publicly said Wednesday.

Larson is expected to step into the No. 42 Chevrolet and replace veteran Juan Pablo Montoya.

The team this month declined to resign Montoya, 37, a former Indianapolis 500 winner and Formula One driver who found little success in NASCAR. Montoya, in his seventh year in

stock-car racing, is 21st in the Cup standings and has reached NASCAR's Chase for the Cup title playoff only once, in 2009.

EGR, led by veteran team owner Chip Ganassi, declined to comment about Larson. But the team has scheduled a news conference Friday at Atlanta Motor Speedway, site of the next Cup race, where Larson's ride is expected to be announced.

Larson, a Japanese-American, is in his rookie year in NASCAR's second-level Nationwide Series. He's eighth in the Nationwide point standings and, although he hasn't won a Nationwide race, has 13 top-10 finishes in 23 races.

It's only his second year driving stock cars, and before that Larson excelled at racing midget cars, sprints and other open-wheel cars on dirt and paved tracks.

In 2011, he won races in the World of Outlaws sprint-car series, in all three U.S. Auto Club national divisions and in the American Sprint Car Series.

(Sprint cars are powerful open-wheel race cars whose name is unrelated to NASCAR's Sprint Cup Series, which reflects the telecommunications company's series sponsorship.)

He has drawn high praise from such NASCAR champions as Jeff Gordon and Tony Stewart, who last year called Larson "absolutely phenomenal." Larson also defeated Stewart and others in a qualifying race at the Chili Bowl Nationals midget-car race this year.

Larson's grandparents on his mother's side were among the thousands of Japanese-Americans sent to an internment camp in Tulelake, Calif., during World War II.

## Pirates Closer Grilli Nearing Return

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Pittsburgh Pirates All-Star closer Jason Grilli's comeback from a right arm injury is picking up speed.

Grilli threw 25 pain-free pitches during a simulated game on Wednesday, a major step toward his return from an injury that blunted the momentum of a career year. The 36-year-old has been on the disabled list since straining the right flexor tendon in his pitching arm during a 6-5 victory over Washington on July 22.

Barring a setback, Pirates manager Clint Hurdle expects Grilli to make rehabilitation appearance for Double-A Altoona on Saturday.

"My arm strength is there," Grilli said. "People want to see if my arm strength is going to be

there, it's there."

The righthander made the All-Star team for the first time and was second in the National League with 30 saves at the time of the injury. Grilli said he won't rush back even as the Pirates battle St. Louis and Cincinnati for the NL Central title.

"I'm going day by day," Grilli said. "Do I think I could jump in and get some outs here? Sure, but that's my confidence talking. I'm going to fine-tune things. I think everybody wants me back the way I was. So do I. Nobody is going to be more critical of me than me."

The Pirates have stayed in the thick of the playoff race with Grilli sidelined thanks to steady play by fill-in Mark Melancon, who has converted 7 of 8 save opportunities in Grilli's absence.