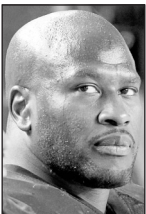


Harrison denied PED use in affidavit

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

Pittsburgh Steelers linebacker James Harrison has denied ever taking performance-enhancing drugs and said he never has met or had communication with Charles Sly.



Harrison

In a sworn affidavit submitted to the NFL by the NFL Players Association, Harrison refuted allegations made in an Al Jazeera America documen-

tary, “The Dark Side” that said he used PEDs supplied by Sly, an intern pharmacist.

“As a professional athlete, I have met thousands of people during my career,” Harrison wrote in the affidavit, “but to the best of my knowledge and recollection, I have never met with the individual who is apparently named Charles Sly. ...”

Along with Harrison, Green Bay Packers linebackers Clay Matthews, Julius Peppers and free-agent linebacker Mike Neal also were accused in the Al Jazeera report of violating

the league’s policy on PEDs. Only Harrison has submitted a sworn affidavit.

The Al Jazeera documentary aired in December and sparked an investigation by the NFL. In “The Dark Side,” Sly admits to an undercover reporter he is providing a substance named D2 or Delta-2 to Harrison.

After the documentary aired, Sly recanted his statements, but the league still vowed to pursue an investigation.

NFL senior vice president of labor policy and government affairs, Adolpho Birch told the players union last

month that the league planned to interview Harrison, Matthews and Peppers on the first day of their respective training camps. Neal’s interview would take place around July 22.

Harrison’s letter signals a high-profile standoff between the league and the NFLPA, which wants commissioner Roger Goodell to provide “credible evidence” before players agree to a face-to-face interview.

Last month, Harrison set the terms of an interview in an Instagram post saying that a meeting with the NFL must take place at his house

before training camp begins and only if commissioner Roger Goodell shows up for the interview.

Harrison posted a copy of the NFL’s letter scheduling his interview for Thursday, July 28, the day before the Steelers open camp in Latrobe, Pa.

Retired future Hall of Fame quarterback Peyton Manning also was linked to PEDs in the Al-Jazeera documentary. The report alleged that Manning was given a supply of human growth hormone in 2011 from an Indiana-based anti-aging clinic.

Manning, who announced his retirement following the Denver Broncos’ victory in Super Bowl 50 in February, has no obligation to cooperate in the league’s investigation as a retired player.

Manning has vehemently denied accusations he used human-growth hormone or PEDs during his recovery from neck surgery in 2011. Manning was not mentioned in the letter about the NFL investigation.

Sources have said that Manning likely will cooperate and submit to an interview with the NFL.

McIlroy lukewarm on golf’s Olympic return

WIRE SERVICE REPORTS

TROON, Scotland — Four-time major winner Rory McIlroy may not watch the golf event on television when it returns to the Olympics next month and hinted on Tuesday it was not one of the sports that would matter in Rio de Janeiro.

Unlike world No. 3 Jordan Spieth, who said earlier in the day that he agonized over his decision to withdraw from the Olympics, McIlroy said he was fully comfortable with his choice to opt out of golf’s Games comeback after a 112-year absence.

“I don’t think it was as difficult a decision for me as it was for him,” the Northern Irishman told a news conference ahead of the 145th British Open that starts on Thursday.

“I’m very happy with the decision I made and I’ve no regrets about it. I’ll probably watch the Olympics but I’m not sure golf will be one of the events I watch.”

Asked which competitions he would view on television, McIlroy replied: “Probably the events like track and field, swimming, diving, the stuff that matters.”

None of the world’s top four golfers will play in Rio after Jason Day and Dustin Johnson also decided to opt out.

Fourth-ranked McIlroy said he did not feel as though he was letting his sport down. “I didn’t get into golf to try and grow the game,” explained the 27-year-old. “I got into golf to win championships, and major championships.”

“All of a sudden you get to this point and there is a responsibility on you to grow the game, and I get that, but at the same time that’s not the reason I got into golf.

“I didn’t get into golf to get other people in the game but I get that...different people have different opinions.”

McIlroy also believes golf needs a more rigorous approach to drug-testing to fall



IAN RUTHERFORD | USA TODAY

Rory McIlroy walks to the 17th tee during a practice round Tuesday for the 145th Open Championship golf tournament at Royal Troon Golf Club – Old Course in Ayrshire, Scotland. McIlroy said he would probably watch the Olympics, but wasn’t certain whether he would watch the golf.

in line with other Olympic sports.

“I’ve been tested by the IGF (International Golf Federation) once this year ... but it was only a urine test. I haven’t been blood-tested yet. I, on average, probably get tested four to five times a year which is very little compared to the rest of the Olympic sports,” he said.

“I’ve got to know a lot of athletes over the years and whether it be coming to their houses and doing blood and urine, I think drug-testing in golf is still quite far behind some of the other sports,” said McIlroy.

“Blood-testing needs to happen in golf just to make sure it is a clean sport going forward. If golf wants to stay in the Olympics and wants to be part of the Olympic movement it has to get in line.”

McIlroy, however, does not believe illegal substances can necessarily help a golfer. “I don’t really know of any drug that can give you an advantage all the way across the board,” he said. “There are obviously drugs that can make you stronger ... and

drugs that can help your concentration.

“But whether there is something out there where it can make you an overall better player, I’m not sure.”

Spieth called the decision not to compete at the Olympics “probably the hardest decision I’ve ever had to make in my life at 22 years old.”

In the end, the two-time major winner said he chose what he thought was best for his future in pulling out of the upcoming Summer Olympics in Brazil.

Appearing before the media on Tuesday at Royal Troon, Spieth spoke for the first time since his withdrawal Monday from Rio.

“It will loom over me throughout the Olympic Games, for sure,” Spieth said. “I will be, I’m sure, at times pretty upset that I’m not down there.

“I thought about all of this ahead of time. When I watched the opening cere-

monies, that’s going to be a big bummer. Then when I watch these guys competing on the golf course. I’ll be texting Rickie (Fowler), obviously, throughout as a good friend of mine.”

But, Spieth said, “Nobody’s going to understand what it’s like to be in my shoes. As you can see, a lot of golfers are trying to decide for themselves. Mine came down to a very personal decision that I don’t expect anybody to understand, but trust that I believe I’m making the right decision for myself, for my future and those around me.”

Spieth said that reports that he withdrew specifically because of concerns over the Zika virus were erroneous.

“This is health concerns as a whole,” Spieth said, not specifying, but possibly referring to other security issues. “I had to weigh the risk for the reward.”

Spieth faced a deadline for his decision because the competitors from various countries were decided on Monday.



Spieth

Browns’ Crowell apologizes for Instagram post

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

Cleveland Browns running back Isaiah Crowell called the city’s chief of police on Tuesday and apologized for an Instagram post last week that sent shock waves through the Browns’ organization.

NFL NOTEBOOK

Crowell’s Instagram post showed an illustration of a police officer having his throat slashed by a hooded figure.

Some have suggested the Browns cut Crowell, while others say he should be suspended. The team is more than just a little angry, according to reports.

“It was completely inappropriate and we have made him aware of our high level of disappointment,” the team said in a statement. “Isaiah has apologized but also knows that just an apology is insufficient and that he must take steps to make a positive difference after a very negative and impactful post.”

Crowell posted the photo on Wednesday, the day before five police officers were gunned down in Dallas and after the fatal shooting of two black men by police, one in Minnesota and one in Louisiana. But he took it down after about 90 seconds and issued an apology Monday through the Browns, the Cleveland Plain Dealer reported.

While discussing security for the upcoming Republican National Convention on Tuesday, police chief Calvin Williams said Crowell called him, apologized and told him he regretted the post, and that he was caught up in the heat of emotion.

Crowell’s public apology through the team’s public relations department has not assuaged some who want the team to jettison the third-year back.

The team has no intention of releasing Crowell. Instead, the Browns want to give him the chance to be part of a solution.

“We have spoken to Isaiah regarding his extremely dis-

turbing and unacceptable social media decision,” the Browns said.

Crowell tweeted a lengthy apology on Tuesday. In part, he said, “We have to be better as a society, it’s not about color, it’s about what’s right and wrong. I was very wrong in posting that image.”

49ers, Rams to play 2018 game in China

The San Francisco 49ers and Los Angeles Rams will meet in a regular-season game to be played in China during the 2018 season, Sports Business Daily reported Tuesday based on sources.

No date for the game has been set, but it probably will be the Rams’ home opener that year, according to the report.

Last spring, there were reports that the NFL wanted to expand its international presence to China, and several teams showed an interest in playing a game there.

“We have not announced the Rams’ opponent in the

event we play a game there,” NFL vice president/communications Brian McCarthy told Sports Business Daily. We have said we are exploring playing a game there but nothing is definitive.”

Any game scheduled to be played in China would need to be approved by the NFL owners and their meeting in October.

Giants extend punter’s contract

The New York Giants signed punter Brad Wing to a contract extension through the 2019 season, the team announced Monday.

Financial terms were not released, but NFL Media’s Ian Rapoport reported the extension is worth three years and \$6.45 million. The deal includes a reported \$3.725 million in guarantees, with a \$2 million signing bonus.

Wing, acquired in a trade with the Pittsburgh Steelers last September, is entering his third season in the NFL and second with the Giants.

high jump and placing second in the long and triple jumps.

He also played in the Blue-Gray North-South All-American Bowl high school all-star football game at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, Florida, in January.

Paterno

Continued from Page B5

John Doe 150 is one of 32 people to have reached a financial settlement.

Those documents made public Tuesday also allege former Tampa Bay Buccaneers head coach and current defensive coordinator at Ohio State Greg Schiano told former Penn State defensive coordinator Tom Bradley in the early 1990s that he saw Sandusky “doing something to a boy in the shower.”

At the time, Schiano was the defensive backs coach for the Nittany Lions.

Schiano, on Tuesday, refuted former grad assistant Mike McQueary’s testimony in those documents that allege some on Paterno’s staff were aware of Sandusky’s behavior.

“I never saw any abuse, nor had reason to suspect any abuse, during my time at Penn State,” Schiano said, via Adam Scheffter of ESPN.

Bradley is the defensive coordinator at UCLA.

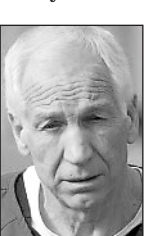
In a 2015 deposition, McQueary testified when he told Bradley what he saw Sandusky doing to a boy in a shower, Bradley was “not shocked.”

“(Bradley) said he knew of some things,” McQueary said. “... He said another assistant coach had come to him in the early ’90s about a very similar situation to mine, and he said that he had — someone had to come to him as far back as the early ’80s about Jerry doing something with a boy.”

Bradley’s attorney also re-

futed McQueary’s testimony.

“At no time did Tom Bradley ever witness any inappropriate behavior. Nor did he have any knowledge of alleged incidents in the 80’s and 90’s,” lawyer Brett Senior said. “He has consistently testified as such. Any assertions to the contrary are false. When he became aware of the 2001 incident it had already been reported to the University administration years earlier.”



Sandusky

Sandusky was convicted on 45 of 48 counts related to sexual assault on June 22, 2012, and was sentenced to 30 to 60 years in prison.

Paterno served as the Nittany Lions’ head coach from 1966 until his retirement in 2011. He died on Jan. 22, 2012 at the age of 85.

Paterno’s family issued a statement Tuesday saying, “The materials released today relating to Joe Paterno allege a conversation that occurred decades ago where all parties except the accuser are now dead.

“In addition, there are numerous specific elements of the accusations that defy all logic and have never been subjected to even the most basic objective examination. Most significantly, there is extensive evidence that stands in stark contrast to this claim.”

Penn State President Eric Barron, in a statement on Tuesday said the university’s “overriding concern has been, and remains, for the victims of Jerry Sandusky.”

Lewis

Continued from Page B5

chance to play in the 27th annual Lobster Bowl, set for 4 p.m. Saturday at historic Waterhouse Field in Biddeford. “I just got all my stuff together and took the trip up.

“It was a no-brainer.”

Lewis missed the initial East team meeting but arrived in time for the first practice session.

“We had a young man drop out late,” said East head coach Bob Sinclair of Orono High School, “and when [Lewis] was asked he dropped everything and said, ‘I’m coming,’ and he’s been great.”

Lewis, who will attend Maine Maritime Academy in Castine this fall but doesn’t plan to play football for the Mariners, had been working out on his own but not with a particular goal in mind.

“I didn’t have the drive because I really had no reason to do it,” said Lewis. “I’m just relying on mental strength to get through it.”

Lewis admits the early stages of training camp — the East

and West squads each had gone through seven practices from Sunday through Tuesday morning — were challenging.

“It’s been rough,” he said, “but by the end of the week I’ll be ready to go. Overall I feel football is more of a mental game. You need that mental strength to succeed.”

Even as a last-minute addition, Lewis said the benefits of competing in the Lobster Bowl will far outweigh its demands.

“It’s a good experience getting everybody from my conference on the same team and meeting people that I’ve been playing against for years now and coming together as a team to perform on Saturday,” he said.

Lewis will play defense as the East seeks to avenge last July’s 45-21 loss and score its third win in the last four years — the West holds an 18-8 overall lead in the series.

“On short notice [defense] is a little easier, but either way it would have been all right,” said Lewis. “I enjoy defense a lot because it’s pretty much just go.

“The big thing is it’s just one more time playing high school ball, going out there and giving it everything.”

MMA

Continued from Page B5

on June 10 with a loss by unanimous decision to UFC veteran Levan Makashvili at CES 36 in Lincoln, Rhode Island.

Kennington won four straight bouts until losing by first-round technical knockout in his most recent bout on April 1 in Coconut Creek, Florida.

Joining Sanders from the Young’s MMA stable will be Aaron “Relentless” Lacey, C.J. Ewer and Josh “Hook On” Harvey, all seeking to improve their professional records to 2-0.

Lacey will face John Santos (3-3) and Harvey will battle Brandon Bushaw (2-2)

in featherweight (145-pound) matchups while Ewer and Ruben Redman (0-1) will meet in a welterweight (170-pound) clash.

Veterans Jon Lemke (5-5) of Team Irish MMA Fitness Academy in Brewer and Jesse Erickson (7-5) of Auburn will square off in a rematch of their Bellator 93 bout in Lewiston in early 2013. Lemke won that earlier fight by first-round technical knockout, and since then both competitors have gone on to challenge for the NEF professional lightweight title.

Rounding out the card is a heavyweight fight between Brendan Battles (1-0) and Derrick Brown (4-3) and a middleweight bout between Jarod Lawton (4-2) and Mike Hansen (4-4).

Smith

Continued from Page B5

avoid contact until that is resolved in the coming weeks.

Instead, Smith is serving

as a player-coach of sorts for the East offense, a role similar to what he did last fall for the Foxcroft football team after suffering a dislocated hip during a pre-season game and missing his entire senior season with the Ponies.

Smith did return to good health in time to play basketball for Foxcroft last winter as well as help the Ponies win the Class B state championship in outdoor track and field this spring by scoring individual victories in the 110 hurdles and