

The Truth Hurts

I'm starting to get the distinct feeling that Jets management struggles with the truth — in particular Mike Tannenbaum. Of course I have been aware of that for years. In fact, ever since Tannenbaum and his predecessor, Terry Bradway, called to inform me they were cutting my client Mike Cecere. When I said, "Nice try, fellas, but we'll be filing an injury grievance," the two of them proceeded to call me some names. And they weren't nice names. I got the impression the two



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right between the eyes

of them thought they were auditioning for a cameo on "The Sopranos."

So it comes as little surprise to me that Pete Kendall, Laveranues Coles and now Chris Baker have all accused Mr. Tannenbaum of misleading them with regard to their contracts. Tannenbaum may think he's cute or, better yet, smarter than the players but, guess what, the players are the ones who matter on Sundays. And if I am a Jets fan, I have to wonder if the organization's pathetic state has any correlation to the way they treat their players.

Needless to say, Tannenbaum wanted to stick it to Kendall, so he refused to pay him the additional \$1 million that Kendall says had been promised. The Jets traded Kendall to Washington, the offensive line played like a group of high schoolers and now they have signed a slew of free agents for an awful lot of money. Wouldn't it have been easier to just give Kendall his due? As I have stated before, I absolutely believe this franchise is at a crossroads. I mean, how long can they hang their hat on 1969?

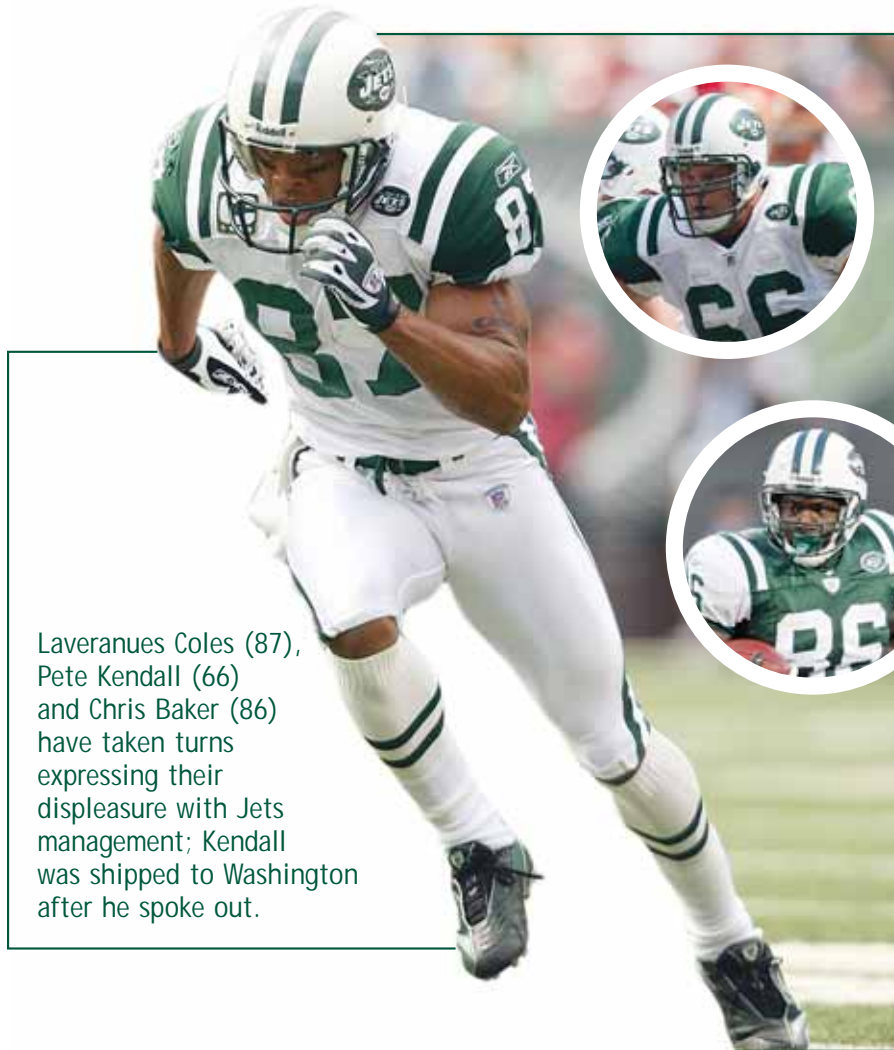
By the way, I might have antagonized Tannenbaum and Bradway when the dynamic duo started teeing off on me and I told them to stick it up their respective asses, and for an additional kick in the nuts we won the grievance.

Carlos Beltran — Can radio guys and writers stop talking about this guy being a five-tool player because it's an insult to true five-toolers like Alex Rodriguez and all-time greats like Willie Mays.

Label Beltran what he is: an overpaid good player who has zero interest in being a team leader (at press time he was hitting in the .260s, had single-digit dingers and was on pace for just about 100 RBI).

In my mind, 125 RBI is the standard for a very good season, not 100. Kind of like 1,300 yards rushing in an NFL season, as opposed to 1,000.

Distraction has to be one of the most overused



Laveranues Coles (87), Pete Kendall (66) and Chris Baker (86) have taken turns expressing their displeasure with Jets management; Kendall was shipped to Washington after he spoke out.

words in sports today. Bottom line: Go out and play and most guys do that. It's the ones who need an excuse who whine about distractions. The Patriots had the specter of Spygate all season but managed to go 16-0 during the regular season. Trust me, professional athletes generally worry about thyself. So when a Carlos Beltran whines about the Willie Randolph situation being a distraction, I would argue that the guy who works an hourly wage and is worried about the electric company shutting off his power or his house being foreclosed has distractions, not some overpaid ballplayer making \$16 million a year. Shake it off, Carlos.

Free money — Folks, I have represented athletes for over 13 years and I have some advice. If your kid is truly talented and has legitimate aspirations of playing professional sports and is trying to decide what sport to pursue, point the arrow toward the NBA because they're giving it away. The Knicks are a case study in free money: It's guaranteed, it's long term and guys like Stephon Marbury can take a year off and still collect \$20 million, no questions asked. Do what I am advising, put your kid on a basketball court and tell him to have at it. And if he's really lucky, one day his team will be on the right side of an NBA ref's whistle (Sorry, Mr. Stern).