

Steve Young still not cleared to play

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) — Steve Young wants to play again. His doctors, teammates, coaches and friends are telling him it may be time to quit.

Increasingly, it appears that Young — a two-time NFL MVP who has had four concussions in three years — clings to one view and everyone else to another.

"I know we would all love him to be healthy and playing again," Coach Steve Mariucci said Wednesday. "But it may be very unlikely that he gets back into a 49ers uniform. There's always that glimmer of hope, but let's be realistic. It's really a long shot."

The 38-year-old quarterback won't put a timetable on his return and refused to rule out a comeback this season.

"I don't know if you can put percentages on it, but today I'm not on the field, so it's zero percent," he said. "I'm not going to play in the next couple weeks or the next few weeks."

Mariucci said the team has discussed putting Young on injured reserve, which would finish him for the year. But Young has pleaded for patience, and out of respect to him the team is allowing more time before making a decision.

"It may happen. It may be inevitable, but we haven't decided as of yet. At this point, we don't need that roster spot. Now, if we get an injury or two, we may reconsider. And Steve knows that," Mariucci said.

For now, Mariucci and the rest of the 49ers are preparing for life without Young.

Dion Booker moves free of his brother's shadow

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saw action in 11 games in 1998 as the third-string free safety and on the punt team. He made two tackles and forced one fumble.

But he wasn't happy with himself or comfortable around his teammates.

"Last year, I was dissatisfied with my own work ethic," Dion said. "I wasn't using my talent or my ability. I was basically wasting it. I wasn't into the whole Nebraska thing."

"It's not that I didn't think I could compete. I didn't have the enthusiasm to go out there each day and put it all on the line. That's what you have to have to play at Nebraska."

Dion said not being comfortable with the defensive system contributed to his disillusion. He also was frustrated with what he perceived to be a lack of opportunities to show what he could do.

"I just didn't have a very good year off the field or on the field," Dion said. "I battled with myself all year trying to stay motivated and enthusiastic and to get along with teammates."

"At practice, I felt like I didn't belong. In meetings, I didn't feel like I belonged. When they said Nebraska football team, it felt like Nebraska football team and then me."

Dion's self-confidence was low, and he struggled to keep positive. He shared his frustrations with Michael and learned that his experiences were similar to his brother's.

Through their phone calls, Michael was able to help Dion get through the season.

Brotherly Advice

During his sophomore season in 1994, Michael Booker had to sit behind Barron Miles and Tyrone Williams and saw action in only seven games. In those, he made four tackles.

In conversations with Dion last year, Michael told him that he was down every day at practice that sophomore season and that he contemplated leaving Nebraska.

So, in other words, he was in the same position Dion was in last year. He told Dion how he made it through.

"He said, 'You have to look at yourself and know why you are here and go out there every day and put forth your effort,'" Dion said. "'It's not them not giving you an opportunity, it's you not taking advantage of the opportunity. If you hang in there, things will go better.'"

Once Dion had his eyes opened by his brother, things started to improve.

"I realized in the spring that it wasn't that they weren't giving me the opportunity, it was that I wasn't taking advantage of the opportunities," Dion said. "If you are on special teams, do the best you can at special teams. If you have to do scout team, do the best at scout team."

Dion's attitude wasn't the only thing that hindered him from fitting in right away.

"When they said Nebraska football team, it felt like Nebraska football team and then me."

DION BOOKER
NU back-up free safety

Silent safety

As part of his personality, Dion is naturally quiet. He describes himself as someone who listens first and then replies.

Because he was quiet amongst his teammates, he thinks a few of them had the impression that he felt he was better than them. That led to some problems for Dion.

But he said that perception was anything but true.

"If I don't talk to you off the field, it doesn't mean I don't like you," Dion said. "I am not like a Keyuo Craver or Ralph Brown who is always talking."

"Just for me to feel comfortable, it has taken a lot longer. I am laid back. I am still trying to get over the hump where I feel comfortable, but people also are accepting that I am quiet."

Correll Buckhalter, one of Dion's best friends, said Dion always would joke around with him. But this year, Buckhalter said, he is seeing it more with other teammates as well.

Dion's happiness has carried over to the field.

Meeting expectations

Each day in practice, as well as in games, he now gives his all. That improved work ethic has earned him more playing time.

Now that he isn't worried about playing time or fitting in, he can just go out and play and focus on the future, Brown said.

"It's always hard when you come from high school where you are used to playing all the time," Brown said. "When you come here, you have to sit a couple years. It's all downhill from here. He's done the hard part. Now it is all easy for him."

In seven games coming off the bench, Dion has made 10 tackles and has had one pass breakup. That one pass breakup came in the fourth quarter against Texas.

Defensive Backs Coach George Darlington said he was comfortable with Dion in the game at any time.

"He has made excellent strides," Darlington said. "He will definitely see a lot of action against Kansas."

And it is likely Dion will see a lot of action in the future with Brown graduating and Clint Finley having only one year left.

Hornets' Coleman accused of DUI crash

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Derrick Coleman was accused of drunken driving Wednesday after a collision with a tractor-trailer that sent him, teammate Eldridge Recasner and a woman to the hospital.

The Charlotte Hornets power forward, who has had previous run-ins with the law, received stitches for cuts to his nose and forehead and was released from Carolinas Medical Center.

Recasner, a reserve guard, had a partially collapsed lung, a badly bruised chest and shoulder and will remain hospitalized for a few days, team spokesman Harold Kaufman said.

The other passenger, Ebony Kimbrough, 25, was being treated at the center for facial cuts and was listed in fair condition.

Coleman told Charlotte-Mecklenburg police he had the green light at an intersection and the truck struck him. The truck driver, Peter Roe, said Coleman turned left in front of him, police said.

Police arrested Coleman on a charge of driving while under the influence. Information on his blood-alcohol level wasn't immediately available.

Two previous cases in Michigan still are pending against Coleman.

In August, he was accused of urinating in front of patrons at a Detroit restaurant and charged with disorderly conduct. Coleman denied any wrongdoing, saying he spilled a drink on himself. He also faces a lawsuit in

"If found guilty of anything, we will take appropriate action."

PAUL SILAS
Hornets' coach

Michigan, in which he is accused of trespassing and battery at a Detroit woman's home in 1997.

In 1995 Coleman was arrested and charged with refusing to move his truck and swearing at a police officer in Detroit. The jury failed to reach a verdict, and the case ended in a mistrial.

Coleman is in the second year of a five-year, \$40 million contract with the Hornets. He has averaged 12.2 points, 6.0 rebounds and 2.3 assists in six exhibition games. Last season, he was limited to 37 games because of foot and ankle problems.

Recasner was signed by the Hornets as a free agent last January.

Hornets officials said Coleman will return to practice today and might play Friday night in Charlotte's final exhibition game against Chicago at Chapel Hill.

"If found guilty of anything, we will take appropriate action," Coach Paul Silas said of Coleman.

Said teammate Eddie Jones: "Things happen. It was an accident, and we need to let him get better."

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Check out the *Crew & Water Polo Club* booths at the City Union today & Friday. Great holiday gift ideas!!!

At Home this Weekend

Don't miss your last chance of the semester to see the **NU Men's Rugby Club**. The club will take on Lincoln City Rugby at noon on Sat. at Whittier Field. (22nd & W Streets)

For more information regarding any of the UNL Sport Clubs events - Please contact the Office of Campus Recreation 472-3467

On the Road

CLIMBING - Club members will be travelling to Thornton, CO this weekend to compete in the Pump-kin Pull Down competition.

W. SOCCER - Good Luck to the NU Women as they take on Drake University in Des Moines, IA, this Saturday and Sunday.

M. ULTIMATE - The competition will be steep this weekend in Fayetteville, AR for the Harvest Moon Tournament.

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