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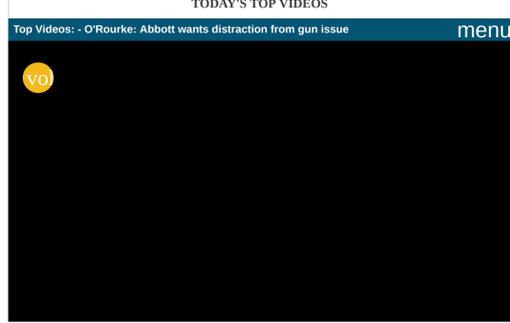
NEWS

# KARKOVICE STEWS AS HE SITS ON THE WHITE SOX'S BENCH

By Scott MacGregor and Chicago Tribune  
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CHICAGO — While Jorge Fabregas grows into his role as one of the key players on the Chicago White Sox, the man he replaced wants the team to release or trade him.

Ron Karkovice, who had been the regular catcher most of this decade until the White Sox traded for Fabregas in May, said he can contribute.

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"They have no plans for me," said Karkovice, who helped Boone High School to a state baseball championship in 1981. "Either trade me or let me go so I can get picked up by somebody else. But I'm not playing here."

With Tony Pena coming off the disabled list last month, Karkovice has been demoted to third-string catcher. His last start was June 23 at Kansas City.

Karkovice said he asked for his release May 30, but the White Sox turned him down. General Manager Ron Schueler has said the team needs him for insurance, but money likely is involved as well.

Karkovice can become a free agent after this season but has a \$675,000 buyout option for next season that he could collect if released.

Karkovice, 33, is hitting .173 in 36 games, but his defense has seen the biggest decline. He threw out nearly 38 percent of runners last season, second in the American League.

But this season, he has gotten only three of 24 (12.5 percent).

"I had a bad month throwing runners out, and they think my knee isn't healthy," he said. "But I feel great. I can still produce and help a team out.

"I've been with this organization 16 years, and they treat me like this," said Karkovice, a No. 1 draft pick in 1982. "I want to have a chance to play."

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