Malik Nabers' ACL injury brings MetLife back in the spotlight as turf debate rages on

By ANTHONY ANGELILLO
Staff Writer

MetLife Stadium, home of the New York Giants and New York Jets, has become the center of attention once again over the NFL's growing debate between artificial turf and natural grass.

As more star players suffer major injuries on turf fields, critics argue that the playing surface is unsafe, while league officials argue that the data does not clearly prove the turf is more dangerous than grass.

Recently, the Giants receiver Malik Nabers suffered a torn ACL in Week four of the 2025 season.

This is not only a major blow to the Giants organization, but as someone who has been a Giants fan his whole life, it is just another major injury to happen at MetLife. Many fans are furious over the lack of changes for players safety, as this reignites the question of whether MetLife Stadium increases the risk of injury.

NFL players, health and safety rank MetLife ninth best for lower extremity injuries and even safest for visiting teams according to injury data collected by NFL Executive VP overseeing Player Health and Safety Jeff Miller and NFL Chief Medical Officer Dr. Allen Sills, which shows how complicated this story remains.

The building has used artificial turf since it opened in 2010, and venue operators have updated that surface as criticism built.

Stadium leadership installed a FieldTurf Core system before the 2023 season, a multilayer product that FieldTurf and the stadium pitched as a safer, more forgiving option after several high-profile injuries.

Giants co-owner John Mara also said he wanted

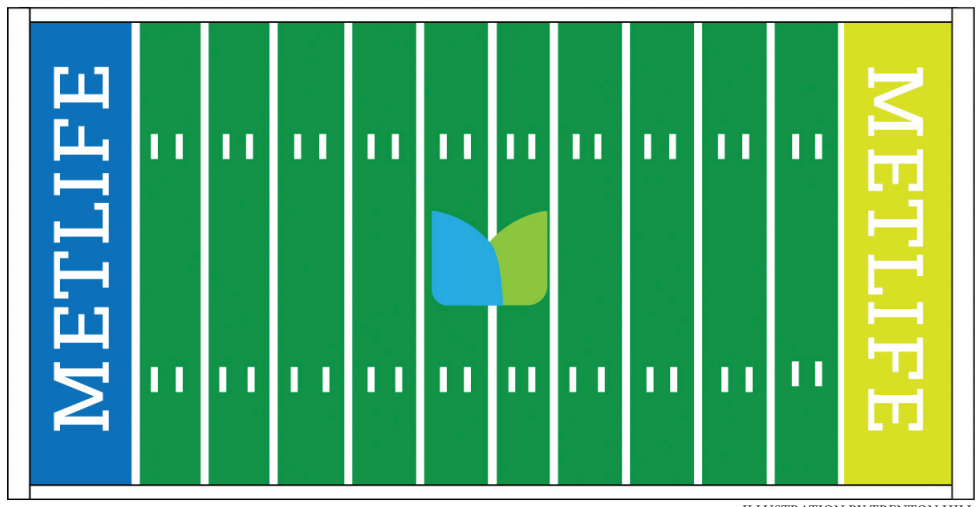


ILLUSTRATION BY TRENTON HILL

a path to grass one day, but he noted the challenges of two NFL tenants and a heavy events calendar.

The injury log at MetLife contains marquee names and flashpoint days. In 2020, San Francisco lost Nick Bosa and Solomon Thomas to ACL tears on the same afternoon and complained about a sticky feel underfoot.

In 2022, Giants receiver Sterling Shepard went down with a non-contact ACL tear during Monday Night Football.

Quarterback Aaron Rodgers tore his left Achilles tendon four snaps into his Jets debut in 2023 and Miami edge rusher Jaelan Phillips did the same that fall. Odell Beckham Jr. fractured his ankle there in 2017.

These players are just a few of the most well-known to face injuries. In total, there have been 16 major injuries on MetLife's turf, and that number seems to be rising every couple of weeks.

A number of Players and Coaches have called out the NFL and the way the turf has not only hurt the team but changed how they play the game.

Kyle Shanahan said his 49ers talked during that 2020 game about how sticky the turf felt.

After Rodgers went down, Jets receiver Randall Cobb said the league prioritizes profit over people. He pushed for grass, sentiments many veterans echoed.

After Naber's injury, Beckham urged the NFL to replace the turf and said the venue which fans call DeathLife has taken too many talented players away from the game.

Independent and union data add context. An NBC News analysis using Sports Info Solutions counted more injuries at synthetic venues from 2017 through 2022 and found seven of the 10 highest total injury stadiums used turf.

NFLPA president JC Tretter has cited league injury logs from 2012 to 2018 that show a 28%higher rate of noncontact lower extremity injuries on turf, including 32%higher noncontact knee injuries and 69% higher noncontact foot or ankle injuries compared with grass.

However, NFL officials have published numbers that point in another direction.

A 2024 review found noncontact lower extremity injury rates in 2023 were nearly identical per 100 plays on synthetic and natural surfaces, 0.043 on turf versus 0.042 on grass.

The NFL has also said teams should improve all surfaces instead of treating grass as a silver bullet and the league highlighted fewer ACL tears overall in 2023 compared with prior years.

Comparisons across venues keep the conversation moving.

A BetMGM analysis of the past five seasons ranked State Farm Stadium as the most injury-prone and placed MetLife close behind in average injuries per game, while NBC News placed many turf venues near the top of its stadium injury counts.

Soccer tournaments have intensified the issue.

Organizers laid natural grass at MetLife for the 2025 FIFA Club World Cup and will do so again for the 2026 World Cup, which led the NFL players union to point out how easily the venue can host grass when global soccer requires it.

For now, the turf stays. Recent reports say the Giants, Jets and the stadiums operating group have no plans to switch to grass, even after Naber's injury.

This means that players will continue to advocate for natural grass at MetLife and other stadiums in the NFL. However, with funding and options scattered everywhere across the league, this battle likely extends into another season.

Charlie Sheen's rise, ruin and redemption told without a safety net

By ANTHONY ANGELILLO
Staff Writer

Netflix released "aka Charlie Sheen" on Sept. 10, a two-part documentary that tracks the actor's rise, many falls and a sober rebuild that he says now defines his life.

Director Andrew Renzi shapes the story through new interviews, archival footage and a look at fame under the bright lights. This brings a darker shadow to Sheen's past issues and Renzi leans into that premise.

As someone who grew up loving "Two and a Half Men," this documentary had a unique impact on me. I always saw Charlie Sheen as the ultimate sitcom star, the guy who made me laugh. Seeing him open up about his own personal demons changed that image in ways I did not expect.

Renzi assembles Sheens's ex-wife Denise Richards, former partner Brooke Mueller, longtime friends Sean Penn and Chris Tucker and "Two and a Half Men" co-star Jon Cryer.

Renzi also sits down with Marco, a dealer who knew Sheen during the worst years. Sheen's father Martin Sheen and brother, Emilio Estevez, do not appear by choice, a decision Renzi and Sheen both explain as support for Charlie's wish to tell his own story without putting his family back through old pain.

Sheen speaks on camera with a level of detail that he once kept private.

"The stuff that I plan on sharing, I had made a sacred vow years ago to only reveal to a therapist," Sheen said.

Renzi said he spent months building trust before the cameras rolled so the conversations could go deeper than headlines.

For years, I thought Sheen's public meltdowns were just part of his wild persona. Now, it feels like those moments were cries for help that most of us, myself included, laughed off.

The documentary spends time on the cost of shame and the pull of spectacle, and Sheen does not dodge any of it.

"Shame is suffocating," Sheen says, a moment where the film lets a simple idea sit without cutaways.

Early in the film, Sheen recalls a drunken honeymoon flight in the 1990s that ended with a starstruck cockpit inviting him forward.

"I am there drunk, with close to 300 people asleep behind me, an angry bride 20 feet behind me, and I start guiding this plane," he says, before crediting a quick-thinking copilot with switching on autopilot.

This was a wild story to hear from Sheen, especially when paired with a clear admission that danger sat close by.

The film revisits a 1990 intervention that recalls a surprise call from actor Clint Eastwood that pushed him toward rehab.

"He said something to the effect of, 'You gotta get the train back on the tracks. Kid, you are worth saving'," Sheen recalled.

Family and friends, including Emilio Estevez and Rob Lowe, surround him, showing how far his circle went to reach him.

I never imagined Eastwood being the voice that helped pull Sheen back. It made me realize how many people cared about him when the rest of us were watching.

Renzi does not reduce the story to addiction alone. Sheen talks for the first time on camera about sex with men during drug-fueled years, and he frames it as liberation rather than scandal.

The film situates those chapters in a four-decade career. It tracks early breaks in Sheen's films, such as "Platoon" and "Wall Street," then jumps to record television paydays and the meltdown that led to his 2011 firing from "Two and a Half Men."

It also notes a later reconciliation with creator Chuck Lorre and a 2023 appearance in Bookie, illustrating how relationships can mend when the work changes.

Seeing that reconciliation with Lorre gave me hope. As someone who loved the show, I always wished they could put their differences aside. Knowing they did makes me appreciate Sheen's growth even more.

The documentary lands alongside "The Book of Sheen," a memoir that arrived on Sept. 9 and extends several stories that the film introduces.

"My stories have been told for far too long through the eyes and pens of others," Sheen says in the rollout. "I think you will agree, it is time to finally read these stories directly from the actual guy."

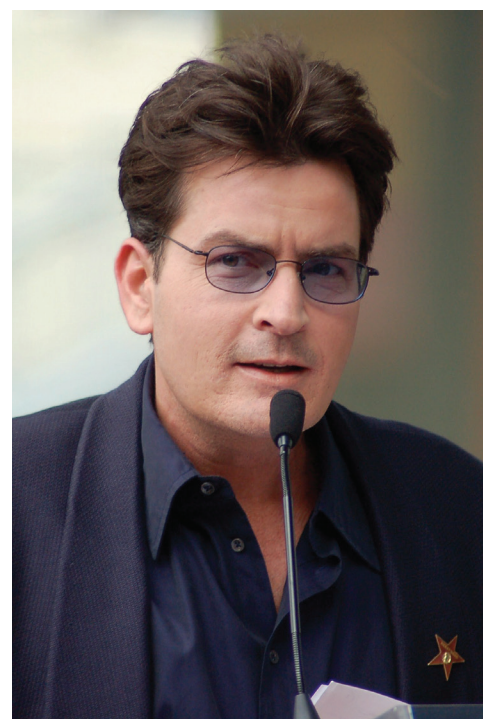
The book and the film create a one-two punch that fuels a wider round of interviews and public reflection.

Early reactions focus on the tension between blunt testimony and Sheen's willingness to open up about everything.

Variety highlights how the film lets Sheen push into taboo subjects with startling candor, while The Hollywood Reporter calls the viewing "both reflective and exhausting in a way that matches the subject."

Audience chatter has centered on the film's structure and on Cryer's opening line about hoping the project does not go bad. That mix of empathy and caution defines the viewing experience.

Renzi and Sheen close on a quieter register. The camera returns to small rooms and direct language rather than victory laps.


ANGELA GEORGE/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS
Charlie Sheen opens up about his turbulent past and path to sobriety in Netflix's new documentary "aka Charlie Sheen."

Renzi says he entered the celebrity documentary space because a flawed subject can teach more than a tidy hero, and Sheen seems to agree.

The film does not offer forgiveness. It offers a record for a figure who once turned into a headline machine by choice and by chaos, that feels like the point.

In the end, it reminds us that redemption is not guaranteed, but honesty can still matter.