nting on Clark, Mathieu to provide leadership

a $105 million, five-year deal.
Big money for what the Chiefs hope is a big payoff.
"It's really trying to build a defense with an attitude," said Mathieu, who spent last season with Houston after a solid run in Arizona. "Any time you can have 10 or 11 guys with a chip on their shoulder, with an edge, a certain kind of presence, a certain kind of attitude, a certain kind of swagger, you can create a collective identity, and I think that's really what we're trying to do."

Make no mistake: Mathieu and Clark both have razor-sharp edges.

Mathieu's contract can be traced to Aug. 10, 2012, when then-LSU coach Les Miles announced that the star safety would be dismissed from the program for a violation of team rules. Mathieu was coming off one of the best seasons in school history, one that earned him the Bednarik Award as the best defensive player in the nation and made him a finalist for the Heisman Trophy.

Mathieu, who still cannot shake the nickname "the Honey Badger," eventually entered a drug rehab program, then declared for the NFL Draft. He wound up going in the third round to the Cardinals, even though his game-changing ability a year earlier would have made him a first-round pick.

Not only did they stay out of trouble, he used that chip on his shoulder to thrive in Arizona.

Despite missing time after tearing ligaments in his knee, Mathieu put up such solid numbers that the Cardinals gave him a $62.5 million, five-year extension. But major changes within the organization led it to ask Mathieu to take a pay cut, and he was released when he ultimately refused.

Consider that another chip on his shoulder.

After making 89 tackles, three sacks and a pair of interceptions in a prove-it year with Houston, the Chiefs made Mathieu one of their offseason priorities as they attempted to shore up a defense that held back one of the NFL's best offenses a year ago — and may have cost them a Super Bowl trip.

"A lot of people put a lot of pressure on us," Mathieu said, "whether it be ourselves or outside noise. It's the same game we've been playing since we were 5 years old, so just go out there and really have some fun, have some swagger, and you know, just have some juice."

Clark certainly plays with that kind of juice, owed in part to his own college transgressions.

The defensive end had blossomed into an All-Big 10 star at Michigan over his first three seasons, and appeared poised for a big senior year. But on Nov. 16, 2014, he was arrested on suspicion of domestic violence and ultimately kicked out of the Wolverines' program.

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