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FBI sets probe of violence - Agents reportedly threatening athletes

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NEW YORK The FBI has started an investigation into alleged cases of violence and threats involving sports agents and players, according to a published report. The New York Times reported in today's editions that the Dallas office of the FBI had recorded a phone conversation between New York-based agent **Lloyd Bloom** and a former Southern Methodist University wide receiver, Ronald Morris.

In that conversation The Times reports **Bloom** threatened to have Morris' hands broken were he to sign with another agent.

The Times reported unnamed sources, familiar with the investigation, said the FBI was investigating alleged threats made against Jeff Atkins, another former SMU player.

The newspaper said the FBI in Dallas would neither confirm nor deny an investigation.

The Times also reported New York-based agent **Norby Walters** was among subjects of this investigation.

The Atlanta Constitution reported March 12 that **Walters** admitted giving cash to college

athletes in an effort to sign them as clients.

Walters also has come under the scrutiny of the National Football League Players Association (NFLPA), which says two college seniors eligible for the April 28 draft called the union to report **Walters** had threatened "to break their legs" for firing him.

Walters denies the charges, but he does not deny making cash payments to college football and basketball players before their eligibility has expired - a violation of NCAA rules.

Among the players **Walters** says he has given money during their college playing career is Auburn running back Brent Fullwood, who completed his eligibility last fall.

Lon Trost, an attorney with Shea and Gould in New York who is representing **Walters'** firm, World Sports and Entertainment Inc., in a number of lawsuits, told The Times he was not aware of an FBI investigation concerning **Walters.**

The newspaper said the Chicago FBI office was brought into a police investigation of an assault on a sports agent who had signed two players formerly associated with **Walters.**

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