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FBI investigates sports agents

By Peter Frank
New York Times News Service

DALLAS—The FBI is investigating alleged threats and violence involving sports agents and players. According to a number of sources familiar with the investigation, **Norby Walters** and **Lloyd Bloom**, two New York agents, are among the subjects of the inquiry.

The Chicago office of the FBI has been brought into the police investigation of an assault on a sports agent who recently signed two players formerly associated with Walters, according to sources familiar with the case.

Kathy Clements, a vice president of the Zucker Sports Entertainment Group in Skokie and the wife of Tom Clements, a former Notre Dame quarterback who plays for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers of the Canadian Football League, was beaten unconscious and stabbed in an arm by a man in a ski mask in her office on the morning of March 16, according to the Skokie police.

Clements said she had been advised not to discuss the attack and declined to comment on whether the assailant had said anything to her during the assault. She also declined to identify who had requested that she not discuss the matter.

"If the guy wanted to kill her, he probably could have," said Lt. Michael Langer, the commander of the detective bureau for the Skokie Police Department. "Somebody sent them a message, there is no doubt about that." Langer said the department had found nothing to

link **Walters** and **Bloom** to the case.

Clements, the sports agent, said Zucker Sports, headed by attorney Steve Zucker, had signed contracts with Bill Ransdell of Kentucky, Reggie Rogers of Washington and Doug Dubose of Nebraska. Rogers and Dubose previously had "been in contact" with Walters, she said, but wouldn't specify if they had signed a contract with him.

The Dallas office of the FBI, the sources said, has a recorded phone conversation between **Bloom** and former Southern Methodist wide receiver Ron Morris in which **Bloom** threatened to have Morris' hands broken if he were to sign with another agent.

The sources also said that the FBI was investigating alleged threats made against another former SMU player, Jeff Atkins. Morris and Atkins are under contract with another management concern, Athletic Associates in Dallas.

The FBI in Dallas would neither confirm nor deny the existence of the investigation or the recording.

Lonn Trost, an attorney with Shea and Gould in New York, which is representing Walters' firm, World Sports and Entertainment Inc., in a number of lawsuits, said he was unaware of any FBI investigations concerning his client. Neither **Bloom**, who was in Los Angeles, nor Walters, whose office in New York was called repeatedly Thursday, could be reached for comment.

At least five individuals have

been interviewed by the FBI, according to Edward Vincent King Jr., an attorney specializing in sports litigation in San Francisco. King said he had spoken with an agent who had been questioned Tuesday by the FBI and that four other players had also been interviewed. More interviews are planned, other sources said.

In a March 12 article in the Atlanta Constitution, the National Football League Players Association was said to have received calls from two unidentified players who claimed that Walters had threatened to break their legs for dismissing him. **Walters** told the Constitution that the allegation was "sickening, really sickening. Who knows what these kids will say to break their contract?"

According to a story in the March 30 issue of The Sporting News, **Walters** and **Bloom** signed 15 football players during the last year. Other agents familiar with some of the players said that only two, Paul Palmer of Temple and John Clay of Missouri, were still under contract with them. The loss of players, either previously under contract or merely associated with the company, is believed to be the primary reason behind the threats, sources said.

Also stemming from the contract disputes are a number of suits between players and World Sports. Trost said there were five suits pending in court, charging players with breaching their contracts with World Sports.

National Invitation Tournament

S. Mississippi tops La Salle for title

From Chicago Tribune wires

NEW YORK—Southern Mississippi's Golden Eagles captured the golden anniversary edition of the National Invitation Tournament, beating La Salle 84-80 Thursday at Madison Square Garden.

Derrek Hamilton scored 10 of his 17 points during a 16-4 streak that lifted Southern Mississippi to the state's first Division I title.

"Webster's dictionary doesn't have the words to describe how the players, coaches and fans feel about winning this," said Southern Mississippi coach M.K. Turk.

Hamilton had two three-pointers during the spurt that gave the Golden Eagles [23-11] a 59-48

lead with 10:13 left. He had three three-pointers for the game. Casey Fisher had 18 points on six long-range shots for Southern Miss, which had 11 three-pointers.

La Salle [20-13], which had three comebacks fall short in the closing minutes, was led by Lionel Simmons, who had 34 points. The Explorers died from three-point range, making only 4 of 24.

Three baskets by Simmons, two free throws by Rich Tarr and a basket by Craig Conlin made it 82-80 with 21 seconds left. After La Salle got the ball back on a five-second violation, Tarr went in the air to take the final shot but apparently changed his mind and wound up throwing the ball away.

John White then made two free throws with 6 seconds remaining.

Randolph Keys, the tournament's Most Valuable Player, also had 18 points for the Golden Eagles.

Brian Carr scored 18 points as Nebraska [21-12] beat Arkansas-

Little Rock 76-67 in overtime in the third-place game. James Dawn had 22 points for Little Rock [26-11].

S. MISSISSIPPI (84)—Hamilton 6-16 2-4 17, White 3-9 3-4 10, Keys 6-15 2-5 18, Fisher 6-14 0-0 18, Sier 6-8 4-4 17, Hinton 1-1 0-0 2, Pettus 0-1 0-0 0, Brown 1-1 0-1 2, Springer 1-2 0-1 11, 84.
LA SALLE (80)—Koretz 4-17 0-0 8, Simmons 12-19 10-10 34, Conlin 4-9 2-2 10, Legler 4-14 2-6 12, Tarr 4-11 4-4 14, Barnes 0-0 2-2 2, Jones 0-0 0-0 0, 28-70 20-24 80.

HAMILTON—S. Mississippi 39, La Salle 34. Three-point goals—S. Mississippi 11-24 (Fisher 6-11, Hamilton 3-4, Sier 1-2, White 1-5, Keys 0-1, Pettis 0-1). La Salle 4-24 (Legler 2-8, Tarr 2-7, Koretz 0-9). Fouled out—None. Rebounds—S. Mississippi 42 (Hamilton 12), La Salle 41 (Koretz, Simmons 11). Assists—S. Mississippi 23 (Fisher 7), La Salle 15 (Tarr 9). Total fouls—S. Mississippi 21, La Salle 18. A-12,742.

ARKANSAS-LITTLE ROCK (87)—Dawn 8-16 6-9 22, Hokes 5-14 1-3 11, Cummings 0-0 2-2 2, Brown 3-9 3-4 9, Springer 1-2 0-0 2, Kidd 4-11 8-9 16, Smith 1-1 0-0 2, Powell 1-6 0-0 3, 23-59 20-27 67.

NEBRASKA (78)—Day 4-5 2-4 10, Vick 6-11 5-7 17, Jackson 3-5 2-2 8, Buchanan 3-7 0-0 8, Carr 6-16 2-3 19, Neubert 2-5 2-4 6, Balous 2-7 4-4 9, Martz 0-0 0-0 0, 26-56 18-24 76.

HAMILTON—Nebraska 37, Little Rock 32. Rebounds—Little Rock 65, Nebraska 65. Three-point goals—Little Rock 1-7 (Powell 1-4, Brown 0-2, Dawn 0-1), Nebraska 6-13 (Carr 3-7, Buchanan 2-5, Balous 1-1). Fouled out—Jackson, Neubert. Rebounds—Little Rock 42 (Dawn 13), Nebraska 34 (Vick 12). Assists—Little Rock 17 (Springer 5), Nebraska 19 (Carr 9). Total fouls—Little Rock 19, Nebraska 19. Technical—Little Rock Coach Newell.

Dawn Caccamo and Glenn Edgerton in Gerald Arpino's Reflections. Photo by Herbert Migdoll



Meet an American classic.

The story of The Joffrey Ballet reads like one of those inspiring "rags-to-riches" tales of American folklore. Starting homeless and unknown, they have risen to international acclaim and acquired two homes—one in New York City, the other in Los Angeles, the better to dominate the world of dance across the continent.

From the beginning, it has been their faith that the classic ideas of ballet needed only a fresh infusion of an unabashedly American spirit to make them universally appealing. Over the years, they've turned that faith into a self-fulfilling prophecy. They do it with a wide-ranging repertory (from the lyrically lovely to the high-kicking hoedown) and with dancers who communicate a joyousness that captivates and compels. In the process, their faith in the magical mix of classic ideas and American zest has been richly rewarded: They have become an American classic themselves.

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Seikaly

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the next freshman?"
Next is Providence, which should present no ego problems for Seikaly. The Friars have no big men who have been compared with him or anyone else, and they lost to Syracuse twice during the Big East season.

Still, Seikaly says: "Providence is looking scary. Every time I've played Providence, I've been exhausted at the end of the game. There are no easy shots against them. They press you for 40 minutes.

"We're looking at a team that is very confident now that they've won some games. Before, they weren't sure how good they were. Now they've beaten enough people; they know how good they are."

But Seikaly thinks Syracuse is pretty good, too, and has thought so all along, even in the preseason when no one was picking the Orangemen to do much. "Pearl" Washington, Rafael Addison and Wendell Alexis were gone from a team that won 26 games last season but, as usual, had been bounced out of the NCAA tournament early.

"I remember going to the coach's office this summer and discussing this year," says Seikaly. "He told me a lot of people would be surprised at this team. I believed it. They were all over-looking Sherman [point guard Douglas]. He's too good a player, and people forgot that."

They apparently forgot, too, that Seikaly, for all of his inexperience, is an enormously gifted athlete.

Although he comes from a wealthy family, his basketball background was impoverished.

An American citizen, he spent most of his youth in Lebanon and Greece, where his father is "a businessman." Seikaly seems reluctant to go beyond that in describing what his father does and has been increasingly reticent since an uncle was kidnapped—and later released—by terrorists a few months ago. When pushed, he'll go so far as to say, "he's like a travel agent."

Seikaly knows first-hand the dangers of life in the strife-torn Middle East.

"You think the Carrier Dome is loud? You haven't heard anything

until you've heard a bomb," he says. "There is no sound like it in the world. You'd go to school sometimes and wonder if you would ever see your parents again."

He recalls his return from grade school one day: "I was going up the stairs to my apartment, and as soon as I walked into our home, a bomb exploded in the stairwell I had just walked past."

It was soon afterward that his father moved the family to the safety of Athens, where Rony went to high school.

He played soccer and volleyball, ran track, "every sport that was available." Basketball was available, but in a very small way. "We'd just play on our lunch break. It was very unorganized. Maybe a math teacher or the science teacher would volunteer to referee."

Seikaly says there was a high school team, "but not like here. It was more like a p.e. class. We played against some other high school teams, but maybe they'd have four players and would use the bus driver to play with them. It was a different kind of basketball."

His first taste of basketball, American style, came at the Five-Star camp in Pennsylvania in the summer of 1983.

Just picture it. All those high school All-Americans who'd spent their entire lives in a gym or shooting at a naked hoop on a playground in the ghetto, and in walks this 6-10 kid that "nobody's ever heard of or seen before," Seikaly says.

"I did very well. You could tell they were better basketball players than me, but I was a better athlete than most of them. That made me think."

After that camp, he visited his brother, who was attending Colgate. Someone there suggested that if he wanted to play college basketball, he should visit Boheim, who was conducting his own summer camp nearby.

"I look up at a guy who is 6-10," recalls Boheim, "and I may not be smart, but I'm not stupid." After checking with people who'd seen Seikaly at the Five-Star camp, Boheim offered him a scholarship.

Seikaly redshirted as a freshman, then was thrown right in with sharks like Ewing and St. John's Bill Wennington. By the end of the season, he would give intima-

ties of things to come when he so overpowered De Paul's Dallas Comegys in the first round of the NCAA tournament that Comegys went home determined to build up his strength.

"He showed some things then," says Boheim, "but he was very erratic. Again last year, he was erratic."

Seikaly's progress can be measured by the fact that he never scored 20 points in a game until the finals of the Big East tournament last year. He has scored 20 or more in all four games of this year's NCAA tournament.

"Since the tournament began, he's lifted his game to another level," says Boheim. "He's the major reason we're still playing."

A lot of the credit for his improvement goes to assistant coach Bernie Fine, who has worked with Seikaly since his arrival. "I go over and look at him about once a week," Boheim says. "That's all I can stand."

"I knew I had a lot of things to learn," Seikaly says. "I was a good athlete who used to block shots and jump well, but I didn't do things consistently. I've worked hard with Bernie Fine. He's molded me into an inside player."

Fine has Seikaly playing much more under control now. One result is that he's blocking fewer shots, but hanging around longer. Last year, as a sophomore, he fouled out of eight games; this year only three.

"It used to be, for every two blocks I'd get a foul," Seikaly says. "I'm playing a little smarter. I'm not jumping for no reason now. If I don't get a block, I'll go for the rebound."

"He's come a long way," says Boheim. "I remember that first practice here, when Andre Hawkins got 46 points on him in about 20 minutes. The better days of his game are still a couple of years in the future."

Now, what could be the biggest game of his life, is just a couple of days away. Seikaly reminisced about the first time he had ever been aware of the Final Four—in 1982, when it also was in New Orleans.

"North Carolina played Georgetown, and I watched it on video in Greece. But I thought it was just another game with a couple of good teams going for all the marbles. I didn't understand how big the Final Four is."