

NEWS

FBI INVESTIGATES SPORTS AGENTS

By Peter Frank and New York Times News Service
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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.
