

SCORECARD

CRAIG NEFF •



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AGENTS OF VIOLENCE?

When New York entertainment agents **Norby Walters** and **Lloyd Bloom** began pursuing college football players two years ago, reports circulated that the men were violating NCAA rules by paying athletes (and some parents) thousands of dollars to sign contracts before or during their senior seasons. By last January, at the Senior Bowl in Mobile, Ala., **Bloom**, 27, and Walters, his



ORIGINAL LAYOUT

54-year-old mentor, were reveling in the attention—and boasting that many of the stories were true.

"Everybody is gunning for me," bragged **Bloom** in a Mobile hotel lobby, pointing to Senior Bowl players he said Walters had paid. "We've put \$800,000 into this draft [Walters says **Bloom** doesn't know the exact financial details]. I'll sign anyone I want. The NCAA can't enforce [its rules]. I'll sign a sophomore if I want." The NCAA is, in fact, investigating reports that **Walters** and Bloom's company, World Sports & Entertainment, Inc., has already signed star juniors Cris Carter of Ohio State and Lorenzo White of Michigan State as clients. Both White and Carter deny the allegation.

Far more serious are reports that **Walters** and **Bloom** engaged in threats against both players and rival agents to keep clients from deserting them. FBI agents in at least eight states are investigating. In one suspicious incident, Kathe Clements, a business associate of Skokie, Ill., sports agent Steve Zucker, was stabbed and beaten unconscious in her office on March 16 by a man wearing a ski mask and gloves. Zucker, who represents the Bears' Jim McMahon, says he has signed three of WSE's former clients, including Nebraska senior Doug DuBose, whom Clements personally recruited. Zucker claims that Clements, the wife of former Notre Dame quarterback Tom Clements, now playing in the CFL, was confronted by **Bloom** at the Senior Bowl and told that "people who don't pay their debts can have their hands broken," an apparent reference to another Zucker client who allegedly owed Bloom and Walters money.

According to The New York Times, the Dallas FBI office has a taped conversation between **Bloom** and former SMU receiver Ronald Morris in which **Bloom** threatened to have Morris's hands broken if he signed with another agent. The Dallas office is also investigating alleged threats against another former WSE client, ex-SMU running back Jeff Atkins. Last month in Dallas a man who was driving Atkins's car was shot and killed. NFL Players Association sources say two of WSE's former clients called to say they, too, received threats from **Walters**. "Both players' stories were almost identical," an NFLPA source told The Atlanta Constitution. "They said Walters called them and told them, 'I'm going to talk to my people in Las Vegas and get them to break your legs.'"

A grand jury in Chicago has subpoenaed Walters and his recent business records as part of a broad federal investigation of racketeering, extortion and fraud in sports agency. Both **Walters** and **Bloom**, however, deny making threats or breaking any laws. Agents have been signing and paying players for years, says **Walters**. "All I did was sell better." Walters contends that the stories about violence and threats have been planted by rival agents jealous that WSE has signed "more potential first-rounders"—about 20, he claims—than any other agent in history.

Most of those blue-chip seniors have reportedly defected, however; the only ones still with WSE are said to be Paul Palmer of Temple and John Clay of Missouri. **Walters** and **Bloom** have filed suit in New York State Supreme Court against at least four ex-clients—former Iowa running back **Ronnie Harmon**, now with the Bills; All-America cornerback Rod Woodson of Purdue; Pitt defensive end Tony Woods; and Auburn running back Brent Fullwood—charging them with breach of contract and failure to repay loans or expenses. "They are the immoral ones," says **Walters**. "I haven't done anything illegal. They took my money."

Others disagree. Lawyers for some of the players WSE is suing insist Walters and **Bloom** performed no services as agents and used deceptive practices in signing the athletes. The NFLPA may move to decertify **Bloom** as a registered agent. Walters never sought NFLPA certification. "I don't feel like being governed by other institutions," he says.

—BRUCE SELCRAIG

ACID RAIN

With an eye on next week's Ottawa summit with Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, President Reagan has announced plans to seek \$2.5 billion in funding for future acid rain projects. Canadians complain that as much as half of the acid precipitation that falls on their soil comes from U.S. sources, primarily coal-burning power plants in the Ohio Valley. Reagan's proposal is meant as a peace offering to Canada, but he made the same \$2.5 billion promise last year and never followed up on it. Environmentalists fear that the President is again putting up no more than a political smoke screen.

Even if the funds are appropriated, they will likely subsidize nothing more than additional acid rain studies. The President has long maintained that we don't know enough about acid rain to do anything but study it. However, the evidence is now fairly conclusive that acid rain is caused by nitrogen and sulfur oxides, 50 million tons of which are spewed into the air each year by U.S. utility plants. With that in mind, Rep. Gerry Sikorski (D., Minn.) plans to introduce a bill that would require utilities to reduce emissions of nitrogen and sulfur oxide by roughly 50%. Sikorski's measure would attack acid rain at the source—but Reagan is expected to oppose it.

Environmentalists hope Mulroney will press Reagan on how the \$2.5 billion would be spent. It has been shown that acid rain damages lakes, trees, corn crops and even buildings. The problem demands action, not study.

A NAME TO RELISH

Georgia Southern sports information director Mark McClellan was pondering a problem recently. Tracy Ham, the quarterback who led the Eagles to back-to-back Division I-AA national titles, is leaving, and the school's vaunted Hambone I offense will have to be retired. What should its successor be called? McClellan's answer: "the Spambone I. Spam is supposed to be the perfect substitute for ham, isn't it?"

JAIL BIRDIE?

As punishment for illegally diverting \$300,000 in material and labor from a California building project, former construction manager Robert Kelly of Oakland has been sentenced to a nine-month work furlough at Oakland's Lake Chabot Municipal Golf Course. He's getting off easy, right? Well, maybe not that easy.

Kelly, you see, is a fanatical golfer. He diverted the material and labor in order to build himself a home near the famed course at Pebble Beach. With that in mind, Alameda County Superior Court judge David C. Lee ruled that Kelly must go to the heavily used Lake Chabot course every day for nine months—to schedule tee times for other golfers. Kelly will not be allowed to play a single hole, no matter how badly he wants to, and will be incarcerated except during working hours. Said judge Lee, "The irony of the situation is clear."

LINEUP OF HEROES

Seaver, Winfield, Reggie—they've all come and gone from the celebrity-sandwich menu at New York's famous Stage Deli. "People like to see some new names in there," says Arthur Lazar, the restaurant's general manager. Stage has just unveiled a new lineup: The Dwight Gooden (grilled salami, swiss cheese, sauerkraut) has been replaced, alas, by the Richard Chamberlain. In a tribute to new champions, however, the restaurant has added the Gary Carter (salami, pastrami, coleslaw and, of course, tongue), the Mike Tyson Triple Decker Knockout (Nova Scotia salmon, lake sturgeon, lettuce, tomato, onion) and the Phil Simms (chicken salad, bacon, lettuce, tomato). "If they don't want the Giants to have a parade in New York, what the hell, we'll put 'em on the menu," says Lazar. Anyone bold enough can try the new Lawrence Taylor (egg salad, anchovies, lettuce, tomato).

One addition could become a Stage classic. It's menu item No. 23, the Don Mattingly (open sliced steak, lettuce and tomato). "That's the highest priced beef sandwich," says Lazar.

HIGH FIVE? YER OUT!

Lamar University's baseball team lost 3-2 to Houston the other day on a curious call. Cardinal first baseman Neil Reynolds homered in the third inning but was declared out for performing a high five with the on-deck hitter before crossing the plate. A little noticed 1984 NCAA rule change—designed to keep teammates from swarming onto the field after a game-winning homer—bars any contact with the runner until he scores. Lamar argued correctly that Reynolds should have received just a warning: only on the second offense is a runner to be called out. But the ump wouldn't back down.

A home run hitter thrown out for celebrating? What would Bobby Thomson say?

PHOTO

WORLD SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT, INC.

Walters admits he paid seniors.

PHOTO

CARL SKALAK

WSE is suing ex-client **Harmon**.

ILLUSTRATION

PATRICK McDONNELL

THEY SAID IT

•Chi Chi Rodriguez, golf pro, questioning the oft-cited need to keep one's eye on the ball:
"The USGA has a machine that can hit a ball 300 yards every time, and it has never seen a golf ball."

•Phil Esposito, Rangers coach and general manager, when asked why he has made so many trades in his first year: "I want to win now. I might be hit by a bus tomorrow."

•Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Laker center, after being assessed his 4,194th career foul, an NBA record: "Half of them were bad calls."

APRIL 06, 1987

