

← Back

# Bears' Douglass tells threat to break his legs

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*By Adrienne Drell March 16, 1989 Publication: Chicago Sun-Times Page: 1 Word Count: 449*

Chicago Bears defensive back Maurice Douglass testified Wednesday that **Lloyd Bloom** threatened to "have someone break my legs" for ending a contract with the sports agent. Douglass, 25, recalled an April, 1986, phone call in which **Bloom** also demanded that Douglass return cash and car payments that totaled nearly \$9,000.

Appearing as a witness at the **racketeering**, mail **fraud** and conspiracy trial of **Bloom** and fellow agent **Norby Walters**, Douglass said he had just dismissed the two in favor of another agent he had previously retained.

Now a resident of Arlington Heights, Douglass was then a senior at the University of Kentucky.

While on a subsequent visit to his mother's home in Cincinnati, Douglass said, the phone kept ringing with calls from **Bloom**.

"If you don't give the rest of our money now, I'll send somebody down to rough you up, and you might not make it to the draft," Douglass said **Bloom** warned.

The seventh athlete to testify for the government in the trial, Douglass, who appears as a male stripper in the off-season, wore a sand-colored designer outfit to court.

Bloom's phone call frightened him enough that he advised his mother, "If anything happened, notify the police. Lloyd Bloom threatened me," Douglass testified.

"I was worried," Douglass, who was drafted by the Bears only days after the phone call, told Assistant U.S. Attorney Howard Pearl. "He probably could get somebody to do something to me. I wasn't sure . . . I was really, really scared. . . ."

Bloom's attorney, Dan Webb, accused Douglass of "double dealing" by taking money from Bloom and Walters and the other agent at the same time.

"It must look like that," responded Douglass, who also admitted he never told police or law enforcement officials about the alleged threat.

Ethan Levin-Epstein, one of Walters' attorneys, asked how Douglass could sign a contract with the other agent in November, 1985, and then another with Walters and Bloom a month later.

Douglass, who had been flown to New York by the two agents, taken to a party with Walters' client, singing star Patti LaBelle, and shown \$2,500 as an inducement, insisted he never meant to sign a contract with them. "But when you spread \$2,500 out in front of any college kid, they'll take it right now. So I signed," said Douglass.

In other testimony Wednesday, Garland Rivers, former University of Michigan football star, said the two agents traveled to his Ohio home to offer him \$2,500 in cash to sign a postdated contract.

He said that when he tried to drop the agents and offered to pay back money received, they threatened to expose him to college officials.

Subsequently, Rivers, 25, said Michigan coach Bo Schembechler confronted him with the postdated agreement. Rivers admitted the truth and lost his scholarship.

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**Page:** 1

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