

Embattled Landry fights distractions as season nears end

IRVING, Texas (AP) — Dallas coach Tom Landry, reacting to minority owner Ed Smith's suggestion that the Dallas Cowboys don't have any leadership, said Tuesday, "All I know is, as a football team you have to be together to win."

Landry said Smith's 27 percent ownership gave him the right to say anything he wants "even if the comment he makes isn't right."

Smith told KDFW-TV of Dallas: "We haven't had any leadership in the last three, four, five years. I think you have to blame the coach-

ing staff. Maybe you blame (club president) Tex Schramm to some extent."

Landry said he wasn't "aggravated" by Smith of Houston, who reportedly was looking into buying the team.

Landry said he is staying through next season and perhaps longer depending on who buys the club.

"We're for sale and when somebody buys the team they'll have to make a decision on who they keep," Landry said. "I don't know what will happen but right now it's my job to

put the Cowboys back on top. I'm not going to quit on my players. They're trying hard."

"I may be out of a job, I don't know. If I am it would be great. I could find something to do but I sure wouldn't be listening to you guys (the media). I can't say when my last season will be. We'll just have to wait and see what it (the sale) brings."

Schramm said, "I wish I knew when (the club) would be sold. Bum (Bright) has the club for sale, not me."

Bright, issuing a statement

through aide Jim Francis, said it is not true that limited partners have a right of first refusal should the majority owner elect to sell.

"There is no such right of first refusal on the part of the limited partners," Bright said. "Further, it is not true that the offer of Ed Smith, as reported by television, was acceptable to H.R. Bright. There has been no offer made."

Landry said he had talked to Smith just once on the telephone earlier in the season. He denied television reports that a shouting match erupted.

"Can you imagine me in a shouting match?" the quiet-spoken Landry said, laughing.

Schramm, who has Bright's approval to solicit bids, has been frustrated in his attempts to find a buyer for the team. Bright has asked \$100 million for the club and \$50 million for Texas Stadium.

Donald Carter, owner of the Dallas Mavericks of the NBA, recently said he would like to buy the Cowboys "and restore them to their former glory."

"I wish we could get an owner who could do that," Landry quipped.

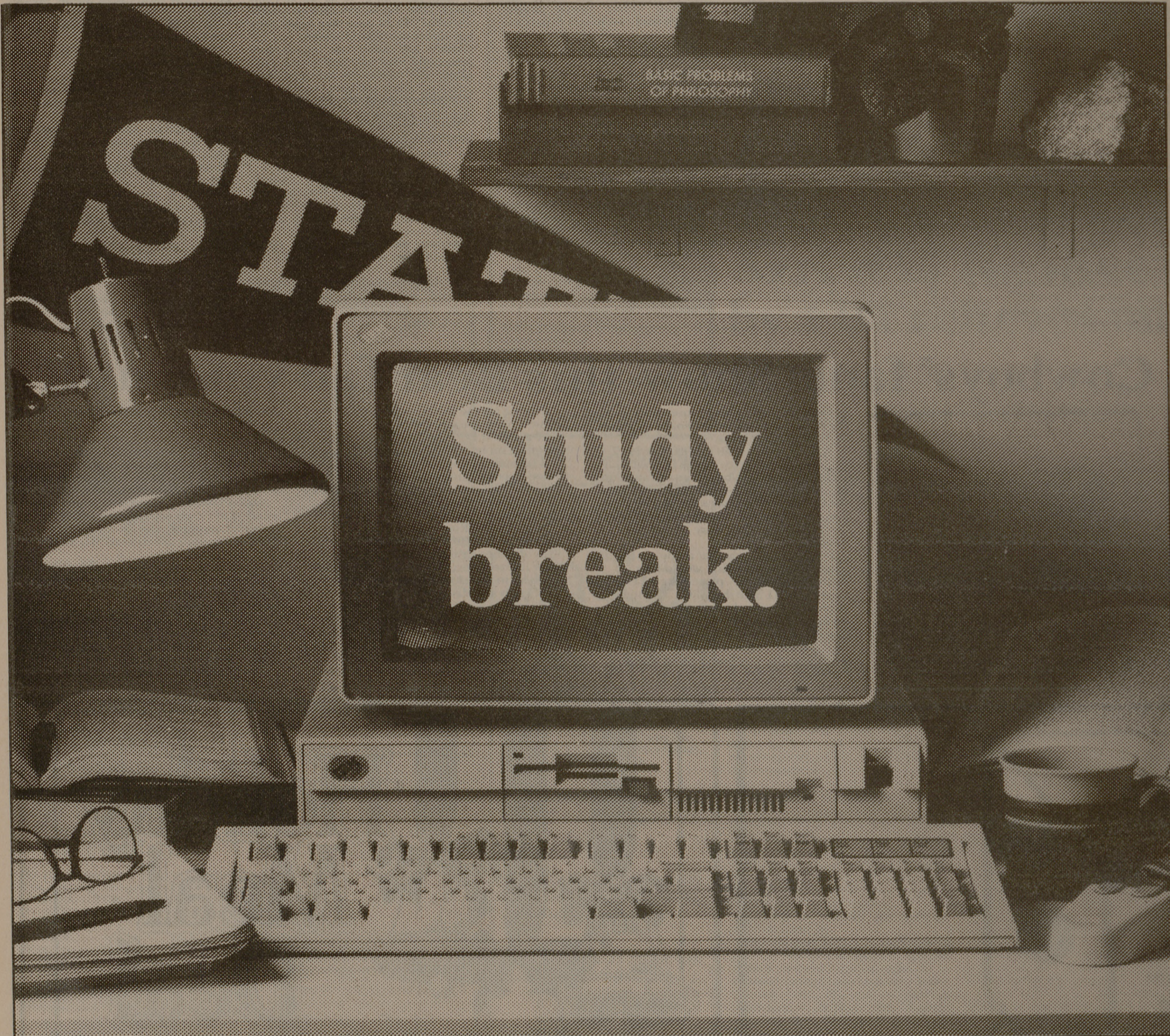
"If he could do that it would make my job easier."

The Cowboys have a club-record 12 losses and will play at Washington on Sunday.

"I've been disappointed that our players have played some good games but haven't had a chance to be congratulated yet," Landry said.

Dallas hasn't won since defeating Atlanta 26-20 on Sept. 25.

"I've never had a team that was any harder or played any harder," Landry said.



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