

# Clemens signs 3-year pact with Boston

## Two-time Cy Young winner now one of baseball's richest

HOUSTON (AP) — He earned the nickname "Rocket" for the way his fastball moves on the field. From now on, Roger Clemens' nickname will apply to his paychecks, too.

Clemens agreed Wednesday to a three-year contract with the Boston Red Sox worth \$7.5 million, the highest average annual salary in baseball history. The 1986 and 1987 American League Cy Young Award winner will get a \$300,000 signing bonus, \$2.2 million this season, \$2.5 million in 1990 and \$2.5 million in 1991.

"I'm happy to get it settled at this point," Clemens said during an interview at the office of his agents. "I didn't feel like going to arbitration because I've heard a lot of negative things coming out."

Clemens earned \$1.5 million in 1988, when he slumped to 18-12 with a 2.93 earned-run average and a league-leading 291 strikeouts in 264 innings. He is 78-34 in his major league career and won the Cy Young Award after going 24-4 in 1986 and 20-9 in 1987.

This contract was agreed to more amicably than his last one. In 1987, Clemens held out and settled on a two-year deal only after the intervention of Commissioner Peter Ueberroth.

"Now, I'm just looking to bigger and better things," Clemens said. "I've tried to perform at the top level of all the pitchers in the league. I always knew if I did the job, everything off the field would take care of itself."



His average annual salary of \$2.5 million is the most ever in baseball, even though his 1989 salary will be only the sixth highest. Including a prorated share of his signing bonus, Clemens will earn \$2.6 million in each of the 1990 and 1991 seasons, the highest single-season salaries ever in baseball.

Don Mattingly's \$2.5 million in 1990 with the New York Yankees was the previous high in straight salary. Eddie Murray of the Los Angeles Dodgers will get \$2.8 million in 1991, but \$500,000 is deferred without interest, lowering its present-day value substantially.

Clemens had asked for \$2.36 million in arbitration and Boston had offered \$1.9 million. For the Red Sox, the key was getting a three-year deal. Clemens would have become eligible for free agency following the 1990 season.

"While it may represent the highest salary per year ever earned in baseball, that's not going to last too long in my opinion," said Randy Hendricks, one of Clemens' agents. "I believe that salaries are going to continue going up."

At four years, 142 days of major league service, Clemens reached \$2 million faster than any other player in history, beating Minnesota's Kirby Puckett by five days. And Clemens could make even more.

In addition to his salary, Clemens has the opportunity to earn \$350,000 per year in bonuses. He would get \$100,000 for winning the Cy Young Award and \$50,000 for finishing second. He would get \$100,000 for winning the American League Most Valuable Player and \$50,000 for finishing second or third. He would get \$50,000 if he is MVP of the AL playoffs and

\$100,000 if he is MVP of the World Series.

Despite his star performances, which include a major-league record 20 strikeouts against Seattle on April 29, 1986, Clemens had become somewhat of an item in the Boston sports pages this winter. He made remarks that Boston fans took to be insulting, then tried to clarify them and got in even worse trouble.

"All that was written and said, I had no control over that," Clemens said. "They took some things out of context and ran with them. The people who know Roger Clemens will be with me. I can't worry about that. I still have to go out and do the job and be consistent."

Some of Clemens' complaints dealt with the conditions at Fenway Park and fears for the safety of his family at the ballpark.

"We'll sit down and go over his complaints one by one," Boston general manager Lou Gorman said at the team's training camp in Winter Haven, Fla. "We don't expect any difficulty there."

Clemens, who lives in Katy, Texas, had wondered what it would be like to pitched in his native state. He could have done that in two years by becoming a free agent, but the security of a three-year deal is more important.

"You talk to any player about playing in his hometown, and that's he would want to do," Clemens said. "I'm happy to hear the fans here talk about that. But I have an opportunity with Boston the next three years. There are a lot of records to be broken."

Gorman, who in December lost left-hander Bruce Hurst to the San Diego Padres through free agency, was relieved to have the Clemens deal done.

"We wanted to commit him to this ballclub for three years and hopefully many more," Gorman said. "He's a major part of our ballclub. Equally important, it proves that Roger wants to stay. It's a long contract and a big one, so it took some time. We're buying out a year of free agency and two years of arbitration. If players give up some rights, you have to pay for it. Based on what Gooden got and Hershiser is looking for, we felt this was in the ballpark."

Dwight Gooden signed a three-year, \$6.7 million deal with the New York Mets last week and Orel Hershiser is asking for \$8.3 million over three years from the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Clemens' agents, feeling that salaries will continue to escalate as baseball's new national television contracts go into effect, were reluctant to discuss a multiyear contract.

"They basically wanted to go with a one-year agreement and then talk about two or three years later," Gorman said. "We were adamant in going for a three-year contract. The last three days we've been on the phone five, six seven hours at a time. We just kept working on it."

# Ueberroth wants Rangers sale finalized before he leaves post

GRAPEVINE (AP) — Baseball Commissioner Peter Ueberroth said he intends to see that the drawn-out sale of the Texas Rangers is completed before he leaves office at the end of March.

Ueberroth met with five potential buyers of the team Tuesday during an eight-hour whirlwind stop in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

"That's a clear goal," Ueberroth said Tuesday during a one-hour news briefing before catching a flight to San Antonio. "I'm not commissioner past March 31. I see it coming before that. We want to find the best solution for everybody."

The Fort Worth Star-Telegram reported Wednesday that among those with whom Ueberroth met were:

- Former Rangers minority owner Raymond Nasher, a Dallas real estate developer;
- George W. Bush, the President's son, who has formed a partnership with Cincinnati's Bill DeWitt Jr. in an effort to purchase the team;
- Fort Worth businessman Richard Rainwater.

Most of the meetings were at an airport hotel, but the Star-Telegram reported that Ueberroth left the hotel late in the afternoon for two meetings believed to be in Fort Worth, one of which was with Rainwater.

Also present at Tuesday's meetings were American League president Dr. Bobby Brown; Chicago White Sox owner Jerry Reinsdorf, chairman of the powerful ownership committee that has recommended that Rangers minority partner Edward Gaylord's bid to buy the team be disapproved; and Ed Durso, general counsel for baseball, the Star-Telegram reported.

Ueberroth would not say whether he would overrule the owners if they should vote down the contract that majority owner Eddie Chiles now has with Gaylord of Oklahoma City, but he did say that he has postponed a special meeting on the subject for a second time. It had been scheduled for next Monday, Ueberroth said. "I've asked that the meeting that

was to be held be postponed because I didn't think it would produce results that would necessarily be good for the franchise," Ueberroth said. "My job is to care about the franchise."

The owners still are expected to meet in special session before their next regularly scheduled meeting in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., on March 10.

Nasher, a member of the Rangers' board of directors and minority partner when Brad Corbett owner the team, tried on numerous occasions to purchase the team in the late '70s and early '80s before selling his stock to Chiles. He said he's not ruling out the possibility of making another attempt.

"At this point, I'm not ruling out anything," Nasher said after a one-hour meeting with Ueberroth.

Ueberroth said he envisions local ownership that would model itself after the Milwaukee, Cincinnati, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh franchises. Majority ownership of each of those franchises is held by a group of investors with a managing partner. At Milwaukee, for instance, Bud Selig is managing partner of the Brewers, though he owns only 26 percent of the team.

"Three years ago, when we set up criteria for expansion, or relocation of a present franchise, one of the main three items we looked for was local ownership with roots," Ueberroth said. "This trip was necessitated because of that. Local ownership with roots means what it means."

"If Mr. Gaylord was turned down, it would be my desire as commissioner to see the ownership go to another Texas group."

Ueberroth said many owners remain adamantly opposed to approving a new owner with broadcast interests. Gaylord owns Gaylord Broadcasting, which includes a Fort Worth TV station that carries Rangers games.

"The television station is an obstacle," Ueberroth said, "possibly an insurmountable obstacle."

Ueberroth said he would like to work out a solution in which Gaylord at least remains involved with the Rangers as a minority owner. He owns 33 percent of the club.

Among the prospective buyers who did not meet Tuesday with Ueberroth was Fort Worth auto dealer Roger Williams, who has joined forces with New Jersey real estate developer Bill Mack in an effort to buy the team.

"Why he would want to meet with other people is beyond me when he's got the Bush group and he's got us," Williams told the Star-Telegram. "He has got buyers right here. He ought to be talking to people who want the team, not people he has to force to buy it. The rationale behind that is hard for me to understand."

Rainwater confirmed his session with Ueberroth but said he would have no comment on the meeting. Bush, first on Ueberroth's appointment list after the commissioner arrived on a mid-morning flight from New York, was unavailable for comment.

"You never know the results of a day like today right away," Ueberroth said. "The purpose ... of the

**"Local ownership with roots means what it means. If Mr. Gaylord was turned down, it would be my desire as commissioner to see the ownership go to another Texas group."**

**— Peter Ueberroth, baseball commissioner**

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