

# Baseball owners to discuss fate of commissioner

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Baseball owners will gather Thursday afternoon at an airport hotel outside Chicago to discuss Fay Vincent, but it's still unclear if they will pressure him to quit as commissioner or attempt to fire him.

It appeared Wednesday that representatives of all 28 teams would attend the special meeting, called by the league presidents last week over Vincent's objection. The commissioner will not attend because he says the Major League Agreement prohibits discussion of the terms and duties of the incumbent.

"I really don't expect that he will be fired on Thursday," Chicago White Sox owner Jerry Reinsdorf said. "I just don't know what's going to happen. We have a lot of things to talk about."

It appeared 13 or 14 teams were against Vincent and that 10-12 were supporting him. The views of the San Diego Padres and Detroit Tigers were unclear.

"I know that there's a majority

that's not going to be behind him," Philadelphia Phillies owner Bill Giles said. "How many, I don't know."

Because the Major League Agreement doesn't have a mechanism for firing a commissioner, it also was unclear what options were available to the disenchanted owners. An attempted firing would lead to a court fight that could tie up baseball's administration for a lengthy time.

The anti-Vincent group, by many accounts, is led by Reinsdorf, Bud Selig of the Milwaukee Brewers, Stanton Cook of the Chicago Cubs and Peter O'Malley of the Los Angeles Dodgers.

"Doesn't the board of directors fire its chairman or its president if it's not satisfied that the chairman or the president is (not) doing what the board of directors wants done?" Reinsdorf asked. "These franchises are owned by the owners, so to speak, and the commissioner is the employee of the owners. And if the commissioner is not doing a good job for the owners, then he ought to be dismissed."

# Bates relives fond memories of RFK

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IRVING, Texas — The Washington Redskins have provided Tom Landry's final victory, Jimmy Johnson's first triumph and Bill Bates' fondest memories.

Bates, the safety whose decade with the Cowboys has been defined by ice packs and bloodied uniform pants, figures to start this season the same way he started his career as the Cowboys prepare to resume their rivalry with the Redskins on Sept. 7 at Texas Stadium.

On Sept. 5, 1983, another Monday night, Washington was the opponent for Bates' first NFL game.

"There's so many games and things that have happened that I will remember," he said. "The plays still flash in my mind."

Bates was at RFK Stadium when Landry won with the Cowboys for the last time in 1988 and the next season when Johnson earned his only rookie victory.

There was a certain uneasiness, suspicion and paranoia during Redskins week under Landry's direction, Bates said. While Johnson is no less intense or focused, Bates said, he appears more self-assured.

Of course, Johnson never had to coach against George Allen, whom Landry suspected was responsible for spying on his practices.

The NFC East has more competitive balance these days, and Johnson seems to consider the Redskins just another challenger. The closest thing to a rivalry Johnson has had was with the Philadelphia Eagles when Buddy Ryan coached them.

Landry was more likely to integrate new plays or personnel matchups into his game plans when the Cowboys played the Redskins than Johnson has been, Bates said.

"I think Coach Landry pulled out a few more tricks here and there that we would save for the Redskins — a special play or a new blitz we hid until that particular game," Bates said. "I think that had a lot to do with Coach Landry's era. He knew that game

— Washington-Dallas — meant so much to the rest of the year.

"Coach Johnson won his only game that first year there. We've got a lot of confidence against them. The great thing about our staff is they've got confidence, and you can tell they have confidence against their staff and what they're going to do."

Bates played his first pro game against the Redskins and has been involved in some of the most memorable — if temporarily forgettable — scenes from the series.

The first happened during Bates' second season, when he found himself in the Redskins' huddle, his misdirection the product of a collision with John Riggins.

"The fourth quarter up there, they're killing us," Bates said. "They're running the counter trap over and over. Riggins is getting the ball, and I know I'm going to meet him in the hole. I went running in there as fast as I could and hit him head-on, and he didn't knock me back, and I didn't knock him back. We both went sideways."

"I get up shaking my head and go into the Redskins' huddle. They're kicking me out, wanting to fight me. Well, I see Riggins finally get up, and he's walking off the field. I decide I'm going back to my huddle, staying in the game, because if he leaves and I don't, then I got the best of that one."

Fog aside, Bates always is certain about the magnitude of the game when the Cowboys play the Redskins. He said he has attempted to convey the importance of those meetings and his appreciation of the rivalry to younger teammates.

"When I came in, I knew what the rivalry was because I was a Cowboys fan," he said. "The guys that are coming in now, I hope they know that it's a big deal."

"I told Larry Brown before we played them last year, driving up to the stadium, 'Remember this game because there's not a better time or a better place to be playing professional football than in this stadium right here. Whether we win or lose, remember this.'"

# Foster

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Last season, the Tigers came into College Station to play the Aggies in Kyle Field, a stadium where they have only won ONE game in the history of the series, that coming in 1987. They lost again, receiving a 45-7 thrashing at the hands of Slocum's troops.

The Aggies haven't won in "Death Valley" since 1975.

Although they came at different points of the season, both teams also had a major tragedy to deal with. The Aggies had to handle the death of place-kicker James Glenn a year ago. This season, the Tigers suffered through Hurricane Andrew with the rest of the Gulf coast.

R.C. Slocum went to college in Louisiana, while Hallman is a graduate of A&M.

O.K., maybe that's stretching the similarities a bit.

If we keep this up, the inexperienced Tigers will be Southeastern Conference champions with a 10-1 record and playing in the Sugar Bowl in no time.

That, my friends, is where the likenesses end.

Sure, LSU has some great freshman backs, much like the Aggies had Greg Hill and Rodney Thomas last season. And one of those, Robert Toomer,

had 7,868 yards in his high school career, which is almost comparable to Thomas' incredible career mark of 8,441 in his career at Groveton High School.

But that won't be enough for the Tigers to follow in the Aggies footsteps. The biggest difference in the two teams: Defensive talent.

As young as the Aggies were last season, they did return their two best defensive players, All-American cornerback Kevin Smith and Quentin Coryatt, who was easily the best, and most overlooked, linebacker in the nation last season.

Hallman, however, lost the majority of his secondary. Starters Corey Raymond, Wayne Williams and Robby Green have all graduated, and the Tigers have had to move tailback Vincent Fuller to the secondary to fill the void.

And, on an inexperienced team, a strong defense is often what can keep you in the win column. As long as the other team doesn't score, the offense has time to work out the bugs.

So, don't look for a 45-7 LSU win this weekend. Although the "Curse of Death Valley" should have been lifted two years ago, the gap between the Aggies and the Tigers is probably greater than it's ever been.

That is, as long as the Aggie "D" keeps the crowd quiet. It's tough to win a game of 11 against 80,140.

# Hallman

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line, linebackers and quarterbacks.

"On our offensive line, we've got some maturity back," Hallman said of a group led by first team All-Southeastern Conference tackle Kevin Mawae. "Our tight end, Harold Bishop, is back after missing last season. And (quarterback) Chad Loup, with his experience, is a plus. "Defensively, at our outside

linebacker position, we've got some depth and maturity."

Hallman softened the blow of losing defensive backs Corey Raymond, Wayne Williams and Robby Green to graduation by moving tailback Vincent Fuller to the secondary. That move helped shore up a position that the Tigers' head man is still worried about.

"In the secondary, we lost three youngsters that played well for us," Hallman said. "That's a concern for us."

Both backs replacing Fuller on offense, Robert Davis and David Butler, are true freshmen.

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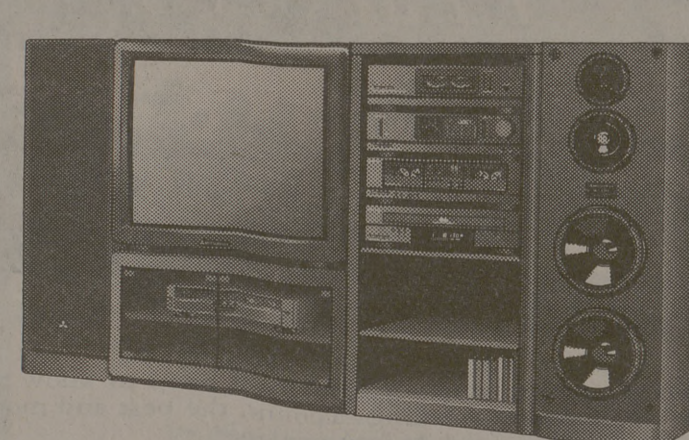
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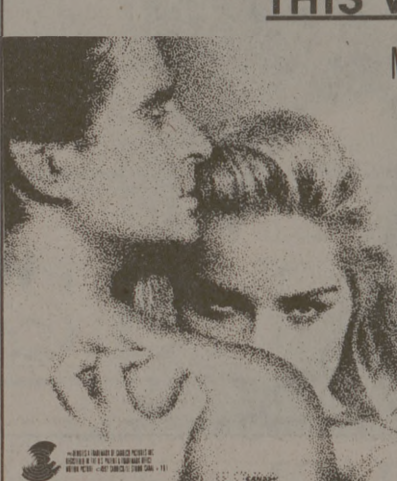
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