

Leg injury leaves Rodman a step behind

The Bulls forward is expected to be out for a month.

CHICAGO (AP) — Chicago Bulls forward Dennis Rodman said Thursday he will be out about a month with a leg injury, but the team said his status is day-to-day.

Rodman told Chicago radio station WSCR-AM that he ripped his left calf muscle trying to jump on the last play of Tuesday's game against the Toronto Raptors.

He said it feels similar to an injury he suffered three years ago that caused him to sit

out for a month.

"I know it's a month," he told the station in a telephone interview from Cleveland, where the Bulls are playing the Cavaliers. "It's kind of disappointing."

Bulls spokesman Tom Smithburg said Rodman would be examined by team doctors Friday.

Tuesday night's 117-108 win over Toronto was his best game with the Bulls — 11 points, 13 rebounds and six assists.

Rodman is known for his hair color changes, tattoos, a brief romance with Madonna, missing practices, suspensions and saying outrageous things. After signing

with Chicago, he said he would sit out the season unless his \$2.5 million salary was raised. He quickly dropped the matter.

The 6-foot-8 forward, who has led the NBA in rebounding four straight seasons, came to the Bulls in an offseason trade with the San Antonio Spurs.

Many here wondered how he would fit in with Michael Jordan and Scottie Pippen — two players he had been at odds with when he played for the Detroit Pistons. But Rodman has behaved himself so far and the three have performed well together on the court as the Bulls have started 3-0, their best season start in years.

Astros may remain for one more season

A Houston Chronicle story reported that McLane might rethink his decision to sell.

HOUSTON (AP) — Astros owner Drayton McLane Jr. will likely keep the team here for at least one more season, the Houston Chronicle reported yesterday.

The brakes on the apparent bolt out of Houston would give McLane more time to gain support inside baseball for a move, unidentified sources told the Chronicle.

The delay would also give Houston officials time to mount a ticket drive and find local buyers for the team.

At the same time, McLane has informed baseball and local officials he may place the franchise in bankruptcy and sue Major League Baseball for damages because its officials are blocking a deal, the sources said.

"Drayton is going to make all kinds of threats, because he wants out in the worst way," said one unidentified baseball official. "But the bottom line is, he can't get out in 1996 and he knows it. He is going to have to put up a positive front and say he is giving it one more year here to see if things improve."

McLane and Astros executive vice president Bob McClaren did not return phone calls Wednesday or yesterday to discuss the team's plans.

McLane has said he would decide by this weekend about whether he will keep the team in Houston or attempt to sell it to Virginia businessman Bill Collins.

Collins, who has reportedly offered at least \$150 million for a majority share of a franchisee wants to move the team to the Washington suburbs.

McLane claims the team has lost \$60 million over the past three years.

Baseball owners have let McLane know they intend to block a move — a power they have under anti-trust exemption status granted by a 1922 U.S. Supreme Court decision that allows baseball to restrict the location of its franchises. Other sports leagues do not have such powers, allowing team owners to move freely.

Two weeks ago, McLane told Houston Mayor Bob Lanier and Harris County Judge Robert Eckels he was considering challenging that anti-trust status, the sources said.

McLane, who made his money in the food distribution business, would start by folding the franchise and forcing baseball to take over the team's payroll. Then, he would sue the league for losses, claiming it prevents him from making a profit by blocking a sale to Collins.

"Drayton is going to make all kinds of threats because he wants out ..."

— unidentified baseball official

A week later, a source said, McLane made the same threats at baseball's Executive Council meeting in Milwaukee.

Few believe that McLane will actually challenge the league, because of the messy situation he would be in should the legal maneuvering fail.

"Drayton might try that because he doesn't like to lose," said one source very close to McLane. "But I just don't see that happening."

One baseball source said owners don't believe McLane has given the Houston market enough chance to prove it can support baseball, because the sport was embroiled in a strike during two of the three years he has owned the franchise.

McLane paid \$115 million for the team three years ago.

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WBC stands behind plans for Tyson fight

Frank Bruno will get his second chance at the world champion.

CHIANG MAI, Thailand (AP) — The World Boxing Council yesterday reaffirmed its decision to have world heavyweight champion Frank Bruno fight Mike Tyson in March.
Twenty-eight members of the council's ruling board voted to go ahead with the Bruno-Tyson bout. Three British delegates abstained from voting.
The WBC decision does not clear all hurdles to the fight. Former champion Lennox Lewis is seeking an injunction to prevent the council from replacing him with Tyson.
A lucrative purse awaits any challenger who steps into the ring with Tyson. Lewis would be a step closer to such a fight if he could fight Bruno first.
"The date is still to be confirmed, but March 16 is the one we are looking at. I'm highly delighted justice was seen to be done," Bruno's promoter, Frank Warren, said after the voting.
Lewis' manager, Frank Maloney, said the WBC was making up rules to suit itself and "making a person bigger than an organization, and that person is Mike Tyson."
"We are still in court in New Jersey. We are still pursuing the legal fight because I am right," said Panos Eliades, Lewis' financial backer.
The fact that both Bruno and Lewis are British led to the abstention by the British delegation.
Speaking before the committee's vote, Bruno said he was ready to match Tyson's strength in the ring.
"I've done all my obligations. I'm a law-abiding citizen. I'm entitled to fight whoever I want to fight," he said.
Despite his record of 38 knockouts in 40 professional victories, many WBC delegates say Bruno lacks Tyson's power and the stamina to absorb it.
Bruno fought Tyson once before, in 1989, and was stopped in five rounds.
"It's a crazy question. You wait after Mike Tyson and I fight and I'll tell you about brute strength," Bruno said. "I'm not worried. He's no more fearful than anybody else out there."



Tyson

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