

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

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Legendary Cowboys owner Tex Schramm dead at 83

By Jaime Aron
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DALLAS — Tex Schramm, who turned the Dallas Cowboys into "America's Team" with his bold innovations and keen eye for promotion and was instrumental in making the NFL a billion-dollar industry, died Tuesday. He was 83.

The former Cowboys president and general manager died at his Dallas home, said Schramm's son-in-law, Greg Court.

"Tex will go down as one of the most influential figures in the history of the NFL," said Don Shula, the league's winningest coach. "I truly believe he had as much, or more, to do with the success of professional football as anyone who has ever been connected with the league."

Schramm was a showman with a passion for football. His focus was the Cowboys, but he was always thinking about what could help the league, too, with ideas ranging from using professional dancers as cheerleaders to letting officials correct calls through instant replay.

His dedication was recognized in 1991, when he became the first team executive elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

"The NFL family has lost one of its giants," commissioner Paul Tagliabue said. "Tex Schramm was one of the visionary leaders in sports history — a thinker, doer, innovator and winner with few equals."

After carving out his reputation as an executive with the Los Angeles Rams and CBS-TV Sports, the 39-year-old Schramm was hired to start the NFL team in Dallas before it was even formally approved by the league.

His first move was to hire Tom Landry as his coach. Despite opposite personalities, their "business relationship" — as Schramm called it — produced 20 straight winning seasons, 18 playoff appearances, 13 division titles, five Super Bowl appearances and two championships.

Schramm left the organization in 1989, two months after Jerry Jones bought the club and fired Landry.

A strained relationship with Jones left

Schramm out of the club's Ring of Honor — until April, when Jones decided the man who created the Ring should be in it. Schramm will become the 12th honoree this fall, joining 11 people he brought to the Cowboys.

"I never gave up hope," he had said at a news conference announcing his selection, his eyes filling with tears. "Things that should happen to people that deserve them, usually do happen."

Jones said having Schramm's name on the facade of the upper deck at Texas Stadium ensures "his spirit will be honored for years to come."

"This organization and its fans will forever be the beneficiaries of Tex Schramm's spirit and vision — his passion and creativity," Jones said Tuesday.

While Schramm's contribution to the Cowboys is enough to leave a profound mark on pro football, it's only a piece of his NFL legacy.

Schramm spurred the league's evolution and popularity by wielding two powerful tools: He was the chairman of the competition committee for 25 years, and was such a close adviser to commissioner Pete Rozelle that some jokingly called Schramm the "vice commissioner." Their relationship dated to 1952, when Schramm gave Rozelle his first NFL job by making him publicity director of the Rams.

Among the rule changes Schramm oversaw: the addition of regular-season overtime in 1974, putting the official time on the scoreboard, moving goal posts from the front of the end zone to the back, and protecting quarterbacks through the in-the-grasp rule.

Radios in quarterback helmets were his idea, as were wide sideline borders and wind-direction strips dangling atop the goal posts. He also pushed the six-division, wild-card playoff concept.

"He made so many contributions, you would run out of ink if you tried to write them all down," said Kansas City Chiefs owner Lamar Hunt, whose franchise started in Dallas as the Texans of the rival AFL in 1960, the same season the Cowboys began.

Tex Schramm 1920-2003 NFL innovator dies

Texas Earnest Schramm, the innovative former president and general manager of the Dallas Cowboys, died at his home on Tuesday. Schramm spent 29 seasons with the Cowboys and made major contributions to the development of pro football.

Born — June 2, 1920, in San Gabriel, Calif.

Education — B.A. in journalism, University of Texas

Career — Sportswriter, Austin American-Statesman, 1947; worked for Los Angeles Rams, 1947-56; CBS, '57-'59;

Cowboys, '60-'89

Accomplishments — 1991 Pro Football Hall of Fame inductee; coordinated AFL-NFL merger, 1966; two Super Bowl titles; five Conference Championships; 13 Division titles



SOURCES: Dallas Cowboys; Associated Press

At Rozelle's urging, Schramm played a significant role in negotiating with Hunt the AFL-NFL merger. Soon after, Schramm headed off a strike and in 1987 he pushed

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A&M coaches try to run clean programs

By Jeff Allen
THE BATTALION

Winning is the name of the game in all college athletics, and it has come to the point where a coach's livelihood can rest on a single winning season. This begs the question, how do these men and women balance the desire and the requirement to win against the always-prevalent opportunity to cut corners and bend rules? After all, it's not just a coaching reputation on the line, it's their livelihood.

For Texas A&M football coach Dennis Franchione, it often comes down to the issue of a reputation that has taken years to establish.

"As a coach, I want to win in everything that I pursue," Franchione said. "But winning loses meaning if it is not done with integrity and not done in the rules. Fortunately, my reputation has been good (over the years). I'm going to try and outwork people and do it every way and do it (within) the rules."

Oftentimes for coaches, the dilemma extends beyond their own reputation and to that of the university they work for. There is no question that in the modern collegiate landscape, a school's name often rides on the back of its athletic programs. Full stadiums lead to big money and invaluable exposure. This situation only increases the pressure on coaches to win.

At A&M, among the men's coaches of the other "big three" sports, Franchione's sentiment is an oft-stated motivation for playing the game by the rules, despite the uncertainty that comes with a program struggling to win. Coaches see that the need to win, be it for the turnstile count or the coaches own pocketbook, never trumps the necessity to keep a program in line and out of trouble.

Perhaps no one at the University

has had to face this challenge more directly than men's basketball coach Melvin Watkins, who for years has been at the helm of a team trying to rediscover itself and fill an often cold and cavernous Reed Arena. Watkins took the struggling team in 1998, a time when the program had very little to boast about. He knew that he would be facing a long uphill battle with few guarantees.

Knowing that it wouldn't be easy, Watkins was aware of the corners that could be cut, yet he has looked back on a lesson learned from his parents as motivation to balance the pressure to win with the responsibility to play by the rules.

"It starts at home, the principles and values learned there, that hard work will pay off," Watkins said. "I knew it may take a little longer (to not cut corners), but you're a lot prouder in the end. (You) sleep a little easier knowing that it won't blow up with your university on the front page."

Baseball coach Mark Johnson echoes some of Watkins' ideals.

"I think for me, it has been my upbringing that it's important," Johnson said. "Whether we win or lose, it is important that people know we are doing it the right way, that our integrity is always going to be there."

Johnson also speaks of the Aggie tradition as a factor in keeping the program successful, despite the sometimes ominous signs that hang over a stretch of bad luck or a couple of losing seasons.

All of the coaches agreed on one thing: Integrity stands above winning in the hierarchy of Aggie athletics, and it is a mission from day one.

"We're going to do it right and represent this University," Johnson said. "This University is about integrity, tradition and all the things that hold people together."

Clemens makes it to Chicago by way of College Station

HOUSTON (AP) — New York Yankees pitcher Roger Clemens almost missed what he says will be his final All-Star game Tuesday when Hurricane Claudette blew into Texas and kept some planes from leaving.

"There were two or three times we were fixing to call the league and call it off because we thought it was obviously too dangerous," Clemens told Houston television station KRIV Tuesday. "We got out just in time."

Instead of flying out of his hometown of Houston, which was grazed by Hurricane Claudette Tuesday morning and prompted some flight

delays or cancellations, Clemens said he and his family drove 100 miles northwest to College Station, where they caught a flight to Chicago.

Clemens learned Monday he had been added to the American League roster to replace Oakland's Barry Zito.

An All-Star appearance by Clemens, who plans to retire after this season, would be his ninth. Warren Spahn holds the mark for most All-Star games by a pitcher — 17.

Clemens, the only six-time Cy Young Award winner, has spent 20 seasons in the major leagues. He got his 300th win and 4,000th strikeout against St. Louis on June 13.

Lugo begins assault trial in Houston

By Juan A. Lozano
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON — Former Houston Astros shortstop Julio Lugo grabbed his wife by her hair and slammed her face first into their vehicle, prosecutors said during opening statements of his misdemeanor assault trial Tuesday.

Defense attorneys dispute the charge. They say Lugo, who now plays for the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, was trying to prevent his wife from hitting him and he did not mean to hurt her.

"He did what any human being would do. He blocked the hit," attorney Chris Tritico said. "There was no intent for Julio to hit his wife. He did not want his wife to hit him."

Tritico told jurors Mabel Lugo tried

twice to strike her husband and the ballplayer was attempting to block her blows when she received a lump on her forehead and a swollen lip.



LUGO

Assistant District Attorney Catherine Evans told jurors that Lugo and his wife, Mabel, began arguing about their marriage as they drove to Minute Maid Park on April 30. Evans said Lugo hit his wife with the back of his fist, forcing her head into a window as he drove. Evans said Lugo then struck his wife again once the pair arrived at the ballpark.

"He grabbed her head and then slammed it into the back of the car,"

Evans said. "Afterward, she drives away. She's scared, she's upset, she calls police."

Houston Police officer Jesus DeLaCruz testified Tuesday that Mabel was crying and had a swollen lip and bump on her head when he interviewed her about the altercation. DeLaCruz also said he noticed some of Mabel's clothing had been torn.

Lugo was arrested at Minute Maid Park after the Astros lost to Atlanta in the April 30 game.

Lugo spent a night in jail before being released on bond. A Harris County judge later issued a restraining order prohibiting him from going within 200 feet of his wife.

Days after his arrest, the Astros released Lugo. He signed a one-year deal with the Devil Rays in May.

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