Kuhn, Bowie (1926-) Encyclopedia Article

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A former lawyer, Bowie Kuhn served as baseball commissioner from 1969 to 1984. His achievements included raising baseball's attendance level, procuring lucrative television contracts, and sponsoring night baseball in the World Series. Despite baseball's increasing affluence during this time, Kuhn often claimed that rising player salaries would bankrupt the sport. Kuhn was reluctant to become involved in the several player strikes that plagued his reign, though he did force owners to scrap plans for a 1976 pre-season lockout. While widely perceived as an "owner's commissioner," he suspended owners Ted Turner and George Steinbrenner for various infractions and feuded with Oakland owner Charles Finley. When Finley attempted to unload superstars Joe Rudi, Vida Blue, and others for $3.5 million in cash, Kuhn nixed the sale, declaring that it was not in baseball's best interests. The owners did not renew Kuhn's contract and he was succeeded by Peter Ueberroth.

Further Reading:

Kuhn, Bowie. *Hardball: The Education of a Baseball Commissioner.* Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1997. Originally published in New York, Times Books, 1987.

Porter, David, ed. "Kuhn, Bowie Kent." *Biographical Dictionary of American Sports.* Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press, 1997.