

Beth Bowlen Wallace fires back at Broncos' trustees: "I have met the criteria" to own team

By Ryan O'Halloran

The Denver Post

June 2, 2018

The spat between Beth Bowlen Wallace and the Pat Bowlen Family Trust continued Friday.

Bowlen Wallace, the second-oldest of Broncos owner Pat Bowlen's seven children, declared her intention to be the next controlling owner on Thursday and the three-person trust responded by saying she is "not capable or qualified at this time," to run the franchise.

Bowlen Wallace fired back in a statement released through her public relations firm.

"I am disappointed and disagree with the inaccurate comments made by the trustees," she said. "While I can certainly respond to each of those statements, I don't believe that will be productive."

In their extensive statement on Thursday, the trustees – Broncos president/CEO Joe Ellis, team counsel Rich Slivka and local attorney Mary Kelly – pointed out how Pat Bowlen "did not designate Beth as a trustee or appoint her to a leadership position, nor did he instruct the trustees to specifically mentor her."

In February 2015, the trustees provided Pat Bowlen's wife, Annabel, and his children criteria outlining the requirements to become controlling owner. It included five years of "senior management experience," high-level education and leadership and integrity qualifications.

The trustees said one of the children would not be guaranteed the controlling owner post even if the son or daughter believed they checked all of the boxes.

The trustees don't believe Bowlen Wallace fits enough of the criteria required to be the next controlling owner. She disagrees.

"I have met the criteria," she said, citing a law degree from the University of Denver, her experience with the Broncos and "executive leadership with Reign Energy Partners and Joseph Energy."

Bowlen Wallace added: "I want to do what is in the best interests of my family, the team and Denver fans. I care deeply for my entire family and I would never do anything to create divisiveness in the family. It remains my sincere hope that I, together with my advisers, can sit down with the trustees and their advisors to resolve this situation. The fans and league deserve this, and we have repeatedly offered to meet with the trustees to accomplish this objective. Therefore, I will not respond to their inaccurate statements at this time."

Led by Ellis, the trustees have operated the Broncos since Pat Bowlen retired in 2014 because of his battle with Alzheimer's disease.

Also Friday, Broncos general manager John Elway tweeted his support for Ellis.

Elway wrote: "I want to make one thing clear about (Thursday's news): Joe Ellis is doing an incredible job (and) I have full confidence in him. He's got all of our support. Pat put a lot of good people to follow his plan and that's what they're doing."

NFL Journal: Bradley Chubb's tape is dynamic but confirms difficulty of transition to pros

By Ryan O'Halloran
The Denver Post
June 2, 2018

To help describe the transition facing Broncos first-round draft pick Bradley Chubb, I went to the video.

In road games at Florida State and Notre Dame, Chubb played 116 snaps for North Carolina State. He played no snaps at strong-side linebacker, his current spot with the Broncos. He dropped into zone coverage only four times, a regular part of his current job description.

Yes, Chubb will be able to use his pass-rushing skills this season, but in order to be a base-down player he is getting a crash course at strong-side linebacker.

"I'm not surprised about it, but he has picked up this defense extremely fast," Broncos defensive coordinator Joe Woods said.

Woods said he "almost passed out," when Cleveland drafted cornerback Denzel Ward at No. 4, allowing the Broncos to take Chubb.

"Dreams do come true," Woods said.

A dream for the Broncos would be unleashing a quartet of Von Miller, Chubb, Shane Ray and Shaquil Barrett on quarterbacks. Chubb's dynamic skills were on display against Florida State and Notre Dame. Here's what I saw:

Chubb at Florida State (N.C. State won) ...

Before the game, FSU coach Jimbo Fisher said of Chubb: "Athletic, long, relentless. Can play with power. Can run in space." ... Played 53 of 65 snaps and finished with seven tackles, two sacks and one forced fumble and was a "factor" (around the football) on 10 plays (15.4 percent). ... Played the first 25 defensive snaps. ... Only lined up in three- and four-point stances. ... FSU generally ran away from Chubb's side and when it threw bubble screens, it was also to the other side. ... First tackle came when FSU ran at him and Chubb did well to stay on his feet. ... Posted a QB hit in 2.03 seconds when he slapped away left tackle's hands after a great first step. ... Showed great effort on forced fumble, which came after a 20-yard sprint downfield. ... First sack came in 2.78 seconds when he went wide against the left tackle, who failed to push him further wide. ... Second sack was in 1.80 seconds when he was not blocked. ... One twist the Broncos could use is rushing Chubb wide, freeing up the interior for two blitzers. ... Lined up once at right defensive tackle.

Chubb at Notre Dame (N.C. State loss) ...

Played 63 of 73 snaps and was a "factor" on 13 plays (20.6 percent). ... Had eight tackles (three for lost yardage) and one sack. ... In first two series, had a sack, two tackles and a QB hit. ... Sack came in 3.38 seconds on third-and-13 when he darted inside to beat the tight end; the running back was assigned to

double team but he planned for Chubb to go outside. ... Made a tackle for a seven-yard loss when he powered through and over the tight end and pulling right guard. ... On second third-down snap, posted QB hit in 2.54 seconds when he beat eventual first-round LT Mike McGlinchey. ... Notre Dame adjusted, sliding its protection to account for Chubb. ... When Chubb dropped into coverage, Fighting Irish QB had 6.27 and 6.54 seconds to survey and throw completions. ... Was not on the field for two Notre Dame touchdowns.

Value of OTAs?

Broncos linebacker Von Miller was blunt and accurate when he said “you really can’t put too much,” into the value of OTAs. For a veteran like Miller, whose role is secure for the regular season, that holds true. Also of note were comments by former Buffalo, Carolina and Indianapolis executive Bill Polian during a podcast on the Patriots’ team website.

“I was part of the group that negotiated the original CBA and OTAs in their original version and they were never intended for veterans; they get enough football,” Polian told veteran NFL reporter Don Banks “It was intended to try and help develop the young players and it’s veered away from that over time.”

The NFLPA should save that sound bite for the next CBA negotiations. Crafting an OTA schedule for young players only (something like rookies and players with less than 20 games experience?) would create more instruction time for them and less risk of injury for veterans.

But here’s the rub ... and there always is one. Might on-the-bubble veteran players be squeezed out because a team’s coaches and evaluators give the edge to the OTA eligible players because they have seen them working on the field? Maybe.

Around the Broncos

New offense. Broncos offensive coordinator Bill Musgrave said his system is “pretty much all different,” than the one installed last year by Mike McCoy. That includes different terminology. “We’re trying to make it concise,” Musgrave said. “We don’t want long-worded plays in the huddle.” That Musgrave wants to use his style is common-place for coordinators who are promoted within a staff.

Musgrave on Lynch. Musgrave said quarterback Paxton Lynch is “growing every day. He’s learning more about the way that he can be effective at this level of football, which is completely different than college and a world apart from high school.”

Word association. New special teams coordinator Tom McMahon has words written on the footballs he is having punt returners catch to improve their see ball/catch ball concentration. “They’ll go, ‘Words!’ (or) ‘Blank!’” he said. “Because you catch a football with your what? With your eyes.”

Bolles’ connection with NSCD. Broncos left tackle Garrett Bolles was among several players at the Pat Bowlen Fieldhouse on Tuesday to work alongside more than 100 volunteers and 150 participants in a skills event sponsored by the National Sports Center for the Disabled. “This is a special opportunity for us to come out and show that it doesn’t matter (the disability) – all kids can play, all kids can get involved,” said Bolles, who battled a learning disability while in school. “These are kids who have things they can’t help, but they have a great spirit.”

Elway tweets strong support of Joe Ellis and Trust's succession plan

By Mike Klis

9 News

June 2, 2018

John Elway has taken a stand and it's not alongside Beth Bowlen-Wallace.

Elway, the unquestioned best player in Broncos' history who has served as the team's general manager for going on eight seasons, issued a statement on his Twitter account Friday that lent his strong support to not only his boss, Broncos' president Joe Ellis, but the Pat Bowlen Trust as a whole and its succession plan.

John Elway
@johnelway

I want to make one thing clear about yesterday's news: Joe Ellis is doing an incredible job & I have full confidence in him. He's got all of our support.

Pat put a lot of good people in place to follow his plan, and that's what they're doing.

"I want to make one thing clear about yesterday's news: Joe Ellis is doing an incredible job & I have full confidence in him," Elway said in his tweet. "He's got all of our support. Pat put a lot of good people in place to follow his plan, and that's what they're doing."

Elway was referring to the fireworks set off Thursday when Beth Bowlen-Wallace, one of Pat Bowlen's daughter, set out a press release saying she has met all the criteria set forth by the Pat Bowlen Trust and she is ready to become the controlling owner of the Broncos.

The Trust and Ellis, who is one of three trustees, responded by saying "we have thoroughly evaluated whether Beth is capable of succeeding her father as controlling owner. We have determined that she is not capable or qualified at this time."

Bowlen-Wallace responded Friday with another press release that took issue with the Trust's response.

"I am disappointed and disagree with the inaccurate comments made by the trustees," she said. The Trust did not respond to Bowlen-Wallace's latest press release. Elway, though, made it clear he is behind the succession plan laid out by the Trust.

A closer look at whether Beth Bowlen Wallace has met Pat Bowlen Trust criteria

By Mike Klis

9 News

June 2, 2018

It's not easy cutting through the melodrama that has unfolded between Pat Bowlen's daughter Beth Bowlen Wallace and those in charge of the Pat Bowlen Trust.

But there is one black-and-white issue that is at the center of this disagreement: Has Bowlen Wallace met the criteria that qualifies her to become controlling owner of the Denver Broncos, as she claims?

Or has she so far fallen short of meeting the criteria, as the Trust stated in a strongly worded response to her press release announcing her intent Thursday?

If only it were black-and-white.

According to the criteria gathered by 9NEWS from family sources, it appears Bowlen Wallace has met several components, but it could be interpreted she has fallen short in meeting the standards of others.

About the criteria. The Pat Bowlen Trust -- which is controlled by trustees Joe Ellis, the Broncos' chief executive officer and president; Rich Slivka, the team's general counsel, and attorney Mary Kelly -- has been authorized to appoint one of Pat Bowlen's seven children to become his successor as the Broncos' principal owner.

To earn the right to succeed their father, the child must become qualified according to the criteria written by Bowlen himself before he was afflicted with Alzheimer's disease, and carried out by his trustees.

A look at the criteria and Bowlen Wallace's credentials:

- Education component, where an advanced degree is encouraged

It would seem Bowlen Wallace has met this point as she received her bachelor's degree from the University of Colorado and law degree from the University of Denver in 2016.

It's unclear whether the Trust expects the degree to become applicable. Bowlen Wallace is not yet a practicing attorney, although she is putting some of her advanced law classes to use in the business she shares with her husband.

- Five years employment with the Broncos or NFL

This is where Bowlen Wallace falls short, at least by the letter of the criteria. She was employed for a little more than three years with the Broncos as a director of special projects before leaving in 2015.

She was involved in the development of the Ring of Fame Plaza. Otherwise, the position primarily dealt with community events.

Bowlen Wallace has said she left to pursue her law degree and it was her understanding the shortfall of team employment could be made up through outside leadership positions.

The statement from the Trust and Ellis on Thursday inferred Bowlen Wallace may have been fired, saying she was “fully informed as to why her employment with the team ended in 2015.”

- Financial and business acumen

Bowlen Wallace ran her own wedding planning and event management company, Social Butterfly, in Hawaii for several years in the 2000s.

She was named Wedding Planner of the Year in 2007-08 by Best of Honolulu Magazine. She folded the company after 2008 to move to Denver to be closer to her father, who by then was experiencing early symptoms of Alzheimer's.

Bowlen Wallace and her husband John Wallace also founded their own oil and gas firm, Reign Energy Partners, which is now Joseph Energy, as it's a contract-based company.

Again, whether Bowlen Wallace meets this component could be open to interpretation.

- Experience in positions of leadership

With Social Butterfly, Bowlen Wallace had a handful of employees, but she managed up to 200 to 300 employees a day for larger corporate events.

It's possible the Trust may view this as not enough qualification to run a franchise that was most recently valued at \$2.6 billion by Forbes Magazine.

- An overarching, subjective component to the criteria that calls for the trustees to make judgments on character, honesty and integrity

Bowlen Wallace has said she'd let her reputation in the community and her commitment to honoring her father's legacy speak for itself.

How the trustees evaluate Bowlen Wallace in these subjective categories remains unknown. But it can be assumed she did not endear herself to the trustees by essentially circumventing the Trust by issuing a press release Thursday to announce her intent to take control of the team.

Bowlen Wallace's intent to run the team has been endorsed by Pat Bowlen's brothers Bill and John and her older sister Amie. Broncos' general manager John Elway came out Friday issuing his support for Ellis and the Trust's plan. There has been no comment from Pat Bowlen's wife Annabel or any of their five children.

Denver Broncos' John Elway says he supports succession plan in place for team ownership

By Troy Renck and Blair Miller

KMGH

June 2, 2018

Deviating from his past silence on ownership matters, Denver Broncos General Manager and President of Football Operations John Elway weighed in on the situation Friday, showing strong support for the succession plan Pat Bowlen put in place in 2014.

"I want to make one thing clear about yesterday's news: Joe Ellis is doing an incredible job & I have full confidence in him. He's got all of our support," Elway tweeted. "Pat put a lot of good people in place to follow his plan, and that's what they're doing."

John Elway
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I want to make one thing clear about yesterday's news: Joe Ellis is doing an incredible job & I have full confidence in him. He's got all of our support.

Pat put a lot of good people in place to follow his plan, and that's what they're doing.

Elway's comments came in response to Beth Bowlen Wallace's comments Thursday in which she said she was seeking to become the controlling owner of the Broncos.

The Pat Bowlen Trust, which was put in place as Bowlen's health declined in 2014, has the final say in determining which of Bowlen's seven children eventually becomes Bowlen's successor.

And the Trust put a vote of no-confidence toward Bowlen Wallace Thursday, saying she wasn't the only Bowlen child interested in becoming controlling owner and that it had informed her that "she is not capable or qualified at this time."

Bowlen Wallace responded to that claim from the Trust Friday as well, saying she was disappointed by them and that she disagreed with them.

"While I can certainly respond to each of those statements, I don't believe that will be productive," she said.

"I want to do what is in the best interests of my family, the team and Denver fans. I care deeply for my entire family and I would never do anything to create divisiveness in the family," she continued in the statement. "It remains my sincere hope that I, together with my advisers, can sit down the the trustees and their advisors to resolve this situation. The fans and league deserve this, and we have repeatedly offered to meet with the trustees to accomplish this objective. Therefore, I will not respond to their inaccurate statements at this time."

Denver7 reported Thursday night that Ellis, the Broncos' president and CEO, was extended for several years in his role as CEO, leaving him time to groom a successor.

Though two of the minority owners of the team, Kerry and John Bowlen, said they supported Bowlen Wallace, 28-year-old Brittany Bowlen has emerged as the leading eventual candidate for the job, given her advanced education and interest in NFL matters. But she is still young; for comparison, Pat Bowlen was 40 when he took over as the team's principal owner and CEO in 1984.

Following a drubbing in Super Bowl 48, the Bowlen family announced that Pat had resigned control of the team as he battled Alzheimer's. Ellis took over the day-to-day operations. It has left to Ellis and the other two trustees to direct the team in the present and make a decision on a potential future owner among Pat's children.

Ex-cheerleaders sue Texans, allege intimidation, low pay

By Juan Lozano
Associated Press
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Five former NFL cheerleaders sued the Houston Texans on Friday, alleging the team failed to fully compensate them as required by law and subjected them to a hostile work environment in which they were harassed, intimidated and forced to live in fear.

The lawsuit, filed in Houston federal court, accuses the franchise of paying the women less than the \$7.25 per hour they were promised, not compensating them for making public appearances or performing other tasks related to their jobs and creating a workplace where the women were threatened with being fired for voicing any complaints.

"I and my fellow cheerleaders were treated as the lowest of the low," Hannah Turnbow said at a news conference. "The Houston Texans were paid thousands of dollars to have us show up at appearances at locations all over Texas with no security, no transportation and where our safety was not guaranteed."

Turnbow said that after she was left with abrasions on her shoulder when she was attacked by a fan at one game, the team told her "to just suck it up."

"We were harassed, bullied and body shamed for \$7.25 an hour," said ex-cheerleader Ainsley Parish.

Texans spokeswoman Amy Palcic said the team is constantly evaluating its cheerleader program and makes changes "as needed to make the program enjoyable for everyone."

"We are proud of the cheerleader program and have had hundreds of women participate and enjoy their experience while making a positive impact in the local community," Palcic said in a brief statement.

Prominent women's rights attorney Gloria Allred, who's representing the cheerleaders, alleged the women were paid "so little or not paid at all" for much of the work they did because of their gender.

"Surely (Texans owner Bob) McNair and the Houston Texans can find it in their budget of hundreds of millions of dollars to pay these women a fair wage, not minimum wage," Allred said. "I say, stop penny pinching. Pay these women what they deserve and make sure you pay them for every minute that they work."

The lawsuit is seeking unspecified damages.

This is the second such lawsuit filed against the Texans.

Last month, three ex-cheerleaders also filed suit in Houston federal court, accusing the Texans of not paying them minimum wage, not paying overtime wages and accusing a cheerleading supervisor of body shaming them.

These lawsuits are part of a series of recent complaints that have been made by cheerleaders against NFL teams across the country.

The New York Times reported last month that on a trip to Costa Rica for a photo shoot in 2013, Washington Redskins cheerleaders had their passports collected, were forced to be topless for a calendar photo shoot that included male spectators and were asked to be escorts for sponsors at a nightclub.

Former cheerleaders with the Miami Dolphins and the New Orleans Saints also have filed recent discriminatory complaints and lawsuits against their ex-teams.

Last year, a federal judge in California dismissed a lawsuit that had been filed by a former San Francisco 49ers cheerleader who had accused the NFL and team owners of conspiring to suppress wages for cheerleaders.

Allred said she planned next week to present a letter to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell asking him to review the complaints being made by her clients and other cheerleaders about their working conditions.

Denver Broncos: Beth Bowlen Wallace Responds to Comments From Trustees On Her Goal To Take Helm of NFL Franchise

By STAFF

Denver Business Journal

June 2, 2018

Beth Bowlen Wallace, daughter of Denver Broncos Owner Pat Bowlen, today responded to comments made Thursday by the Trustees of the Pat Bowlen Family Trust.

The comments were made in response to Beth's announcement on Thursday that she is throwing her hat in the ring to be Controlling Owner of the Denver Broncos, in accordance with her father's wishes.

"I have met the criteria for becoming Controlling Owner of the Broncos. I have earned my law degree at the University of Denver and I have served at the Broncos and in executive leadership with Reign Energy Partners and Joseph Energy.

"I am disappointed and disagree with the inaccurate comments made by the trustees," Beth said. "While I can certainly respond to each of those statements, I don't believe that will be productive. My dad has always encouraged me to be part of his organization. When I returned to Denver, he wanted me to come work at the Broncos with him.

"I want to do what is in the best interests of my family, the team and Denver fans. I care deeply for my entire family and I would never do anything to create divisiveness in the family. It remains my sincere hope that I, together with my advisers, can sit down with the trustees and their advisors to resolve this situation. The fans and league deserve this, and we have repeatedly offered to meet with the trustees to accomplish this objective. Therefore, I will not respond to their inaccurate statements at this time.

"I want to thank my family, including Uncle John and Aunt Kerry Bowlen, who are minority owners in the Team, as well as my Uncle Bill Bowlen, for their kind words of support over the past 24 hours."

With Broncos, Case Keenum gets first turn as offensive centerpiece

By Lindsay Jones

USA Today

June 2, 2018

As Case Keenum has embarked on his first season as an NFL's team unquestioned starting quarterback, it was last year's biggest loss that has driven him more so than the surprising success in Minnesota that preceded it.

Keenum won 11 regular-season games as the Vikings' starting quarterback, eclipsing the mark he had amassed in his previous five seasons combined, before leading Minnesota to a unforgettable divisional-round win over the Saints highlighted by his walk-off touchdown pass.

But against the Eagles in the NFC Championship Game the following week, Keenum threw a pair of interceptions – one that was returned 50 yards for a touchdown in the first quarter and another in the red zone in the fourth quarter – in a 38-7 loss.

"I got close enough to taste it, and it hurt watching one of my best friends play in the Super Bowl," Keenum said of Eagles quarterback and Super Bowl MVP Nick Foles, his former teammate on the St. Louis Rams. "I love him to death, but that was tough to watch. That taste in my mouth, that sour feeling has fueled a lot this offseason."

It drove him to sign with the Broncos in free agency (after the Vikings made it clear they would pursue Kirk Cousins), a team that like the 2017 Vikings is driven by its defense. But the offense will have a new look as coordinator Bill Musgrave crafts a playbook that fits Keenum's skills.

It won't be a carbon copy of former Vikings coordinator Pat Shurmur's offense, but there should be a heavy dose of play-action and plays designed to move Keenum around and out of the pocket, as the team wants to take advantage of his ability to accurately throw while on the move.

Musgrave said Thursday he's largely changed the attack, including the language, from what the Broncos ran in the second half of 2017 after he replaced Mike McCoy as the play-caller.

"He can stay on the move and remain a passer. He can process what he sees instantaneously," Musgrave said. "Those are good attributes to have, especially when things break down."

But what's been fun for Keenum is, for the first time in his career, he can truly take ownership of an offense.

"There's some stuff I've done before, and there's some stuff that is very new to me that I'm very open to learning and adding to my game," Keenum told USA TODAY Sports on Thursday.

Last year, Shurmur's playbook was initially built for Sam Bradford, who is much more of a traditional pocket passer than Keenum. With Bradford sidelined for all but two games, the offense tailored on the

fly. During his two years with the Rams, Keenum was both the backup (to Foles in 2015) and then the starter (for nine games in 2016 before giving way to No. 1 overall pick Jared Goff).

While training camp and preseason games will give a far more accurate picture of what the revamped Broncos' offense will look like, and how Keenum will fare in it, the voluntary practices in May have been vital to reconfiguring an offense that finished 17th in yards and 27th in points last season.

Keenum is taking all of the first-team reps, a marked change from the past two seasons in Denver when a quarterback competition stretched into late August.

"It's nice to have the freedom to come out here and compete and really pursue just excellence that I want out of the quarterback position and out of my craft. Just the leadership too that goes along with that," Keenum said. "It's not just X's and O's and getting the ball down the field, it's the leadership part of that that helps. It's been great to get to know the guys, get to know the coaches, the team, the city. It's awesome."

Broncos Ownership Saga: Breaking Down Beth Bowlen Wallace's Efforts to Take Control in Denver

By Khadrice Rollins

MMQB

June 2, 2018

Beth Bowlen Wallace, the daughter of Broncos owner Pat Bowlen, wants to take control of the team from The Pat Bowlen Trust, which was put in place by her father to determine the future controlling owner of the franchise in Denver.

On Thursday, Bowlen Wallace released a statement explaining her intentions to become the controlling owner, according to The Denver Channel. However, the trust, which is led by team president and CEO Joe Ellis, responded later Thursday saying it was not ready to pass on control of the team to Bowlen Wallace yet.

"Beth Bowlen is not the only Bowlen child who has expressed interest in becoming controlling owner," the statement from the trust said. "The trustees have informed Beth of their determination that she is not capable or qualified at this time."

Bowlen Wallace is one of Pat Bowlen's seven children who are expected to all eventually hold an equal share of the franchise with one of the children functioning as the controlling owner who would make final decision and be the voice of the team at league meetings, according to Nicki Jhabvala of The Athletic and formerly of the Denver Post.

On Friday, Bowlen Wallace released another statement in response to the comments from the trust, saying she has met the criteria needed to become the controlling owner laid out by the trustees, and the statement added that her push to become owner is "in accordance with her father's wishes."

WHY IS THERE A TRUST?

Pat Bowlen announced that he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in July 2014, and he created a trust to ensure a smooth transition of the Broncos' ownership to his children.

In 2014, Bowlen left control of day-to-day operations to Ellis. Ellis, along with Broncos counsel Rich Silva and Denver attorney Mary Kelly, make up the trust. The trust has the final say on whether one of Bowlen's children is prepared to take control of the Broncos, and the trio has the power to hold off on granting that power for as long as it sees fit, according to the Post.

That structure could be shifted, but it would require approval from the league and the 31 other owners, according to the Post.

WHEN DOES THE TRUST DECIDE ON A NEW CONTROLLING OWNER?

There is no set time for when the trust needs to appoint one of Bowlen's children, but the Post reports that back in February 2015 the trust sent a blueprint that included a list of requisites and a list of responsibilities for whomever takes control.

According to the Post, the qualifications to take control include having a bachelor's degree combined with an MBA, J.D. or another advanced business-related degree; five years of senior management experience with either the team, the league or Stadium Management Company; and subjective traits such as leadership, integrity and sound judgement.

WHAT IS BETH BOWLEN WALLACE'S CASE?

Bowlen Wallace, 47, was formerly director of special projects for the Broncos from 2012-15, which was the highest position by title ever held with the team by one of Pat Bowlen's children. She earned a law degree in 2016 from the University of Denver.

In the statement from the Pat Bowlen Trust, it said, "We have communicated our decision with Beth and her lawyers on multiple occasions. She is also fully informed as to why her employment with the team ended in 2015."

In her statement from Friday, Bowlen Wallace mentioned serving in executive leadership for Reign Energy Partners and Joseph Energy.

WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH THE REST OF THE FAMILY?

Patrick Bowlen III, 33, is the facilities coordinator at Stadium Management Company. John Bowlen, 32, was previously a marketing employee. He was placed on indefinite leave in 2015 following an arrest on domestic violence charges and later parted with the team. Brittany Bowlen, 28, works at the consulting firm McKinsey & Company, but previously worked in the NFL's junior rotational program and served as an analyst in the Broncos' business department in 2015. And according to the Post, Amie Bowlen Klemmer, 48, lives in Hawaii and both Annabel Bowlen, 25, and Christianna Bowlen, 20, live in Colorado, but none of the three have ever worked with the team or stadium.

Pat Bowlen's brother John and his wife Kerry are minority owners of the team and they are supporting Bowlen Wallace's push to become controlling owner, according to The Denver Channel, as are Bowlen Klemmer and Pat Bowlen's other brother, Bill.

Broncos OC: Case Keenum's workload paying dividends

By Herbie Teope

NFL.com

June 2, 2018

Quarterback Case Keenum hasn't taken long to assimilate in the Denver Broncos' offense.

Keenum, who signed a two-year, \$36 million deal during free agency, is paid as a starter. And he has conducted himself as such while the Broncos transition to a new scheme under offensive coordinator Bill Musgrave.

"Case is working hard," Musgrave said Thursday, via the Broncos' official website. "It's a new system for him; it's a new system for everybody. Case is getting -- exclusively -- all the reps with the ones. We're not splitting them like you would if you didn't have an established starter, so he's getting more concentrated work, and it's paying dividends."

Musgrave's praise of Keenum is noteworthy when considering what the Broncos endured in 2017 without an established starter.

Denver finished the past season ranked 20th in passing en route to a 5-11 record after going through quarterbacks Trevor Siemian, Brock Osweiler and Paxton Lynch. The trio combined to throw 19 touchdowns, which ranked 25th in the league.

But with Keenum locked in as the clear No. 1, the team's receiving options can focus on building chemistry with the quarterback during organized team activities.

"You don't have to worry about getting reps with multiple guys," wide receiver Demaryius Thomas said after Tuesday's OTA practice. "Your focus is to get reps with Case and only Case. To build that connection. So far, so good."

Tight end Jake Butt echoed Thomas' assessment of Keenum.

"Obviously, Case is our leader, our head man and the voice of the offense," Butt said. "He's doing a great job commanding us, getting everybody lined up, making the right reads and making the good throws."

While players often shine during the no-contact phase of the offseason workout program, it is a good sign for the Broncos that Keenum has taken command ahead of training camp.

Should Keenum carry that momentum into the 2018 regular season, the retooled Broncos could find themselves back in the mix in the AFC West after missing the playoffs for two straight seasons.

Broncos DC shocked Browns passed on Bradley Chubb

By Chris Wesseling

NFL.com

June 2, 2018

Leading up to the 2018 NFL Draft, Broncos pass rusher Von Miller offered high praise for N.C. State star Bradley Chubb.

"He's Khalil Mack and Von Miller put together," Miller raved.

Little did Miller know that he would soon line up alongside Chubb in Joe Woods' defense. After working with the draft's No. 5 overall pick in organized team activities, Miller confirmed his initial assessment.

"He's great," Miller said this week, via the team's official website. "He reminds me of myself. He texts me late at night. Texts me at 3 o'clock in the morning. I'm up. I'm all for it."

Miller's excitement level actually seems tepid compared to that of his defensive coordinator.

Woods told reporters Thursday that he "nearly passed out" in Denver's war room when the Browns opted for cornerback Denzel Ward at No. 4 overall, allowing the Broncos to pounce on Chubb one pick later.

"When I saw him after the pick that night," NFL Network's James Palmer relayed on NFL Up to the Minute, "[Woods] said, James, please pinch me. This can't be real."

As AFC West quarterbacks will soon discover, the dynamic Miller-Chubb duo is all too real.

Hey, Bowlen Kids: Don't Fight Over the Broncos Until Dad's Dead

By Michael Roberts

Westword

June 2, 2018

The original Dynasty has nothing on the Mile High City soap opera starring the children of Denver Broncos owner Pat Bowlen. But daughter Beth Bowlen Wallace's self-nomination as heir apparent to oversee the team doesn't qualify as campy and entertaining; instead, it's unseemly and sad, since her father is being treated like he's dead even though he's not.

Pat Bowlen formally gave up control of the Broncos in 2014, when the family acknowledged something pretty much everyone had known for years: He's suffering from Alzheimer's. But this was just a formality. Way back in 2010, sources told Westword that Pat was no longer involved in day-to-day operations because of his illness.

Alzheimer's is an incredibly cruel disease that's often referred to as a living death. But in this context, the operative word is "living" — as in, Pat still is. But 47-year-old Beth seems in a hurry to bury him.

On May 31, she unleashed a media blitz, speaking about her wish to become the Broncos' boss to Nicki Jhabvala, a former Denver Post reporter who jumped to The Athletic a couple of months ago, in addition to putting out a press release on PR Newswire — which is what all families do when they want to send a message, right?

The latter is larded with quotes like this one: "I love the Denver Broncos. This team has been so special to my family, to the City of Denver and to the state of Colorado. My father's legacy is very important to me and my family. It is my desire to lead this team with the same passion my father did and help the Broncos become Super Bowl champions again. I have the ambition, experience and drive, and my mentor in running a winning NFL franchise is the best in the business — my father."

The release also notes that Beth "has submitted a proposal for a succession plan to the Trustees of the Pat Bowlen family trust that includes Beth taking over as the Controlling Owner after a short transition and mentoring period with current leadership." But those trustees — CEO Joe Ellis, team counsel Rich Slivka and attorney Mary Kelly — responded as if she'd left a burning bag of dog shit on their porch. We've included the statements of the trustees and one from Ellis personally below in their entirety, but they basically suggest that Beth impressed no one during a stint with the team a few years back and was essentially shown the door in 2015 for reasons she was "fully informed" about.

What did Beth do? Trip Ellis on the team jet? Give Slivka a noogie? Tell John Elway that with choppers like his, he should run in the Kentucky Derby? The remarks are purposefully vague, but they imply enough bad blood to provide several sequels to a certain Taylor Swift song.

Not that the issue of succession is simple. Most observers figured son John Bowlen would eventually be given the keys to the locker room, but that was before he was busted for a 2015 domestic-violence episode involving whippets and booze and a 2017 DUI that established him as even a bigger douchebag celebrity son than Jordan Hancock, son of Denver Mayor Michael Hancock.

These incidents would seem to exempt John from serious consideration as Pat's successor, since the trust his dad established calls for strong leadership and integrity in addition to a high level of education and five years of senior management experience. But most of Pat's other children fall short by this measure, too. Daughters Annabel, Brittany and Christiana are considered to be too young to have accrued the desired experience level, son Patrick fails to meet the education requirement, and eldest daughter Amie Bowlen Klemmer doesn't seem interested in sweaty dudes with masks over their faces — unless she's into kinky sexual exploits she hasn't publicly acknowledged.

Given that, Beth feels she's the most qualified of her siblings, having graduated from the University of Denver's Sturm College of Law in 2016, and both sister Amie and Pat's brother John support her bid. But the rest of the kids have kept their lips zipped, at least thus far, leaving the trust's blasts at Beth to resonate even more loudly.

The main issue, though, is that no decision can be made about succession until Pat Bohlen is in the ground, and he remains above it as of now. The corpse his kids are battling over is still breathing.

Continue reading for statements from the trust and Joe Ellis.

Pat Bowlen Trust statement:

"The statements issued by Beth Bowlen Wallace today are contrary to Pat Bowlen's long-standing succession plan that he created over many years of careful consideration.

"Pat was determined to ensure the Broncos would remain a premier franchise in the National Football League in the event of his absence. He chose to sustain the team's success in that eventuality by appointing three non-family trustees to determine whether any of his children had become qualified at some point to step into his shoes.

"Pat did not designate Beth as a trustee or appoint her to a leadership position, nor did he instruct the trustees to specifically mentor her. He made it clear that his children were not automatically entitled to a role with the team and that they would have to earn that opportunity through their accomplishments, qualifications and character.

"As trustees honoring the clear wishes of Pat, we have thoroughly evaluated whether Beth is capable of succeeding her father as controlling owner. We have determined that she is not capable or qualified at this time.

"We have communicated our decision to Beth and her lawyers on multiple occasions. She is also fully informed as to why her employment with the team ended in 2015.

"Although Beth has declined our invitations to discuss her qualifications for the last two years, we will continue to proactively engage and meet with any of the Bowlen children who express a desire to earn the right to succeed their father.

"As trustees, we will continue to honor Pat's long-standing plan to determine the Broncos' future ownership and any potential appointment of his children to leadership positions within the organization.

Our decisions will always be guided by what will ensure the long-term success and stability of the Broncos while also doing what's best for our community, our fans and the NFL.

"Consistent with Pat's long-standing succession plan, our decisions are not to be dictated by the short-term or personal interests of any individual. We will vigorously defend Pat's plan in responding to these and any statements that are contrary to Pat's words and intentions."

Joe Ellis statement:

"As a trustee and someone Pat designated to oversee his team, I have an enormous responsibility to carefully administer his succession plan and make decisions in the best interests of the Broncos. We will continue to follow Pat's blueprint and nobody else's while keeping our focus as an organization on having a successful season."

Beth Bowlen Wallace responds to trust's comments about pitch to own Broncos

By Eric Ruble

Fox 31

June 2, 2018

Beth Bowlen Wallace, daughter of Broncos owner Pat Bowlen, said she is a good fit to become the team's next owner despite comments from her father's trust.

On Thursday, Bowlen Wallace announced she would like to be considered to become the next owner of the Broncos. The team's CEO and President Joe Ellis quickly issued a joint statement with the Pat Bowlen Trust that said Beth's wishes to own the team go against her father's intentions.

However, on Friday, Bowlen Wallace responded to the statement, saying her desire to be owner is in accordance with her father's wishes.

"I have met the criteria for becoming Controlling Owner of the Broncos. I have earned my law degree at the University of Denver and I have served at the Broncos and in executive leadership with Reign Energy Partners and Joseph Energy," Bowlen Wallace said.

She said the comments made by the trustees were inaccurate.

"My dad has always encouraged me to be part of his organization. When I returned to Denver, he wanted me to come work at the Broncos with him," the statement said.

Bowlen Wallace said she wants to do what is best for her family, the team and Denver fans.

"I care deeply for my entire family and would never do anything to create divisiveness in the family," she said.

Bowlen Wallace said she repeatedly offered to meet with trustees to resolve the situation. However, in Thursday's press release, the trust said it had told her and her legal team that she is not fit to own the team a number of times.

Bowlen Wallace also thanked her family for their support since she making the announcement.

Pat Bowlen's daughter is "disappointed" by "inaccurate comments"

By Josh Alper
Pro Football Talk
June 2, 2018

Thursday saw dueling statements released by Beth Bowlen-Wallace, the daughter of longtime Broncos owner Pat Bowlen, and the trustees appointed by her father to oversee the future of the team.

Bowlen, who has Alzheimer's disease, appointed the trustees to determine whether any of his seven children meet prescribed criteria for succeeding him as the owner of the team. Bowlen-Wallace expressed interest in that role and the trustees responded by saying "that she is not capable or qualified at this time" and offered a reminder that any of Bowlen's children need to "earn that opportunity through their accomplishments, qualifications and character."

On Friday, Bowlen-Wallace responded by saying, via Mike Klis of KUSA, she is "disappointed" in what she terms "inaccurate comments" by the trustees.

"My dad has always encouraged me to be part of his organization," Bowlen-Wallace said. "When I returned to Denver he wanted me to come work at the Broncos with him. I want to do what is in the best interests of my family, the team and Denver fans. I care deeply for my entire family and I would never do anything to create divisiveness in the family. It remains my sincere hope that I, together with my advisers, can sit down with the trustees and their advisors to resolve this situation."

Neither the Broncos nor the NFL responded to Klis' request for further comment on the matter.

John Elway sticks up for Joe Ellis (and, in turn, for himself)

By Mike Florio
Pro Football Talk
June 2, 2018

With the daughter of Broncos owner Pat Bowlen hoping to take control of the franchise in a manner that would seem to run afoul of the meticulous plans made by Bowlen before he relinquished control to a group of trustees, Broncos G.M. and president of football operations John Elway has issued a statement supporting team president and CEO Joe Ellis.

“I want to make one thing clear about yesterday’s news,” Elway said. “Joe Ellis is doing an incredible job and I have full confidence in him. He’s got all of our support. Pat put a lot of good people in place to follow his plan, and that’s what they’re doing.”

The plan consists of the trustees deciding when and if one of Bowlen’s seven children will be ready to take over the team. In theory, the trustees could decide that it will never happen, which could (again, in theory) result in a sale of the franchise.

By supporting Ellis, Elway necessarily is supporting himself. Unlike every other G.M. in the NFL (except for Jerry Jones), Elway operates with virtual autonomy and independence, with no chance of an owner strolling in to Elway’s office and asking a bunch of questions, demanding a bunch of answers, and hinting that a bunch of changes could be made if things don’t improve.

So if the effort to find which of the seven children is best suited to serve as owner (which may include assessing which of them would be most friendly to the current power structure of the team) becomes short-circuited, the child who emerges as the owner could end up installing his or her own preferred executives.

The fact that Ellis and Elway have publicly pushed back against Beth Bowlen Wallace could make their ouster much more likely, if she ever gets in. The fact that they’ve publicly engaged her suggests that they have a high degree of confidence that, if push comes to lawsuit (and it feels like that’s where this is heading), Beth Bowlen Wallace won’t be taking over.

Lack of QB competition “paying dividends” for Broncos

By Josh Alper
Pro Football Talk
June 2, 2018

The Broncos held quarterback competitions the last two offseasons that ended with Trevor Siemian in the starting job and offenses that failed to impress in the regular season.

Denver is trying a different approach this season. They signed Case Keenum as a free agent and installed him as the unquestioned No. 1 in the offense, which means he’s taking all of the reps with the first team while Paxton Lynch and Chad Kelly work with the backups.

Offensive coordinator Bill Musgrave says he’s already seen benefits from having one quarterback doing all the work with the starters.

“Case is working hard,” Musgrave said, via the team’s website. “It’s a new system for him, it’s a new system for everybody. Case is getting — exclusively — all the reps with the ones. We’re not splitting them like you would if you didn’t have an established starter, so he’s getting more concentrated work, and it’s paying dividends.”

As with all May statements about how good things look, Musgrave’s words should be taken with the grain of salt that comes with non-contact practices against your teammates. More of the same come the preseason would provide stronger reason to believe that the Broncos’ biggest offseason move will pay the necessary offensive dividends come September.

Broncos get words of wisdom from Peyton Manning, DeMarcus Ware

By Darin Gantt
Pro Football Talk
June 2, 2018

The Broncos have gone younger at a number of positions since they won a Super Bowl, but they don't mind letting some of the old guys from that team hang around.

According to Lindsay Jones of USA Today, the Broncos had Peyton Manning talk to the team after Thursday's OTA practice.

"He just talked a little bit about being a pro, and what that means, and how that's something that is not just while they're here," Broncos quarterbacks coach Mike Sullivan said. "It's on the field, it's in the meeting rooms, the weight room. It's when they are away from the facility. I think that was a great message he could convey to the entire team."

The Broncos also had former pass-rusher DeMarcus Ware in this week as a guest coach, where he worked with first-rounder Bradley Chubb and others.

But Manning still lives in Denver, and has been a resource for players on a regular basis.

"He's been receptive to questions and different things," quarterback Case Keenum said. "He's a great tool to have right here in your backyard."

The Broncos still have a number of key parts from the Super Bowl team Manning was part of, but as those numbers dwindle, having him impart wisdom on the newcomers can't hurt.

Al Jazeera claims Peyton Manning's lawyer confirmed HGH use; Manning denies it

By Mike Florio
Pro Football Talk
June 2, 2018

A story that made major waves in late 2015 has suddenly resurfaced. But the new twist to the 2.5-year old tale is more ambiguous than inculpatory.

The Hollywood Reporter, which isn't quite known as a bastion of hard-hitting sports journalism, has obtained court documents from the litigation spawned by an Al Jazeera America documentary accusing former NFL quarterback Peyton Manning and other prominent athletes of PED use.

The report cites the unsealed court papers as suggesting that Manning's lawyer "confirmed" the allegation from former Guyer Institute intern Charlie Sly that Peyton Manning used HGH that had been sent to Manning's home, but that had been addressed to Manning's wife.

Here's one of the key quotes, from a court filing made by Al Jazeera: "In their communications with [Al Jazeera's outside law firm], the Mannings' lawyers confirmed much of what Sly had said."

In another filing, Al Jazeera claims that the Mannings' lawyers served as "[t]he second, corroborating source for some of Sly's statements was the Mannings, who voluntarily communicated facts to Al Jazeera through their lawyers at Gibson Dunn & Crutcher."

Al Jazeera first claimed that it had a second source to corroborate Sly's contentions, which had been secretly recorded without his knowledge, when Deborah Davies of Al Jazeera appeared on CNN in the aftermath of the original publication of the report.

"[W]e had a second source," Davies said in early January 2016. "Absolutely impeccably placed, knowledgeable, and credible, who confirmed exactly what Charlie Sly said. Shipments of HGH were repeatedly, repeatedly sent to Ashley Manning in Florida and other places in the U.S. . . . There are different kinds of sources. There are some you can name, there are some you can't. This is a source we cannot name. We could not name. The value of that source was to add to the level of confidence we already had in what Charlie Sly was saying."

Although she "could not name" the second source then, Al Jazeera now contends that this second source was the Mannings' lawyers.

PFT contacted Manning's long-time agent, Tom Condon, for comment earlier on Friday, but Condon did not respond. A Manning representative has subsequently supplied this statement to The Hollywood Reporter: "Al Jazeera's self-serving claim that Peyton Manning's attorneys 'confirmed' Al Jazeera's allegations about Peyton Manning is absolutely false. In fact, information was provided to Al Jazeera that confirmed the Al Jazeera allegations about Peyton Manning were unfounded. In addition, the sole source for Al Jazeera's allegations has publicly recanted them. Moreover, the NFL conducted an extensive investigation of the claims raised in Al Jazeera's programs and found no evidence to support them. This is a desperate move by Al Jazeera to distract the courts from its own wrongdoing."

The report also points to the notion that Sly recanted his claims of HGH use by Manning only after being visited by persons working for Manning, suggesting that this is a new revelation. It's not; that information was first revealed by the Washington Post in February 2016.

Manning threatened to sue Al Jazeera, but he never did.

NBA won't be changing its anthem policy

By Mike Florio
Pro Football Talk
June 2, 2018

More than a week after the NFL clumsily changed its national anthem policy in a way that managed to take a bad situation and make it worse, the NBA won't be changing its own rules and regulations regarding the anthem.

Via SportsBusiness Daily, NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said in an annual "state of the league" press conference that there's no reason to change the state of the league's rule that players must stand for the anthem.

"The NFL is in a very different situation than the NBA," Silver said. "Twenty-five percent of our league is comprised of players who aren't American. So it's hard to say in the case of the NBA it's about patriotism, when a quarter of our players aren't even American. But we've collectively viewed it as a moment of unity in our arenas."

That's kind of a weird explanation, frankly. The more accurate truth is that, in the aftermath of Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf refusing to stand for the anthem more than 20 years ago, the NBA swooped in and negotiated an agreement with the NBA Players Association to make standing mandatory. End of problem.

Which is precisely what the NFL should have done. But the NFL doesn't enjoy the kind of relationship with the NFL Players Association that would be conducive to a quick and easy win-win outcome, and the league surely didn't want to get squeezed into making a concession to players in order to make the problem go away in August 2016.

As a result, the problem lingers. As does the NFL's reluctance to negotiate the kind of conclusive resolution that would happen if the league and the union would agree that players will stand for the anthem. All because the NFL doesn't want to give something up to get the outcome it so desperately needs.

Waiting for the “dramatic turn” in Kaepernick case to come

By Mike Florio
Pro Football Talk
June 2, 2018

As noted on Thursday, the “dramatic turn” in the Colin Kaepernick collusion grievance promised by lawyer Mark Geragos presents its own drama. Either Geragos delivers or he doesn’t, and he’ll take the heat that goes along with writing a check that reality couldn’t honor if there is no dramatic turn.

So as we wait for the dramatic outcome to the promise of a dramatic turn, let’s spend some time wondering what it may be. Geragos suggested that someone would be dropping a dime, which presumably would cause the NFL to drop a deuce. (Geragos actually said someone will “dime out” the NFL, but if I didn’t phrase it as “dropping a dime” it would have looked odd to use “drop a deuce.” And I never turn down a chance to use “drop a deuce.” And now I’ve been able to use “drop a deuce” three times. Actually, four.)

So if someone is going to be dropping a dime, it would have to be someone who knows what’s been going on. While discussing the Geragos claim during Thursday’s PFT Live, I wondered aloud whether the dime-dropper will be former NFL P.R. executive Joe Lockhart, who surely knows what was going regarding any potential coordination (collusion) between the league office and the teams in order to keep Kaepernick unemployed. With word emerging on Wednesday that Cowboys owner Jerry Jones had testified that he was “proud” to see Lockhart gone, maybe Lockhart decided to take the gloves off.

Although it’s been impossible to track down any details in the day or so since Geragos said what he said, I get the feeling it’s not Lockhart. I get the feeling it could be someone in even better position to drop the kind of dime that would indeed result in, well, it would be immature to use it a fifth time.

Polls show public divided on anthem issue

By Michael David Smith

Pro Football Talk

June 2, 2018

The NFL wanted to find a way to put the national anthem controversy behind it, but polls indicate that's impossible, as the public is sharply divided, with large numbers of Americans likely to oppose any policy the NFL could implement.

A HuffPost/YouGov survey found that 41 percent of Americans say that teams should be fined if their players kneel in protest, while 44 percent say they should not, with the rest undecided.

Separately, a Yahoo Sports/YouGov poll found 53 percent of NFL viewers said they support the policy, with 32 percent opposing and 15 percent saying neither or no opinion.

Those numbers indicate that there are tens of millions of Americans on each side of the issue, and that it's impossible for the NFL to placate everyone. The anthem controversy hasn't gone away. Last year Americans argued about the players who knelt on the field, and this year Americans will argue about the players who stay in the locker room. But we're along way from Americans agreeing on the issue.