

Discover more 

DOW JONES

---

## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. To order presentation-ready copies for distribution to your colleagues, clients or customers visit <http://www.djreprints.com>.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/christies-cowboys-support-rankles-some-new-jersey-residents-1418682613>

NY POLITICS

# Christie's Cowboys Support Rankles Some New Jersey Residents

In a State With Many Eagles Fans, Governor's Appearance With Dallas Owner Isn't Too Popular

By **JOSH DAWSEY**

Updated Dec. 15, 2014 8:54 p.m. ET



Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones, left, talks with New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie before an NFL game between the Cowboys and the New York Giants on Nov. 23 in East Rutherford, N.J. Mr. Christie sat with Mr. Jones in the Cowboys box during a game Sunday night between the Cowboys and the Philadelphia Eagles. *KATHY WILLENS/ASSOCIATED PRESS*

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie usually has a loyal ally in Matt Rooney, a prominent conservative blogger who often defends the Republican governor from attacks.

After seeing Mr. Christie high-five Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones Sunday night and celebrate the Cowboys' win over the Philadelphia Eagles, he joked that he might have to reconsider his support.

"If there's one thing I can't stand more than a Clinton, it's a Cowboys fan," Mr. Rooney said. "It just broke my heart to see him in the Cowboys box."

Mr. Christie took a deeply unpopular position in New Jersey Sunday night. He pulled for the Cowboys, who are NFC East division rivals with two teams with New Jersey fan bases: the Philadelphia Eagles and the New York Giants. New Jersey isn't exactly known as a hotbed for Cowboys fans.

"I only know three of us," said Jim Bailey, an emergency-medical services worker in

Avalon and Cowboys fan who watched the game alone.

Mr. Bailey said he didn't know Mr. Christie was a fan and was surprised to see him in the box.

John Schwartz, Mr. Bailey's friend and a fellow Cowboys fan, said he watched the game at a South Jersey bar packed with Eagles fans.

Even after their team's win, both men said they were keeping quiet Monday in a state overwhelmed by Eagles fans. "It can backfire," Mr. Bailey said, of gloating about football.

Mr. Christie didn't seem scared, even as he was heckled by fans Sunday night, called offensive names by a Philadelphia city councilman and joked about on social media.

The governor dialed into a South Jersey radio show to explain his lifelong love for the Cowboys and bask in the victory. Mr. Christie said he became a fan as a young child watching quarterback Roger Staubach.

"I'm a passionate sports fan, so I can't say I was the least bit surprised by the reaction of some Eagles fans," Mr. Christie said to radio host Harry Hurley. "I'll continue to have a good time rooting for the Cowboys. I'm not going to be one of those politicians who changes their sport team loyalties to score political points."

What bothered many of the Eagles fans, they said, wasn't that Mr. Christie liked the Cowboys. It was that he liked them with such intensity and by Mr. Jones's side.

"The high-five just really irritated people," said Brigid Harrison, a political scientist at Montclair State University and Eagles fan.

Mike Donohue, chairman of the Cape May County Republican Party, said his phone was buzzing Sunday with text messages from angry fellow Eagles fans.

"When you're losing to the Cowboys, you want to break something. And then you see the governor with Jerry Jones, it kind of pushes you over the edge," he said.

Some speculated on how the public display might affect Mr. Christie if he decides to run for president in 2016. The governor previously has said he would make a decision in early 2015.

"I guess there are more electoral votes in Texas," said Mr. Donohue, with a laugh.

Copyright 2014 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. Distribution and use of this material are governed by our Subscriber Agreement and by copyright law. For non-personal use or to order multiple copies, please contact Dow Jones Reprints at 1-800-843-0008 or visit [www.djreprints.com](http://www.djreprints.com).