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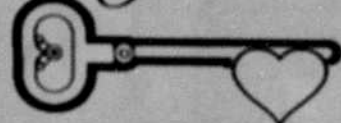
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USC coach ousted mid-season

■ FIRED: An overall winning record wasn't enough to keep Charlie Parker around

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Southern California fired head basketball coach Charlie Parker today and replaced him on an interim basis with former UCLA star Henry Bibby.

The Trojans have an 11-10 record, but have lost nine of their last 14 games. They are 4-5 in the Pacific-10 Conference, putting them in sixth place.

The team already has four more wins than it got all last season when it went 7-21 and lost its final 14 games. Parker took over as interim head coach after George Raveling retired suddenly two days before the start of the season after a near-fatal car accident.

Before that, Parker, 47, was USC's associate head coach for six years. He had the interim tag removed from his title last March.

Bibby, 46, joined the USC basketball program last May as an assistant coach. He has 14 years of college and professional coaching experience, including stints in the Continental Basketball Association and the United States Basketball League.

"This is probably the most difficult decision I've had to make since I've been athletic director the last three years," Mike Garrett said at a hastily called news conference on campus. "I believe I

have someone who's amply qualified and will do a great job."

When asked why the change was made at this time, Garrett said, "I look at our young people and see if I believe they're growing and have an opportunity to grow and we're providing the things they need to grow. Wins come after that. If you use wins and losses, I don't think they're reflective of the total picture."

Bibby said it was unfortunate he was selected head coach in the manner that he was.

"We're not looking to turn the team around, we just want to continue improving," he said. "There are things we need to continue to work on — rebounding, defense. I think we can be competitive, not necessarily more, but we will be competitive."

Garrett said he has had no talks with anyone about taking the job permanently. Bibby will be the head coach for the rest of this season, Garrett said.

Parker was not immediately available for comment. Garrett told reporters he informed Parker of his decision early today and Garrett said Parker was very disappointed.

"He has his opinions and he has every right to them," Garrett said.

The Trojans play in the Bay Area this week, facing No. 25 Stanford in Palo Alto, Calif., on Thursday night and California in Berkeley, Calif., on Saturday afternoon.

Japan, United States may make first major league trade

NEW YORK (AP) — In what would be the first trade between American and Japanese major league teams, the Boston Red Sox are discussing a deal to acquire pitcher Robinson Checo from the Hiroshima Toyo Carp after the 1996 season.

Carp spokesman Takashi Hamada said the possible move would send Checo, 24, to the Red Sox for a player to be named and perhaps some cash.

"However, terms for the trade and other details have yet to be finalized between Hiroshima, Boston and Checo," Hamada said. "They now share only a general understanding for the trade."

The Carp and Red Sox are expected to sign a formal agreement before the season ends, Hamada said.

Though Hideo Nomo, Cecil Fielder and other All-Stars have moved between Japan and the United States, those deals have always been straight cash transactions. Never before have players from the two countries been traded for each other, and such a move would indicate increased cooperation between the two baseball offices.

Any player on the 40-man roster that Boston wants to trade to Japan must give his written consent, the commissioner's office said. But the Red Sox do not need such permission to deal a player not on their major league roster.

Boston and Hiroshima began talking last month after Checo expressed an interest in pitching for the Red Sox. On Wednesday, Boston general manager Dan Duquette declined to confirm or deny that the teams have spoken about a trade.

"The Red Sox are well aware of Robinson Checo," he said. "We have expanded our international scouting and we are always evaluating talent on a worldwide basis to constantly help our team."

Checo, from the Dominican Republic, was 15-8 with a 2.74 ERA last year as a rookie in Japan. A hard-throwing right-hander, he also has good command of his curve.

Sideline

TODAY IN SPORTS

First player drafted in three sports will soon retire

NEW YORK (AP) — Dave Winfield, the major league leader in hits and RBIs among active players, has called a news conference for Thursday, and a source familiar with the situation says the 44-year-outfielder will retire.

The 12-time All-Star, who played for Cleveland last year, has spent 23 seasons in the major leagues with San Diego, the New York Yankees, California, Toronto, Minnesota and the Indians.

His agent, Jeff Klein, declined comment. But another person, speaking on the condition he not be identified, confirmed the purpose of the news conference was to announce Winfield's retirement.

Winfield, a five-time Gold Glove winner, didn't give any hint of his plans when he talked with a reporter last weekend. All he would say was that he was in great shape.

He finished with a .283 career average and in the top 20 of many career categories: 3,110 hits (14th), 1,833 RBIs (11th), 465 homers (19th), 11,003 at-bats (sixth) and 2,973 games (seventh).

But he hit just .191 in a limited role with the Indians, with two homers and four RBIs in 115 at-bats. He went on the disabled list twice with an injured left shoulder, and Cleveland didn't include him on its post-season roster.

"Let's just hope I'm having a positive influence," he said during the World Series. "There's no need to get into how I feel now. The guys here know what happened to me."

Winfield joined the Padres in 1973 after becoming an All-American at the University of

Minnesota, never spending a day in the minors. He was the fourth pick overall in the baseball draft. He was also selected by the Atlanta Hawks in the fifth round of the NBA draft, by the Utah Stars in the sixth round of the ABA draft and by the Minnesota Vikings in the 17th round of the NFL draft.

Olympic Committee rejects U.S. flag logo featuring Nike swoosh

BEAVERTON (AP) — Uniforms for the 1996 U.S. Olympic track and field team will not feature a U.S. flag logo with the stars replaced by the familiar Nike swoosh.

"The flag will still be there, but devoid of the swoosh," said Duffy Mahoney, USA Track and Field's director of operations.

Nike backed off its original design after receiving complaints following a fashion show Monday in Atlanta to publicize the uniforms the company is providing for the U.S. team.

The warmup jackets featured a U.S. flag logo of 15 stars and stripes and a white swoosh on a field of blue. An 8-foot replica of the logo provided a backdrop for the six athlete-models.

A woman at the U.S. Olympic Committee press office in Colorado Springs, Colo., said Tuesday she had fielded almost two dozen calls protesting the logo.

Nike spokesman Tom Feuer said it was a mistake for the logo to be used at the show. He also said the company had made the decision a week earlier to drop the swoosh from the blue field, not because of any response by the public.

"The logo with the swoosh was part of the design process. Some of those samples were at the news conference," he said. "That was all."

Feuer said the blue field will be blank on the jackets worn by U.S. competitors. However, versions of the clothing sold to the public will have the swoosh in the logo.

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