

Illinois fires football coach

■ OUSTED: Lou Tepper compiled a losing record in his five seasons on the job

By Matt Kelley
The Associated Press

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — Lou Tepper took pride in running a clean program at Illinois and in his players' high graduation rate and civility.

In the end, those qualities couldn't overshadow two straight poor seasons for the Fighting Illini, and Tepper was fired.

"It became a question of competitiveness," athletic director Ron Guenther said at a news conference Tuesday. "We had all the elements. We just weren't winning games. This is not a business decision. Ultimately, this is about winning games."

In a statement Monday, Tepper said, "Our philosophy has been to educate by promoting academic achievement, positive social behavior, racial harmony and hard-

nosed winning football." Tepper said he was "sorry that we have not had more success on the field this season."

Tepper, 51, is 25-29-2 in five seasons at Illinois.

He said he disagreed with the decision, but will remain coach at Illinois (2-7, 1-5 Big Ten) in the Illini's final two games — Saturday at Minnesota and Nov. 23 against Wisconsin in Champaign.

Minnesota coach Jim Wacker also will be in a countdown situation. He announced today he is leaving after five losing seasons, but will coach the last two games.

Purdue's Jim Colletto and Indiana's Bill Mallory are the other Big Ten coaches who are leaving.

Guenther praised Tepper's "class and dignity" in announcing the firing Monday.

"Unfortunately, we have not been as successful on the field as we would expect, and we feel a change in leadership is necessary at this time," Guenther said.

Tyrone Washington, a safety who played under Tepper from 1992-95, said he respected the coach.

"It's a shame it had to go down like this," Washington said. "Things just didn't work out for him."

Illinois lost its first three games by a combined score of 116-11, lowering already dismal attendance at Memorial Stadium. The Illini played before an average of more than 16,000 empty seats in Champaign this year, including a crowd of 54,000 in the 69,000-seat stadium for last week's 48-0 loss to No. 2 Ohio State.

Tepper's replacement probably will make more than the \$286,342 Tepper made as coach, members of the university's Board of Trustees said.

"We're aware that coach Tepper was probably in the middle or lower end of the pay scale among his counterparts," said board Chairman Thomas Lamont.

LSU admits to NCAA violations

■ CONTROVERSY: The track team will voluntarily reduce its number of scholarships

By Guy Coates
The Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. — After denying for two weeks there were NCAA violations involved in LSU's scholarship scandals, athletic director Joe Dean now admits to one.

The admission came after a letter was sent to Dean by the state, asking that he certify that there were no violations, legislative auditor Dan Kyle told the House Education Committee Tuesday.

In a letter dated Monday, Dean acknowledged there was a "secondary" violation and that the NCAA will allow LSU to voluntarily reduce the number of scholarships in the track program.

NCAA rules don't allow athletes to accept a special chancellor's scholarship, Kyle said. The student receiving the scholarship was a walk-on athlete in the track program, he said.

Dean couldn't be reached immediately for comment.

Rep. Buddy Shaw, R-Shreveport, lauded Kyle, saying that if Dean had not been sent a letter "we would

not have known" about the violation.

"You are right," said Rep. Carl Crane, R-Shreveport. "We would have never known about this if Dr. Kyle hadn't asked for certification."

Kyle gave the committee information two weeks ago saying that "one or two" athletes had received scholarships from the chancellor's Incentive Award program.

That program, geared for minority students in need, became a source of embarrassment for LSU when a university audit showed most of the scholarships were given to white students and a large number of them went to a certain fraternity.

The chancellor's assistant, who was associated with that same fraternity, handed out the scholarships. He apologized and resigned. A week ago, chancellor Bud Davis resigned over the flap.

During that time, Dean said in a news release and later at the Press Club of Baton Rouge that there "were absolutely no NCAA violations." Dean also chastised legislators who indicated there might have been violations.

The athletic director said last week the NCAA rules are complex and that legislators should have called him before making such comments.

Minnesota coach to leave after season

■ RESIGNATION: Jim Wacker is one of four coaches in the Big Ten who will not return next season

MINNEAPOLIS — After five losing years as Minnesota football coach, Jim Wacker is leaving at the end of the season.

"I think it's time for this program to have new leadership; I think it's time to hire new people," Wacker said at a news conference. "I have no doubt this administration's going to pick the best person for the job. And they're going to get it done. It's going to turn."

Wacker is one of four coaches in the Big Ten who won't be back next season. Indiana fired Bill

Mallory; Purdue coach Jim Colletto announced his resignation; and Monday, Illinois fired Lou Tepper.

Wacker said he told the players this morning at an emotional meeting. He was seen leaving in tears.

"Let's just say it's a tough, tough day," Wacker said at the news conference. "I came in five years ago with high expectations and dreams. I had no doubt at this time we would be at the top of the Big Ten and Rose Bowl champions. The main reason it didn't happen is the guy you're looking at right here. It just didn't happen."

Wacker has said he wanted to end the season with at least six wins to make his fifth season a

winning one. The Golden Gophers are 3-6 and on a six-game losing streak following a 45-28 loss Saturday to Wisconsin; two games remain.

Wacker told friends Monday he wanted the Gophers to be able to hire a new coach by Dec. 1, the *Saint Paul Pioneer Press* reported. He said it was a tremendous disadvantage when he was hired in late December 1991 and couldn't assemble a staff until after Jan. 1, the newspaper stated.

Wacker, who is 15-38 in his fifth season, has a mandate to win five games this season. When he signed a two-year contract extension just before the final game of 1995, it included the stipulation that he would resign if he didn't win at least five.

Meet: Joint practice session next for Ducks

■ Continued from Page 7
perienced rowers instead of eight. However, both the men and women's races in Washington this weekend featured an eight-man entry from Oregon.

The Head of the Lake meet is the most prestigious head race on the West Coast and featured squads from Stanford, Gonzaga and Washington. The men finished 15th out of 16 boats, while the women placed 10th out of 12. Although the places were lower than those at last week's Portland

Loop, "We had a much better row than last week," Holmes said, "and our margins were much closer."

Both races were won by Washington, which competes at the NCAA level and is a fully-funded program. While the Ducks hustled to find enough rowers for two boats, the Husky's men's team featured 125 freshman.

Next up for the Ducks is a joint practice session with Oregon State this Saturday. The novice boats from each school will also

have a competition. Following that, the Ducks will hibernate until spring, when the new season starts. Spring races are 2,000 meters, as compared to fall's 5,000-meter contests. Practice schedules will be adjusted accordingly, with rowers doing sprint workouts three days a week and running on off days.

Come race days, the Ducks hope to be on a level with crews from Western Washington, Puget Sound, Portland Lutheran and Oregon State.

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