

# Simmons eager for training camp

*Anthony Simmons is expected to challenge Dean Wells for starting middle linebacker*

By Tim Klass  
The Associated Press

SEATTLE — Anthony Simmons missed the phone call from the Seattle Seahawks. Then he nearly missed seeing himself picked in the first round of the NFL draft.

After agonizing over whether to leave Clemson after his junior year, the 6-foot-1, 231-pound linebacker doesn't want to miss the start of training camp.

In a news conference and interview Monday, Simmons said he told his agent, Eugene Parker, to get him a contract before camp opens July 18.

"I'm just ready to get out in the field, get started, get back to playing the game," Simmons said.

He said he didn't set any minimum terms.

"I'm not like that," he said. "Whatever you guys can work out, just as long as I'm working out so I don't miss out on anything. I think that would be just an unfair disadvantage to myself."

Simmons, who played inside linebacker at Clemson despite being relatively small for the position, said his first assignment with the Seahawks would be in the middle in a 4-3 set. He is ex-

pected to challenge Dean Wells for starting middle linebacker.

Seahawks President Bob Whitt presented him with a No. 51 jersey. Simmons said he picked the number because it was as close as he could get to No. 41 he wore with the Tigers.

He said he got into football at the urging of friends in high school in Spartanburg, S.C., playing first at free safety as a sophomore and switching to linebacker the next year.

Simmons, who has a 5-year-old daughter, said he would move to Seattle alone but hoped to return to Clemson in the next few years to complete work on a bachelor's degree in marketing.

A cross and a \$5 gold coin hanging from his neck, Simmons said he was glad to be done with the stress "of having no concept of what's going to happen to me within the next couple hours on draft day, just knowing that one pick's going to decide my future."

He had visited Miami, which had the 29th pick; Detroit, No. 20, and Seattle, No. 15. Parker predicted he'd be taken by Cincinnati, who had the 13th and 17th picks. Simmons thought it would be Detroit.

Two hours into watching the draft with friends in a hotel room, hunger got the better of him. When he went into the restaurant to get his order, he left his cellular telephone in the car.

Returning, he saw he had received a call. He got back to the room just in time to see his name flash on the screen.

"Oh my, whoa! I started jumping up and down. I couldn't believe it. I was totally surprised," Simmons said.

Jumping up and down is also something he does a lot after big sacks and tackles.

"I'm just a player that likes to go out and play the game hard and especially to go out and make plays," he said.

That attitude loomed as large for the Seahawks as speed and instinct for getting to the ball, head coach Dennis Erickson said.

"The thing about Anthony is he loves to play the game. He has fun playing the game, and that's what it's all about," Erickson said.

Watching game films, the head coach explained, "Anthony just jumped out at you. He got excited playing the game. When he made plays, he was excited about making plays. That's what football is all about."

Simmons said he had been told the players he most resembles are Ray Lewis of the Baltimore Ravens and the now-retired Mike Singletary.

"I tend not to model myself after anyone, you know. I like to just be my own person, I would say, play my own game — my game," Simmons said. "I haven't kept up with the NFL too much."

# Clippers fire Fitch after four years

*Bill Fitch, the only man to coach more than 2,000 games, is second in NBA history in wins and first in losses*

By Ken Peters  
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Head coach Bill Fitch was fired by the Los Angeles Clippers on Monday, two days after the perennial NBA doormat finished a 17-65 season.

Elgin Baylor, Clippers vice president of basketball operations, said he planned to compile a list of candidates for the coaching job within a few days.

Fitch, 63, coached the Clippers for four years, compiling a 99-229 record in Los Angeles, including 36-46 and a playoff berth last season.

Hit hard by injuries this season, including the loss of floor leader Loy Vaught, the Clippers' record was the third worst in the NBA, behind only Denver, which won 11 games and fired its coach Monday, and Toronto, which won 16 games and saw its coach resign in February.

Fitch, who began his NBA coaching career with Cleveland in 1970, is second in league history in wins with 944, behind Lenny Wilkens, and first in losses with 1,106. He is the only man to coach more than 2,000 games.

Baylor said he told Fitch he was being let go on Monday morning, meeting with him in the coach's office at the LA Sports Arena.

"We had a very long conversation," Baylor said. "Like any coach, he was disappointed. We talked about a lot of things. We probably talked half an hour or longer."

# Golf: Baumgartner said women will improve

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Gomric is in fourth with a first-round 73, while eight players — three of them Wildcats — are tied for fifth at 74.

The No. 1 player in the country, the Sun Devils' Grace Park, is among the four players tied with Patterson for 13th.

Anika Heuser is second on Oregon after the first round with a 76 that ties her for 17th. Heuser is coming off an individual title at the Peg Barnard Invitational on

April 12, which was the Ducks' last tournament.

The other three players competing for Oregon are Kylie Wilson, Jerilyn White and Karen Bristow. They are placed in that order after the first round with Wilson's 78 landing her in a tie for 26th, White's 80 tying her for 37th, and Bristow tied for 42nd with 81.

"I think you're going to see all five of [the Ducks] improve dramatically [today]," Baumgartner said. "I think Paula Patterson is

going to go out and shoot par or better. She's going to know that we're going to need her leadership, and she's going to step it up a notch."

The second 18 holes is played today before the tournament concludes with Wednesday's final round.

"The Pac-10 Championships isn't won on the first day," Baumgartner said. "And we feel really confident about the next two."




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