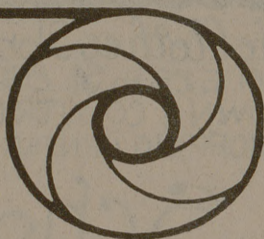


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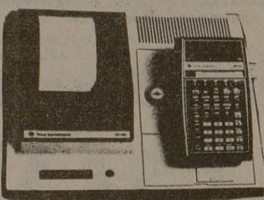


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## Sports

# White Sox are optimistic

**United Press International**  
SARASOTA, Fla. — There is a new attitude of optimism and determination among the Chicago White Sox this year which could very likely fade into resignation by mid-June.

Most White Sox players agree that new manager Bob Lemon got the team off in the right direction by stressing fundamentals and defense in the opening weeks of spring training. It is generally conceded that Paul Richards, at 67, just didn't have his heart in managing last season and by September the White Sox players also gave up, as evidenced by their 15 losses in the final 16 games.

"Let's face it," said Ken Brett, who after coming over from the New York Yankees in mid-May became the White Sox best pitcher in '76, "this was a horrible ballclub last year. We didn't stress any fundamentals in spring training and pretty much went through the motions. Most players will tell you it was the easiest camp they ever had."

Slugging outfielder Richie Zisk, who was acquired over the winter from the Pittsburgh Pirates, a perennial contender in the National League, agreed with Brett that this year's edition of the White Sox can only get better.

"You have a lot of kids on this team and guys who haven't had such big league experience," said Zisk. "But they can play. Guys like Brian Downing, who was hurt a lot last year, Alan Bannister, Kevin Bell and Chet Lemon. All they need is more experience and they'll have us winning."

True, there's a lot of merit to that old saying about there being no substitute for experience, but the cold hard facts are that the White Sox finished dead last in the American League in pitching with a 4.5 team earned run average and did nothing to improve their lot in that department over the winter. And although Zisk, who hit 21 homers and drove in 89 runs for Pittsburgh last year, will aid the offense, he'll do nothing for the woefully weak outfield defense. Further, the infield defense is almost as uncertain.

**Strengths:** Zisk, first baseman Jim Spencer and outfielder Jorge Orta are all proven hitters with adequate power. Bucky Dent, if he's not traded, is among the best shortstops in baseball.

**Weaknesses:** Unproven rookies; uncertain infield, especially if Dent is traded; weak defensive outfield.

**New Faces:** Besides Zisk, the most significant off-season acquisition, right-hander, Steve Stone, returns via the free agent route and will join the starting rotation.

will join the starting rotation with a 4-3 record with the cross-batter last year. Other free agents included third baseman Soderholm, utility infielder Nordbrook and pinch hitter Stillman — none of whom were prominently in Lemon's early season outlook. The White Sox consider themselves lucky to get out expansionist Seattle for the Al West in a year which was undoubtedly highlighted by more Bill Veek gimmicks.

## Plane ride back helps ease Houston's pain

**United Press International**  
HOUSTON — What a gutty St. Bonaventure team took out of the Houston Cougars, a three-hour flight with the school band, the cheerleaders and the pom-pom girls helped put back in a Cougar assistant coach said yesterday.

Despite finishing their 29-8 season as Southwest Conference runner-up and National Invitation Tournament runner-up, Houston players were still aggravated for allowing a 10-point lead to slip away in the final four minutes of the NIT finals Sunday.

"I hate to see a championship game decided at the free throw line," said All-America Otis Birdsong. "It's just a sour way to end it."

Houston outgated St. Bonaventure by nine shots. But the Cougars committed 29 personal fouls to the Bonnies' 16 and as a result St. Bonaventure had 46 free throw attempts to Houston's 16.

Forward Chet Thompson had another gripe.

"They were on our backs all afternoon, but they would never call 'em on them," he said.

Houston coach Guy V. Lewis, who won his 400th game during the week-long tournament in New York, did not criticize the referees.

"Nobody figured we'd be here, but here we were in the finals of the NIT and one of the teams still playing college basketball. I could win 800 games, but they would never make this one loss."

It did not help that the plane carrying the team home four hours late arriving in New York. "But it might not have either," assistant coach Harlan said. "The party would have been at the same time anyway. We finally got on the plane there was a band, the cheerleaders, the pom-pom girls and a lot of our fans. It didn't hurt anybody, including me."

For the players, yesterday was a regular class day. But Pat Sanders might be a few late sleepers among the regulars.

Birdsong, who scored 38 points in the finals and 86 for the tournament, was overshadowed by the Most Valuable Players award by the Bonnies' Greg Sanders, who scored 40 points.

Birdsong wept openly in Madison Square Garden locker room after the game. After the game, however, even he was talking.

"It was a fine experience. I we had won," he said. "But heck of a time, and I'm everyone else did too."

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Furniture, fixtures, equipment and leasehold improvements, less depreciation	16,326.24
Deferred charges and other assets	43,324.46
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$1,563,234.83</b>
<b>Capital and Liabilities</b>	
Savings Accounts	\$ 720,542.46
Other liabilities	13,573.89
Permanent Reserve fund stock	562,500.00
Surplus or Undivided Profits	266,618.48
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