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Rangers acquire Hunter

Newcomer becomes fourth Texas manager this week

United Press International
OAKLAND — Billy Hunter begins his big league managerial career today, confident he can take care of the housekeeping chores that will make the Texas Rangers pennant contenders.

Hunter, who became the fourth Ranger manager this week, signed a multiyear contract Monday and then flew from Cleveland to Oakland in time to see his new club hold on for a 5-2 victory over the A's.

At least four big league teams, starting with the Cincinnati Reds in 1970, offered Hunter managerial jobs but he refused, instead biding his time and waiting for what he called the "right opportunity."

That opportunity came when Rangers owner Brad Corbett offered him the Texas job Monday after Connie Ryan said he didn't want it. Ryan had taken over after Eddie Stanky, who replaced the

fired Frank Lucchessi, worked one game and went home.

"It's been an interesting week, to say the least," Corbett said Monday night while he awaited Hunter's Oakland arrival. When Billy finally made it to the Oakland Coliseum in the fourth inning, Corbett put his arms around him and said softly, "Welcome aboard."

"I turned other jobs down in the past," said Hunter, 49. He was a coach at Baltimore while Earl Weaver was the Orioles' skipper, "because I was happy with the job I had and also because I didn't think I was ready to manage a big league club."

"Now, though, I'm ready. I took this job with Texas because I became convinced it was the one I had been waiting for. This club has the personnel and if I don't mishandle it, the chance is there to win."

"The team has a good defense, especially in the infield. The team has good speed. The team can score runs and the pitching could get better as the season goes on. To me, that means this is a team with an excellent opportunity to win it all."

Corbett said he went for Hunter because of Billy's longtime associa-

tion with success — first as a player with the New York Yankees and then as a coach under Weaver with the Orioles.

"The man has been a winner himself and he has worked on winning teams," said Corbett. "We think that experience plus Billy's knowledge of the game will be factors in our success."

Hunter will be in uniform tonight when the Rangers again play the A's but he is going to let Ryan run things.

"I know a lot of the players from past associations," Hunter said, "but I don't want to jump in right away. I'm going to let Connie run the team for at least another game while I observe and make notes to myself. I'm a great believer in notes. Heck, no one can remember everything."

While neither Corbett nor Hunter would reveal contract particulars, it was learned Hunter signed a three-year agreement for \$250,000 plus a bonus arrangement based on the team winning a division title.

"I'm very happy with the contract," said Hunter. "There never was a problem concerning the terms."

Ryan said he did not want a Texas job because it was his opinion that the team needed an outside lead it after the turmoil of the 70 games.

"Billy is a solid baseball manager. He will do a good job," said Corbett. "I'm a member of the organization that's why I signed with the originally — to help in any way produce a winner. Now, I think we are on the right track."

Hunter said he had no change of mind for now.

"What I think the club needs most is to feel it has a goal in reach," said Hunter. "When we have this kind of personnel and are struggling along at a 500 level, obviously something is missing. We're going to find out what that is and go from there."

Hunter said one of the people to congratulate him was Stanky, who sent him a telegram.

"Good luck Billy. It's a great job and a fine organization," Stanky wrote in his wire, which Hunter carried across the country neatly folded in his pocket.

"I appreciate that," he said.

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Four U.S. men in semis; Evert beats King at Wimbledon

United Press International
WIMBLEDON, England — Jimmy Connors, with a day's rest after his grueling five-set victory over Stan Smith, heads a group of four Americans bidding today for three semifinal places in the Wimbledon tennis championships.

The top-seeded Connors, hoping to regain the title he won in 1974, is heavily favored to beat unseeded South African Byron Bertram. His next opponent could be John

McEnroe of Douglaston, N.Y., the first Wimbledon qualifier ever to reach the quarter-finals.

The 18-year-old left-hander should have been playing in the Wimbledon junior draw. McEnroe won the junior title at the French Open last month.

But McEnroe was more than happy to miss the junior event for an important date against 13th-seeded Phil Dent of Australia.

"I don't mind pulling out of the

Texas dove population declining says survey

Nesting white-winged doves in the Rio Grande Valley have declined by some 18 percent from last year's estimate, according to a recently completed survey of the popular game bird.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department whitewing project leader Gary Waggener and his crew made counts of the adult birds which returned from Mexico and Central American to nest in citrus and native brush of the Rio Grande Valley.

Based on counts of calling birds, Waggener estimates 455,000 whitewings to be in the Lower Valley; of that total an estimated 179,000 are in native brush with the majority — 276,000 — in cultivated citrus groves.

Waggener said this represents a 16 percent decline in the number of birds using citrus trees for nesting

and a five percent decline in those birds nesting in brush, for an overall decline of 18 percent.

However, across the Rio Grande in the Mexican state of Tamaulipas, biologists there estimate a 25 percent increase in whitewings.

Waggener and Jim Dunks, P&WD dove program leader, recently finished a survey of whitewing nesting areas in northeastern Mexico adjacent to Texas and were impressed with the number of birds they found.

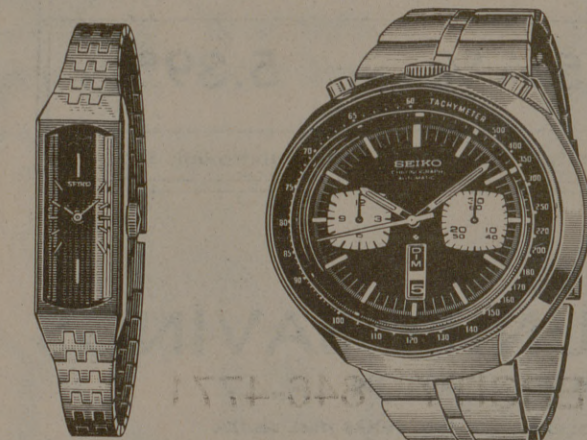
An estimated 300 pairs of birds per acre were found nesting in one area.

Although neither Dunks nor Waggener can prove it, they feel agricultural practices in Mexico and Texas have a major role in determining numbers of whitewings present in the two countries.

"Location of food supplies seems to have a great deal to do with where whitewings choose to nest," said Dunks.

The Parks and Wildlife Commission will meet in July to set both whitewing and mourning dove seasons and bag limits.

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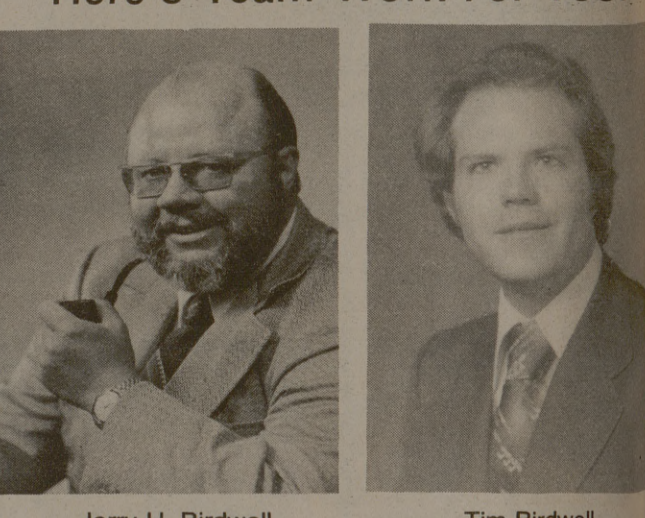
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