

Kings crown Begzos GM

United Press International
KANSAS CITY — John Begzos, who helped lead the San Antonio Spurs to National Basketball Association success both on the floor and at the gate, Tuesday was named executive vice president and general manager of the ailing Kansas City Kings.

Begzos, 37, who replaced outgoing president and general manager Joe Axelson, will assume his duties Sept. 1.

"The key is to win, but to win while we have fun," he told an afternoon news conference. "We're going to have fun. And we're going to have a winner."

Begzos will be only the fourth general manager in the Kings' 30-year history. He inherits a club which last season won the Midwest Division championship — their first in 27 years — but ranked only 11th in attendance in the 22-team league.

The club reportedly lost \$160,000 because of the low attendance. And after the Kemper Arena — the team's home court — collapsed during a wind and rain storm, rumors circulated that the Kings might be calling another city home for the 1979-80 season.

But the city agreed to waive rent, staffing charges and the user fee at Municipal Auditorium, which only seats 9,300, and the Kings announced they would remain through the coming season despite a probable loss of up to \$500,000 because of the limited seating.

Begzos said the loss of Kemper was only "a momentary problem." "When it's back up, and it will be soon, it will be great for us and the city," he said.

Begzos said his primary concern would be increasing attendance at Kings games.

"We're going to be aggressive getting them (crowds) into the building. We're going to put people in the building. We are going to entertain them. We are going to send them home happy."

Begzos began his association with professional sports in 1971 as office

manager of the Oklahoma City AAA baseball franchise. He then moved to San Antonio as general manager of the AA baseball club.

His ability to put customers in the ball park was noticed by the San Antonio Spurs, which at the time were even having trouble drawing the players' families to games.

In 1973 he was named sales manager. A year later he became the Spurs' general manager.

That first year the Spurs averaged 6,000 a game, a considerable jump in attendance from the previous season. During the 1977-78 season when the HemisFair Arena still held only 10,000, the Spurs aver-

aged 9,100 per game. Last season the Spurs averaged almost 12,000 per game in the expanded arena.

"Over the past two months our selection committee interviewed a number of strong candidates, both in and out of the NBA, and John Begzos was our unanimous selection," said Kings managing director Paul Rosenberg. "Begzos' dynamic approach to sales, promotions and customer goodwill ensure our continued progress toward building the strongest NBA franchise possible."

"There are only 22 general manager jobs in the NBA and this is one of the best," Begzos said about his

leaving the Spurs, which lost in the semifinals of the NBA playoffs to the Washington Bullets.

"I actively sought this job. I sought the Kings out. They didn't seek me."

"As far as San Antonio is concerned, I will always have a warm spot in my heart for the fans and the team. They gave me the start in a sport that I truly enjoy."

"But San Antonio has been able to hold salaries down. Contracts are running out. And we're not getting any younger."

"And this (the Kings) is a team on the rise."

Astros pound Cubs, 6-1

United Press International
HOUSTON — Ken Forsch pitched a four-hitter and Julio Gonzalez rapped a two-run double Tuesday night to lead the Houston Astros to a 6-1 victory over the Chicago Cubs.

Ken Forsch, 6-6, at one point retired 16 consecutive batters before pinch-hitter Ken Henderson hit his first home run of the year with the two out in the eighth.

A fielding error by Cubs' shortstop Ivan DeJesus on a possible double-play ground ball by Alan Ashby with runners on first and

third bases and one out in the fourth inning allowed Enos Cabell to score the Astros' second run. Forsch then reached base on a fielder's choice and Gonzalez drove on Ashby and Forsch with his double down the left-field line.

Forsch put down a suicide squeeze bunt in the sixth to score the Astros' fifth run after Jeff Leonard, who collected three singles, and Art Howe singled to open the inning. Jose Cruz' infield single in the first drove in a run and the Astros added an unearned run in the

seventh when Terry Poff reached on an error, scored double-play. Dennis Lamp sorbed the loss.

The win allowed the Astros five games ahead of second Cincinnati who also won.

The Pittsburgh Pirates played under protest by the Reds left the field for 34 minutes while umpires and managers argued a play in which the Reds argued they had not.

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Cain's death still a mystery

United Press International
ST. CHARLES, Mo. — J.V. Cain's teammates filed quietly into the meeting room at football training camp.

Their solemn demeanor contrasted sharply with the noise, laughter and horseplay that normally accompanies such gatherings. The players and staff of the St. Louis Cardinals were stunned by Cain's death Sunday night, two hours after he collapsed at team practice.

Doctors at first attributed the death to a heart attack but an autopsy Monday ruled that out.

"We found no indications of a heart attack," St. Charles County Coroner Joseph Mueller said. "As of now the findings are inconclusive."

"This thing could get complicated now with him being an athlete. We don't know if heat and exertion were factors. We have to keep testing and hope we come up with something definite, but it could take several weeks."

Emerging from the closed team meeting, most players were too shaken to talk. Rookie Jerry Holloway, drafted as a backup to Cain at tight end, said there was talk of retiring Cain's jersey, No. 88, and of players wearing black armbands at games this season.

Running back Wayne Morris told reporters, "I would like to personally dedicate the season to J.V."

The 6-foot-4 Cain was the Cardinals' No. 1 draft choice in 1974 out of the University of Colorado. His leaping, one-hand touchdown catches helped make him the Cardinal rookie of the year and earned him the starter's role midway through the 1975 season.

A torn Achilles tendon in training camp last year forced Cain to sit out the Cardinals' dismal 6-10 season. Wilkinson hoped Cain's return would make the Cardinals winners again.

"J.V. was one of the things we looked forward to this season," said Joe Sullivan, vice president for operations. "He was one of the leaders. Everybody looked up to him. Now new leaders must take over."

Cain's closest friend on the team, defensive tackle Charlie Davis, said Cain appeared to be in good health and spirits Sunday, his 28th birthday.

"I was with him all day," Davis said. "I talked to him about his birthday and how we were going to celebrate at training camp. Then suddenly this happens."

Davis flew to Houston Sunday night in a plane chartered by the Cardinals to bring Cain's widow, Jeanne, to St. Louis.

Wilkinson said Cain was running "a simple pass pattern." At play's end, he turned, took two steps back toward the huddle and collapsed.

Team trainer John Omohundro rushed to Cain and applied mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and team physician Bernard Garfinkel used cardio-support equipment to help the athlete regain his breathing on the practice field of the Lindenwood Colleges.

Cain was taken to St. Joseph Hospital, where he died in the emergency room.



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