

Porter's honesty key to his success

United Press International
NEW YORK — Darrell Porter held on tightly to the edge of the bat as he spoke.

He really didn't need to because he had a good grip on himself. He was answering all the questions being put to him easily, talking from the heart without any embellishment and you could tell he believed what he was saying.

Some of the things he said were a bit shocking, particularly if you hadn't known about them before, but they sounded entirely plausible the way he said them. It wasn't hard to believe him.

Porter's wife, Deanne, also believes him. She did from the

first time he ever was introduced to her at the ballpark and if anything, she has even more faith in him now.

"He's a good person," she said. "He's honest."

Darrell Porter wouldn't know any other way to be. This was at a press conference that was more like a spectacular. It started with Porter being presented a sleek, new black Pontiac Trans Am for being voted the World Series MVP in the recently concluded seven-game set between his St. Louis Cardinals and Milwaukee Brewers. The car is awarded by Sport Magazine and Major League Baseball.

Porter showed up on fashion-

able Park Avenue, where the car was at the curb, as if he were out for a morning stroll in the country. The 30-year-old catcher looked perfectly natural in his open collar shirt, sky blue golf sweater and everyday slacks.

He wasn't trying to impress anybody.

But he did impress people. With his honesty and naturalness.

Like Porter's wife, Whitey Herzog believed in Porter. Enough so that when Herzog was managing Kansas City in 1976, he pushed all he could to get Porter from Milwaukee, which had turned down \$1 million cash from the Cubs for him only a couple of years before.

Four years later, when he was serving as general manager as well as field manager of the Cardinals, Herzog recognized Porter's value again even though he was aware the Missouri-born, left-handed hitting receiver had not that long before gone through a rehabilitation center for his drug problems and was coming off a disappointing .249 season with the Royals.

Herzog had so much faith in Porter that he signed him to a \$3.5 million contract for five years and traded away catcher Ted Simmons, one of the Cardinals' most popular players.

A reporter asked Porter to talk about his career in terms of agonies and ecstasies and he had

to smile at the way the request was phrased.

"I think there have been more agonies than ecstasies," he said. "I think most ballplayers would say it's a game of failures. There's definitely more failures. But I'm enjoying the present and forgetting about the past. Yet, I must be constantly aware of what I am — a drug addict and an alcoholic."

They wanted to know more about his problems, how and when he first got started.

"So simply, you wouldn't be-

lieve," he said. "I never took a drink when I was young. I took one sip of beer in high school and that was it. I was the designated driver. I was used to being the big star in high school. I think I hit something like .560.

Then I got in with guys who were just as good as me (in pro ball) and I hit .204. I was flat lonely. A couple of guys invited me to go out and have a few beers. I first started using alcohol and drugs socially. Later, I used them to get a high. Before

you know it, I lost track of who I was."

One member of the media who was present at the news conference told Porter that he had a 15-year-old son who had been a user but had been rehabilitated. The father said Porter had inspired the boy by what he had done.

"That's neat," Porter said. "Thank you. Thank you very much."

The World Series MVP couldn't have been more pleased.

Black groups say television rulings could 'spell doom'

United Press International
DENVER — A coalition of black organizations has filed a brief with the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals warning that a federal court ruling over televising of college football games could financially destroy some black colleges.

"Because of diminishing federal, state and local resources for student financial aid and other purposes, black colleges all over the nation are fighting for their very survival," the brief warned.

The "friend of the court" brief was filed on behalf of the National Association for Equal Education Opportunity, Inc.; the National Black Media Coalition; the Black Mississippians Council on Higher Education; the National Conference of Black Lawyers; and Viewers of the South, an association of community-based organizations in Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee and Texas.

The coalition asked the appellate court to overturn an order by U.S. District Judge Juan Burciaga of Albuquerque, who declared the NCAA television contracts with CBS, ABC and the Turner Broadcasting Co. in violation of federal antitrust laws.

The lower court ruling has been held in abeyance pending an appeal on the suit, which was filed against the NCAA by the universities of Oklahoma and Georgia, two perennial football powerhouses which want to negotiate their own television contracts. The total value of the NCAA television package, in which all schools share, was estimated at \$281.5 million.

"The lower court's decision will spell the doom for nearly all of the historically black colleges and a substantial number of historically white schools," the brief claimed.

"We pray that this court not

allow the placement of yet another burden in the path of those seeking to counter the effects of nearly three centuries of benign neglect."

Much of the coalition's brief outlined the importance of black colleges and noted 148 such schools have been forced to close since 1908, many for financial reasons.

"Survival of the remaining historically black institutions is tied into their tapping into new revenues," the brief said.

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Astros to name Lillis manager

United Press International
HOUSTON — Interim manager Bob Lillis likely will be named manager of the Houston Astros in the next few days, two newspapers reported today.

The Houston Post and Houston Chronicle quote sources in the organization as saying the field of candidates has narrowed to Lillis, the former first base coach who replaced the fired Bill Virdon late last season.

"Things look pretty good for me," Lillis said, but he and the Astros did not confirm the reports.

Second baseman Joe Morgan of the San Francisco Giants, formerly of the Astros, was a leading candidate until he

announced recently he planned to play another year.

Lillis, 52, replaced Virdon Aug. 10 on an interim basis and compiled a 28-23 record. Virdon since has been named manager of the Montreal Expos.

Astros Board Chairman John McMullen and General Manager Al Rosen met with Lillis Monday and apparently firmed up the deal, although neither McMullen nor Rosen would confirm any impending announcement, the reports said.

Lillis has been with the Houston organization since 1962. As an infielder, he was the franchise's most valuable player that season.

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