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Boredom hasn't caught Fisk

United Press International
SARASOTA, Fla. — Get a ballplayer who has been around a while off by himself, and he'll probably level with you and tell you the everyday grind of waiting around, traveling in planes and buses, practicing, playing, eating restaurant leftovers and perpetually living in a public fish bowl wears out everyone in time.

Ultimately, ballplayers with anywhere from 12 to 15 years in the big leagues become understandably bored of doing the same thing every day, even playing baseball, no matter what they say otherwise, and look for somewhere to "hide" and get away from it all.

Where can they possibly hide? Plenty of places. You probably haven't given it any

thought, but they have.

One of the places where they can keep out of sight and get as far away as they can from the manager is the other end of the bench. Another good spot for concealment is the bullpen if there's enough room, and still another hiding place can be a strange or different position. Any number of players try that near the end of their careers. It's a great place to hide.

But Carlton Fisk isn't bored with catching yet. He's not tired of it either. He's starting his 13th season in the American League and his fourth with the Chicago White Sox and although he has tried some other positions, he has no desire to lay aside the catching tools, this year, next year, or maybe even the one after that. So that has to come as bleak news to young fellows like 23-year-old Joel Skinner and 20-year-old Ron Karkovice, hoping to be the club's No. 1 receiver some day soon.

"I'm still a catcher," Fisk says,

leaving little room for any speculation he may be considering giving it up for some other position. "I thought there might have been some plans to use me at first base or some other position, apparently there isn't. They're even trying Mike Squires at third base."

What makes the third base experiment with Squires noteworthy is that he throws left-handed and there's hardly anyone around who can recall the last third baseman who wasn't right-handed.

Fisk played some third base for the Red Sox last season he was with them in 1980. He has also played first base and left field and has been used as a designated hitter.

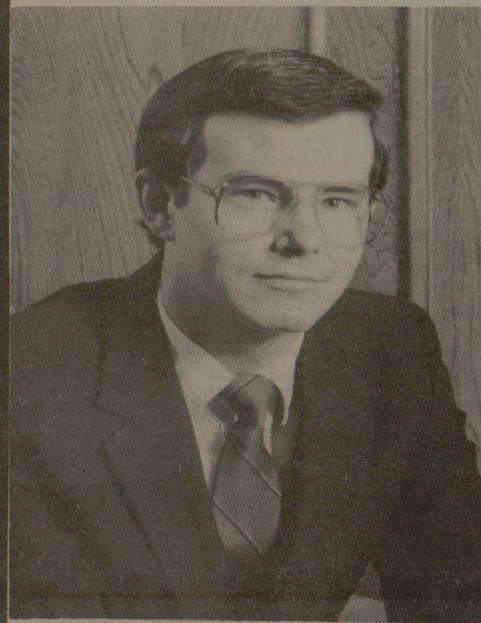
any ultimatum to the club, wouldn't play this position that one."

Fisk, 36, played in 138 games for the White Sox last season. He caught in all but 10 of them and the only one-time league who caught more games was Ray Boone of the Angels.

Through mid-June of last year, Fisk struggled about hitting less than .200. But Tony LaRussa moved him to the second spot in the lineup and it was as if the White Sox manager had wrought a miracle. Fisk came in as a third to the Orioles Cal Ripken and Eddie Murray in the balloting after finishing solid .289 batting average, .381 on-base percentage, 28 RBI and 26 homers. He caught every pitch for the White Sox in their four-game playoff with the Orioles.

LaRussa is sure Fisk will hit five more years if he likes

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Indiana in spoiler role

No. 1 takes on Knights

United Press International
North Carolina, the No. 1 college basketball team in the country in the opinion of most coaches, faces an Indiana team tonight which many of the same coaches consider the No. 1 potential "spoiler" in any tournament.

Indiana has a modest 21-8 record compared to North Carolina's 28-2 but is a typical Bobby Knight-coached team — meaning it is well disciplined in all phases of the game and likely to be at its best under tournament pressure.

The thought isn't lost on North Carolina coach Dean Smith.

"Indiana is a very good basketball team," said Smith. "They have played a five-point game at Kentucky, beaten Illinois and won by 19 at Purdue. We will have to play very well to win."

To compete against North Carolina (28-2), the 18th-ranked Hoosiers will have to get productive nights from 7-2 junior center Uwe Blab, who admits he has been inconsistent all season, and from freshman guard Steve Alford, a 91.3 percent foul shooter, who hit 10-of-10 in last Saturday's 75-67 win

over Richmond.

Smith said he was impressed with the quickness of Blab. "He is a fine rebounder," said the Tar Heel coach. "In Steve Alford, they have one of the best shooters in the country."

Knight, of course, brushes off the idea that Indiana is capable of upsetting North Carolina and points to the fact that this year's team has three freshmen and no seniors in its starting lineup.

"North Carolina has had great teams and we've had great teams, but we don't have a great team now," said Knight. "We hope someday we'll develop into a great team."

"This is a situation for us to try and set up what we want to do and have the patience to bring it off. They will try to put a lot of pressure on us and we have to react to that pressure. It's an interesting kind of game to play with a young team like ours."

Blab, who easily shot over the shorter Spiders before getting into foul trouble, will have a tougher task against the Tar Heels' 6-11 Brad Daugherty and 6-9 All-America Sam Perkins.

The semifinals are scheduled for March 31 with the Virginia, 19-11, opposes Syr-

acuse, 23-8, in the first game of the double-header at Atlanta, Ga., with Virginia gamely beating good teams with a 4-foot, 4-inch Ralph Sampson.

"There was too much emphasis on Sampson," said Duke coach Jim Boeheim. "The Cavaliers returned to the top of the list with Ricky Stokes, Rick Othell Wilson and Jim McMillen."

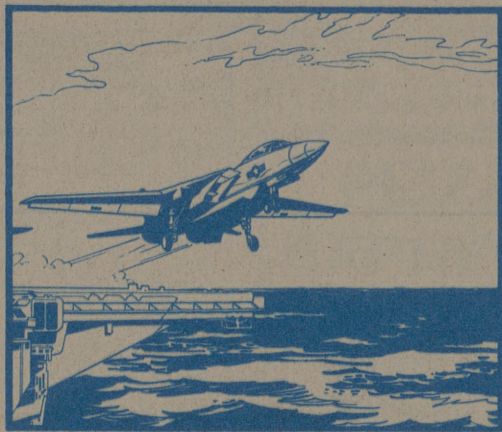
"This team's won a lot of games this year, and played a lot of good teams," said Knight. "They're a very good team to play against. They are a very well-trodden team. Virginia has a good job in their management."

Maryland, 24-7, opposes North Carolina, 25-4 and Kentucky faces Louisville, 24-10, in other Thursday semifinals in Lexington, Ky.

Tomorrow, Houston, 28-2, meets Memphis State, 28-2, DePaul, 27-2, plays Wake Forest, 22-8 at St. Louis and North Carolina, 20-10, opposes Wake Forest, 24-6, and Georgetown, 3, meets Nevada-Las Vegas, 5, at Los Angeles.

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