

# Astros get a manager

## Lanier hopes to hire Yankees' Berra as assistant



**Associated Press**  
 HOUSTON — Hal Lanier, who learned managing techniques under St. Louis' Whitey Herzog for five seasons, was named manager of the Houston Astros Tuesday, General Manager Dick Wagner announced.  
 Lanier, a third base coach with the Cardinals last season, signed a two-year contract and said he hoped to hire veteran major league manager, Yogi Berra, as an assistant coach.  
 "I talked to Yogi yesterday and we think he'll be a good addition," Lanier said. "It will be nice to have him there if I want to ask a question."  
 Wagner said Berra was still under contract to the New York Yankees but his contract expires shortly.  
 Lanier, a successful minor league manager in the Cardinals' system, said his experience in the National League and Herzog's recommendation were major factors in his selection to replace Bob Lillis, who was fired Oct. 7.

base-stealing team, similar to the Cardinals' style.  
 "I want to get it in people's minds to take the extra base," Lanier said.  
 "I don't like to see a club that goes base to base and I think that's the type of club the Astros have been. I think there are four or five players on this team that can steal 25 to 35 bases per year."  
 Astros outfielder Kevin Bass is one of Lanier's projected base stealers and he's delighted to hear about the new game plan.  
 "I think we need to have a giddy-up offense and he's going to give us that," Bass said. "We have to take chances. We don't have the Boston Red Sox power."  
 "This is an exciting time. They seem to be leaning toward the younger players and since I'm one of the younger players, I hope my time has come to play everyday," he said.

Lanier joined the Cardinals major league staff in 1981 as a coach and was a third base coach in the Cardinals' charge to the 1985 World Series against Kansas City.  
 Lanier, the son of former Cardinal pitcher Max Lanier, signed his first pro contract in 1961 with the San Francisco Giants. He reached the major leagues in 1964 as a second baseman but primarily played shortstop for the Giants.  
 He was the top fielding shortstop in the National League in 1968.

Cardinal outfielder Tito Landrum played for Lanier in the minor leagues and was a member of the Cardinals' World Series team last season.  
 "One thing that would help him in his playing experience," Landrum said. "He knows what it's like to be a regular and what it's like to be an extra player."  
 "It's tough handling 25 different individuals. But he's always known how to handle different players and personalities. Over the course of a season, that helps."  
 Chicago White Sox third base coach Jim Leyland, who competed against Lanier as a minor league manager, also was interviewed for the job.  
 Wagner also interviewed former New York Mets and Atlanta manager Joe Torre, former major league manager Dave Bristol, and former Minnesota manager Billy Gardner.

In replacing Lillis, Lanier becomes the ninth manager in Astros history. Lillis took over Aug. 10, 1982 after Bill Virndon was fired.  
 The Astros finished third in 1983, tied for second in 1984 and tied for third last season under Lillis. The Astros started the 1983 and 1984 seasons with slumps and dropped out of contention with a poor July last season.

Cardinal players gave Lanier a vote of confidence, especially in the areas of communicating with players and aggressiveness.  
 "He's one of those guys that won't allow you to take it easy," St. Louis second baseman Tommy Herr said. "He wants you to play hard all the time."

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### Aggie, Hog named AP's best of week

**Associated Press**  
 Texas A&M defensive back Domingo Bryant and Arkansas quarterback Mark Calcagni were named the Associated Press' Players of the Week Tuesday.  
 Bryant, who blocked a fourth quarter field goal attempt by SMU, was named AP's Defensive Player of the Week for his play in the Aggies' 19-17 win over the Mustangs.

### A&M water polo team deals with its obscurity

**By CHRISTOPHER EMIG**  
*Reporter*  
 Contrary to what National Football League Hall of Famers Dick Butkus and Bubba Smith say in their TV beer commercial, water polo isn't played with horses.  
 At Texas A&M, though, it might as well be because no one would notice.  
 Despite second place finishes the past two years at the National Indoor Water Polo Championships, the the A&M Water Polo Club receives little recognition.  
 Pat Yates, player/coach of the club, accounts this lack of recognition to not having intercollegiate status.  
 "Because we are a club sport, we are not paid scholarships," Yates said. "The team members play strictly for the fun of it."  
 But it's not always fun.  
 "We work very hard," Yates said. "Each year, 30 to 40 kids show up for the first workout. But, by tournament time, we end up with 12 to 14."  
 "We practice five nights a week, 2 1/2 hours a night. We run three to four miles on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. We do sit ups, push ups and various other strength exercises on Tuesdays and Thursdays."  
 "And, we swim laps and work on passing and skill drills each afternoon."

All of this work has paid off for Yates and his squad.  
 The Aggies competed in three tournaments in the two months prior to the national championships last month. They travelled to the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo., where it finished second to the Falcons.  
 A&M then won an eight-team tournament at the University of Texas and finished second in its final tourney before nationals.  
 At the national championships in Orlando, Fla., A&M finished a disputed second behind the Olympic Club of San Francisco.  
 During the title game between A&M and the Olympic Club, Yates said the referee made several judgement calls which cost the Ags the title.  
 "He (the referee) made some very bad calls," Yates said. "That's the problem with water polo, if someone doesn't want a certain team to win, he can change the outcome of a game. There is too much politics in the sport."

Yates, a Californian who played intercollegiate water polo for the University of California-Santa Barbara, spoke of the favoritism involved in water polo in Texas.  
 "There is very little interest in water polo throughout Texas," he said. "There is no intercollegiate water polo in the Southwest Conference and there are very few high school programs. This problem stems from the fact that the only two cities with programs are Houston and San Antonio."  
 "When an organizer runs a tournament in one of these cities, he hires his own referees and those referees favor the home team. The organizers want power, so they cheat to win their own tournament. The other coaches see this and won't go back to that town to play again. The coaches don't want to deal with the politics."  
 Yates said the "politics" of water polo is different in his native California.  
 "In California, water polo is a big thing," he said. "There is an organized high school program and everybody has pools. These players then go on to the college programs there."  
 Yates said the players in California go on to coach in that state, which benefits the West Coast programs even more.

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