

Sports

Boston's NBA draft choice dies suddenly

Cocaine may be cause of Bias' apparent heart attack

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (AP) — Lenny Bias, who said he was living a "within a dream" after being named by the National Basketball Association champion Boston Celtics Tuesday, died unaccountably of an apparent heart attack Thursday. An autopsy was performed to determine what caused the University of Maryland star to collapse. Team manager Frank Grimaldi said Bias "was perfect."

Edward Wilson, chief of emergency services at Leland Memorial Hospital, where the 22-year-old Bias was pronounced dead at 11:30 a.m. EDT, said there was "no damage" to the heart but "we know what caused the damage."

In Washington, D.C., television station WDCW, quoting unidentified hospital sources, reported traces of cocaine were found in urine but said there was no indication that cocaine was a factor in the death. CBS News also quoted po-

lice as saying there was evidence of cocaine use.

Dr. John Smialek, the chief state medical examiner, said his office would not release preliminary findings and estimated a complete report would take several days.

Bob Law, a spokesman for the Prince George's County police, said authorities were awaiting the autopsy results to determine the exact cause of death "and whether drugs are involved."

Maryland Athletic Director Dick Dull said the school had performed routine drug tests on Bias and other members of the team and "we've never had absolutely any kind of indication that there was excess of alcohol or any kind of drug involvement by Lenny Bias."

The tragic end of what appeared to be a career of unlimited promise came just days after Bias passed a

physical given by the Celtics before they made him the No. 2 pick in the draft.

Boston superstar Larry Bird, who urged the team to select Bias and was to work with Bias at rookie camp, said of the death:

"It's horrible. It's the cruelest thing I ever heard."

Bias was stricken about 6:30 a.m. EDT in his dormitory room at the university, where he was attending summer school after playing his final collegiate season.

Hospital spokesman Frank Berry said Bias was brought in about 6:50 a.m. and died two hours later following unsuccessful attempts to save the athlete.

Wilson said he understood a friend tried to revive Bias with cardio-pulmonary respiration, and the procedure was continued on the 1½-mile ambulance trip to the hospital.

"The heart was stimulated by chemical and pacemaker means," said Wilson, the attending emergency room physician. "There was no response. The heart was not pumping, and the lungs were not working."

"So far as I know, it was a sudden collapse," Wilson said. "There was no chest pain so far as we know. Nothing would indicate something was wrong."

Asked if such a sudden death for someone in apparently robust good health wasn't unusual, he replied, "It's unusual, but it does happen."

WDVM said detectives were trying to question two players who were with Bias in the early morning hours. The station said investigators became suspicious because the room where Bias collapsed was spotless and appeared to have been recently cleaned.

Initially, WDVM reported, the two players with Bias told police that he had two or three beers in the 3½ hours before he collapsed, but unidentified sources said there was no trace of alcohol in the urine.

Maryland Coach Lefty Driesell, who recruited the extremely agile 6-foot-8 Bias from Northwestern High in nearby Adelphi, Md., and several of Bias' teammates rushed to the emergency room upon hearing the news.

Driesell, who frequently called Bias "All-World" during a senior year when he averaged 23.2 points and 6.8 rebounds a game, said at a late afternoon news conference he thought Bias was "the greatest basketball player that ever played in the Atlantic Coast Conference."

"I've known Leonard since he was in the fifth grade," Driesell said. "He was like a son to me."

"He was a born-again Christian," Driesell said. "He turned his life over to the Lord. He's in a better position now than we are. He is at home with the Lord. I love you Leonard, and I miss you."

Summer-school students and residents of the College Park area, who just two days earlier rejoiced over the good fortune of Bias, were in a state of shock and disbelief.

"I've been here 10 years," said Maryland Athletic Director Dick Dull, "and to say (this is) the saddest, darkest experience of my life would be an understatement. Team members are beside themselves with grief."

Bias, a soft-spoken interior design student who wrote poetry, was eulogized on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives by Maryland and Massachusetts congressmen, and members of the Bos-

See Bias, page 8

Baseball teams leave litigation behind, begin play for state title

AUSTIN (AP) — After a one-time out for courtroom battles, teams will play for the Class 4A high school baseball title this weekend.

Austin Westlake, 28-5, plays Mercedes, 21-7, Friday at 6:30 p.m. at Disch-Falk Field. The other semifinals are Brenham, 28-3, and Richfield, 24-8, at 8:30 p.m. Friday.

The layoff means all the teams will have their top pitchers well-rested and ready to go. Westlake Coach Howard Bushong said, "If anybody has lost an edge, it probably would be hitters more than pitchers."

The 4A tournament was scheduled for last weekend, when champions were crowned in the other

**Today's semifinal games
(at Disch-Falk Field in Austin)**

Austin Westlake, 28-5, vs. Mercedes, 21-7, at 6:30 p.m.

Brenham, 28-3, vs. Snyder, 24-8, at 8:30 p.m.

Richfield lost, 4-3, in 11 innings to Westlake in the playoffs. Rain prohibited the completion of the best-of-three series before the UIL deadline. Westlake advanced on the strength of the extra-inning win.

A state district judge in Waco then ordered the Richfield-Westlake series completed before the state tournament could continue.

An Austin judge, at the request of Westlake, issued a conflicting order.

The Texas Supreme Court resolved the issue Wednesday by throwing out the Waco judge's order. UIL officials had said they might cancel the 4A tournament if court delays prevented play by this weekend.

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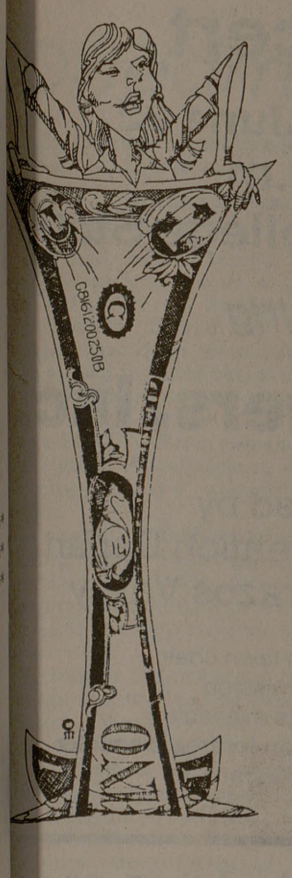
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