

Sports

New kids on the block Brown leaves KU Jayhawks for San Antonio, huge salary

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Kansas University basketball coach Larry Brown, saying yes to a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," resigned Monday to become head coach of the ailing San Antonio Spurs of the NBA, officials said.

Brown, 47, who guided the Jayhawks to the NCAA championship last season, reportedly will become the highest-paid coach in the league, agreeing to a \$3.5 million, five-year contract.

"I will do everything I possibly can to provide a great basketball team," Brown said at a news conference in San Antonio. "I don't know about a win-or-lose record, but we are committed to doing the best."

Brown brought with him his Kansas assistant coaches Ed Manning and Alvin Gentry and said he hopes former assistant Lee Rose would fit into the organization.

Second-year coach Bob Weiss, who compiled a 59-105 record, was fired June 7 by new Spurs owner B.J. "Red" McCombs.

"The offer at San Antonio was simply a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity which I couldn't turn down," Brown said.

"Kansas has been a very special place to me," he said. "And it was a very difficult decision to leave. I can't believe that any college coach in the country has a better situation than I did at KU."

McCombs said, "I believe I have selected the very best basketball coach in the world. Larry has always been in the hero category to me for what he has done not only on the court, but with the lives he has influenced."

McCombs said he spoke to Brown on June 7 but did not pressure him into making a quick decision.

"We initially discussed what my feelings were for San Antonio... and the significance of this franchise for San Antonio," McCombs said. "We spent very little time talking about basketball."

"We spent a lot of time talking about Larry and his concerns and his feeling for the people in Kansas, the kids he recruited."

McCombs has said he wants to change the direction of the team and would like to increase individual gate revenue, which last year averaged at \$78,000, compared to the league average of \$170,000.

Brown, meanwhile, will inherit former 7-1 Navy center David Robinson, who has signed a \$26 million, eight-year contract with the Spurs. Robinson is finishing his two-year commitment in the Navy and will be available in 1990.

Shortly after the Jayhawks won the national title, Brown was offered and accepted the UCLA coaching job, but changed his mind when he returned to Kansas.

But the Spurs' offer was different, he said.

"After I made the decision not to go to UCLA and stay at Kansas, I had no intention to consider any other job," Brown said in the statement. "But the San Antonio situation presented itself and I didn't think it would be fair to my family not to consider it."

about frustration," he said. "Sometimes you say things you later regret. I'm sure if you asked Akeem today to make the same statement, I don't think he'd do it."

"If one of you has never said anything he regretted, you should pat yourself on the back because you are very pure."

Chaney said he planned to talk with each Rockets player individually and that Olajuwon would probably be the first.

Chaney, 42, former head coach of the Los Angeles Clippers, has been an assistant coach for Detroit and Atlanta.

Fitch was fired after leading the Rockets to the NBA playoffs in four of his five seasons as head coach. The Rockets reached the finals in 1986 but dropped to third in the NBA Western Division last season and finished fourth this past season.

Chaney said the Rockets could be competitive with their present personnel but were "one or two players away" from challenging for the league title.

"We need some outside shooting," Chaney said. "We need a guard at the No. 2 spot who can shoot and a power forward who can rebound and shoot."

The Rockets ended the Twin Towers era early this season when they traded Ralph Sampson to the Golden State Warriors. They became a half-court team, centered around feeding the ball to Olajuwon, and faded in the latter part of the season.

The new Rockets will be a running team that plays tough defense, Chaney said.

"If you start with a player like Akeem, you can find a supporting cast to do the job," he said.

Forward Rodney McCray had an off-season, but Chaney said he wouldn't allow another off-year.

"I love Rodney McCray and I love his type of game," Chaney said. "He's the type of player you need on the floor as a starter."

The Rockets still are searching for a player personnel director, a position Fitch also held. Rockets assistant coach Rudy Tomjanovich was in line for the job but decided to continue coaching.

Great Scott! — Astro hurler delivers second one-hitter

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston's Mike Scott is the latest to learn that the ninth inning has become no-man's land for no-hit pitching efforts this season.

Scott was on the brink of his second career no-hitter Sunday when Atlanta's Ken Oberkfell lined a single to right field with two out in the ninth inning. Scott then retired Gerald Perry to end the game for his second career one-hitter and a 5-0 victory.

But it made Scott the sixth pitcher this season to lose a no-hitter in the ninth inning.

"There's no looking back, but I'm sure I will," Scott said. "Sure, I wanted to throw that no-hitter."

Scott retired the first 13 batters he faced until Dion James reached base on shortstop Rafael Ramirez's fielding error in the fifth inning, spoiling Scott's hope for a perfect game.

Ozzie Virgil reached base on third baseman Craig Reynolds' throwing error in the eighth inning.

James and Virgil were the only baserunners until Oberkfell lined a hit to right field in the ninth.

"I'm sure no-hitter was on everybody's mind late in the game," Oberkfell said. "His stuff was outstanding. He threw a great one-hit shutout."

Scott has been accused by several managers of scuffing baseballs, but Braves manager Russ Nixon never challenged Scott.

Walling raps game-winner

HOUSTON (AP) — Denny Walling's run-scoring single broke an eighth-inning tie as the Houston Astros beat the Atlanta Braves 6-5 Monday night.

With the score tied 5-5, Kevin Bass led off the eighth with a single off Jose Alvarez, 2-2. Bass then stole second and scored on Walling's first game-winning hit of the season.

Juan Agosto, 3-0, got the victory with one inning of relief.

The victory moved Houston into a virtual first-place tie in the National League West with Los Angeles. The Astros trail L.A. by two percentage points.

"It doesn't do any good unless you just want to get some time in front of the camera," Nixon said. "We've gotten pails of balls of his and others, but nobody cares or does anything, so why bother with it?"

Instead, Nixon said he thought Scott pitched an outstanding game.

"I tip my hat to him," Nixon said.

"He's capable of doing that every time out. We need more like him in baseball, but I know the hitters wouldn't say that."

Dale Murphy, who was hitless in

three tries and was Scott's eighth, and final, strikeout victim, said Scott's control was at a peak.

"He had control and stayed ahead of the hitters," Murphy said. "When the pitcher gets behind, the hitter has a good chance. Today he pitched ahead the whole game and had good stuff."

Scott, 7-2, won his first six games this season, his best start ever. But he had thrown poorly and lost his last two decisions before Sunday's game. He pitched four innings in losing to the Los Angeles Dodgers 11-1 last Wednesday.

"When you build up a lot of innings, you just may need some rest, and after getting knocked out early against LA, I got some," Scott said. "I felt rested and better today, and the results were better."

Scott pitched a no-hitter against San Francisco on Sept. 25, 1986, that clinched the National League's Western Division title.

He had a one-hitter in a 4-0 victory over Los Angeles April 15, 1987.

The Astros maintained the traditional silence on the bench while Scott was working on his no-hitter.

"You don't dare mention it in the dugout," teammate Terry Puhl said. "In the eighth inning, you really think about it."

And the ninth?

"The ninth inning really gets hairy," Puhl said.

Chaney returns to Houston to run Rockets, calm Akeem

HOUSTON (AP) — Don Chaney, named head coach of the Houston Rockets because of his communicating skills, delivered a quick message to critics of star center Akeem Olajuwon: Get off his back.

Chaney, a former star at the University of Houston, signed a three-year contract Monday to coach the Rockets and one item he stressed was that he would have no trouble communicating with Olajuwon.

"To be honest, I'm tired of hearing all the negative talk about Akeem," Chaney said. "You'll have to ease up on him a little."

Olajuwon criticized former coach Bill Fitch, who was fired June 6, and also publicly criticized his teammates during the tension-filled 1987-88 season.

"You can't play team ball and talk in public about your teammates," Chaney said. "That's a no-no."

But Chaney said he understood how frustration can mount in a player when a season goes sour.

"I've been a player and I know

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Sierra heats West race as June weather warms

ARLINGTON (AP) — Ruben Sierra's idol is the late Roberto Clemente.

In games like he had Sunday night, Sierra even looks like the former Pittsburgh Pirates' star, the greatest player Puerto Rico ever produced.

The switch-hitting Sierra served a Dave Stewart fast-ball deep into the rightfield stands to give the Texas Rangers a 3-2 victory over the Oakland A's.

It was Sierra's 10th homer of the year and his third in the last four games.

If Sierra could only play all of his baseball games in the simmering summer.

"Once the weather warms up, Ruben warms up," Rangers manager Bobby Valentine said. "He's starting to put up the kind of numbers he put up last year."

Sierra, signed as a free agent by Texas in 1982, had a .263 average with 169 hits, 109 runs batted in, and 30 home runs last year.

He became only the sixth player in major league history to post so many homers and RBIs before he turned 22.

And this was after he got off to a bad start in the cold and damp spring when he had only five hits in his first 36 at-bats.

"I got off to a bad start again this year, but I hate to blame it on the weather," Sierra said. "I'm just being more selective at the plate. Before, I was swinging at bad pitches and getting behind on the count. I'm staying back and using my hands more."

"I guess I do always get hot when the weather gets hot."

Sierra is definitely on another one of his highs. He has hit safely in 24 of 27 games and has 27 RBIs in the last 18 games.

"It seems that when Ruben gets going the whole team gets going," Valentine said.

Sierra still resides in Rio Piedras and like many Puerto Rican youngsters grew up imitating Clemente's Hall of Fame swing.

"I've been told a hundred times I swing like he did," Sierra said. "I just hope some day I can have the same results he did."

The Rangers' rightfielder has a tremendous arm and is one of the fastest players on the team.

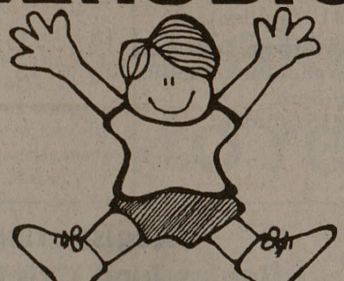
He scored 97 runs last year, fourth highest total in club history.

Sierra also had two inside-the-park homers, attesting to his great speed. He also stole 16 bases.

"Ruben has it all," Rangers' general manager Tom Grieve said. "He can hit, run and field. When he puts it all together he can be very exciting. He can just dominate a game."

Currently, Sierra and the Rangers are in fourth place in the American League Western division. Texas trails division-leading Oakland by 10 games.

However, the Rangers would be in first place — if they and Sierra played all their games in the June heat.



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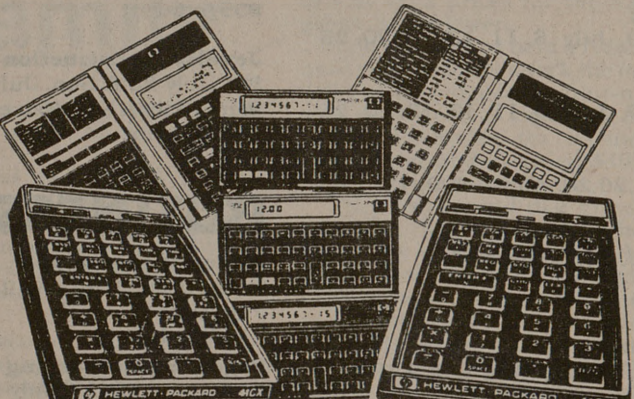
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D	M/W, 6-7pm, July 13 - Aug 10
Intermediate Aerobic Exercise	
E	T/Th, 6-7pm, June 9 - July 7
F	T/Th, 6-7pm, July 12 - Aug 9
Beginning Aerobic Exercise	
G	M/W, 7-8pm, June 8 - July 11
H	M/W, 7-8pm, July 13 - Aug 10
I	T/Th, 5-6pm, June 9 - July 7
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