

Tuesday, February 28, 1989

Register quits after 17 years with Ags

FROM STAFF & WIRE REPORTS

Texas A&M Head Football Coach R.C. Slocum lost an experienced assistant Monday when Defensive Line Coach Paul Register ended a long career at A&M by retiring.

Greg Mattison, a defensive interior line coach at Navy the past two years, was named to replace Register on the A&M staff.

Slocum expressed mixed feelings about Register's departure and is happy he will stay on in another capacity.

"It is with mixed emotions that I make this announcement," Slocum said. "We're certainly going to miss Paul because he has been a close, personal friend and an outstanding coach and recruiter for Texas A&M. He has coached long enough to retire and that is what he wants to do."

"However, I have asked him to stay on with our program and I am pleased that he will continue to serve in another capacity."

A press release did not describe what Register's new job will be.

Register was known as an excellent recruiter. He was responsible for recruiting in the Houston area.

Mattison, a former defensive coordinator at Western Michigan, is a 1971 graduate of the University of Wisconsin at LaCrosse where he was a four-year letterman as an offensive guard while also gaining four letters in wrestling.

He has coached at the University of Illinois, Cornell and Northwestern prior to his stint at the Naval Academy.

"Since we are losing Paul, we're pleased to replace him with an individual who has an outstanding reputation in the coaching ranks."

Register had been a member of the A&M staff since 1971 when he came to join the staff as an assistant to Emory Bellard.

He previously was the head coach at Hurst Bell High School and was head coach at Spring Branch High School from 1964 to 1970.

Jones admits bungling of Landry firing

Cowboys' new owner says Johnson was only candidate for job

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — New Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones acknowledged Monday, "I didn't do a very good job" dismissing Coach Tom Landry, but reiterated that he never considered anyone but the University of Miami's Jimmy Johnson for the job.

Jones said he was sensitive to the feelings of Landry, the only head coach in the Cowboys' 29-year history, and felt inadequate when he and team president Tex Schramm flew to Austin Saturday to break the news.

"I do want to assure everyone that is interested in the Cowboys and certainly interested in Coach Landry — Coach Landry saw my baby blue eyes as quickly as humanly possible under the circumstances," Jones, a millionaire oil and gas executive from Little Rock, told a news conference.

Jones said he respected Landry. On Saturday, when the sale was announced, Jones said he would have graded himself an "F" for his part of the conversation.

"I resent the way that it was handled, too," Jones said Monday.

"I was so sensitive to his feelings, I was so sensitive to the speculation," Jones said. "It did mean everything to me for Coach Landry to hear what I had to say in the manner I had to say it as quickly as possible, and that was done. We made every effort in the world. Frankly, Coach Landry would have known about it a

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second after Tex Schramm would have known about it if we could have gotten to him."

Landry told The Associated Press Sunday, "No one had to tell me. I would have had to be pretty stupid not to know when they got on the airplane to come see me. They could have saved the trip because all they did was tell me I was fired."

"I couldn't have done it any better," Jones said.

Jones said it was important to him

to have Johnson, his former roommate at Arkansas and teammate on the Razorbacks' unbeaten 1964 football team, at his side in running the Cowboys.

"My business background is such that I'm not afraid of something new. What is important to me, though, because I'm going to be in that dark hole, I want somebody familiar standing there with me helping walk down that ole' black tunnel," Jones said. "I wanted him (Johnson) bumping around as we walked down that darkness down there, trying to build our football team."

"We will win, we must win, winning is what it's all about," Jones said.

He and Johnson have discussed dreams of running a professional team for years, Jones said.

Jones said Johnson will not own part of the team.

"Someone upstairs has given me my time," Jones said. "They've pitched the ball to me and I'm ready to run with it."

He declined again to give the price tag, which has been reported around \$140 million. He said he had no plans to reveal the price, and that seller H.R. "Bum" Bright agreed with that position.

He said Johnson will answer questions about coaching staff and other matters during a news conference in Dallas on Tuesday.

Asked about Schramm's future, Jones said, "Tex, of course, is as important to the Dallas Cowboys as Tom Landry. You really can't say one without the other." He compared Schramm to Barnum and Bailey for his accomplishments in building the Cowboys into a major enterprise. "He created America's team," Jones said.

In response to a question, Jones said he might consider naming Texas Stadium after Landry. "I think enough of him to do it," Jones said, but added that the idea hadn't occurred to him until a reporter mentioned it.

Don't turn and run; violence in sports is an issue to discuss

Opinions about the sport of boxing are as opposed to each other as two fighters in the ring.

Some see fighting as entertaining and the essence of one-on-one competition. Others cannot stand to even think of two men beating each other to the point of blood loss.

Some don't think boxing qualifies as a sport, calling it stupid or ridiculous. Others say that boxing requires stamina that not even the elite athletes of other sports possess.

Some are convinced boxing takes no thought — it's purely physical. Others challenge that if a boxer isn't smart in the ring, he has no chance of succeeding.

There have been boxers and specific fights over the years that could prove all of the above points. Boxers are different — from everyone else and from each other. So it's hard to say "for-certainly" about any part of the sport.

So I'll just jump right in and say what I think.

For one thing, I think it's a shame that fighters have to make such great boasts about their ability. No telling where that started. But I know that Muhammad Ali



Jerry Bolz
Assistant Sports Editor

had a big impact on how fighters express themselves.

Sunday I watched a show on the first matchup of Sonny Liston and Ali. Liston, the champion, was a huge "brawler" that looked invincible. Ali was a much narrower self-proclaimed pretty-boy without a scratch on his face.

Before the fight in the 1960s, which was a title bout, Ali constantly tore into Liston verbally. He boasted of how he was going to destroy Liston in the ring.

Then it was showtime and everything Ali said came true, to everyone's disbelief — except Ali.

He danced around the ring claiming he was the greatest fighter ever and that there wasn't a scratch on his face.

Today we have George Foreman back in the ring as a Christian making money for charity. And then there's the current "greatest fighter ever," Mike Tyson. Tyson seems to be just in it for himself.

So what can you say about boxing. It is such an individual sport (or non-sport) that it is hard to compare with anything else.

But some things that can be looked at are the attitudes and personalities of the fighters and everyone else involved in the sport.

I suspect that most boxers learn to fight in the streets before they ever climb into a ring.

As a whole, fighters seem to grow up in ghettos or economically poor areas. And it seems like they carry a lot of aggression into the ring.

Most of these boxers seem to be angry kids making some statement about society. In the early going of a boxer's career, a fighter who gets in the ring without an aggressive attitude is at a disadvantage from the opening bell. So it seems clear that

a boxer should be tunneling his wrath at the other man in the ring.

But this other guy in the ring is probably from the same background, so what is a guy trying to prove by beating up a comrade? They're beating up someone who's trying to get out of the same mess — poverty, crime, violence. Violence — there's a key word.

Here we are again at this unresolved issue of violence. It's obvious, isn't it? Boxing is just a bunch of mad men angrily beating on other mad men — which leads to more beating. It's an insatiable diet of violence.

But then how can we explain someone like Foreman? He doesn't seem like the violent type anymore — he's obviously had a life-changing experience. But he still beats on guys, and rather effectively, too.

Help me here. I'm trying to understand this sport. It's confusing, isn't it?

We've got guys pounding on each other, other guys promoting them, a couple more telling the world about it and everyone else enjoying the whole production.

Of course the easiest thing to do is to avoid the issue and simply enjoy watching guys aggressively beat on each other. But that's not going to work much

longer. Avoiding things, including violence in sports, has become too much of a trend in this country — and we're all finding out that avoidance only creates more issues to avoid.

It was several years ago that a few fighters were killed in the ring. It scared a lot of people then, but now the deaths are forgotten by most. Or at least they aren't important enough anymore to hinder a fan enjoyably watching a title bout.

Boxing pays more to contestants than any sport. There's a good chance that money has a lot to do with the sport remaining so strong.

But the money is not the real problem either. It gets back to people again. If there's money involved, it's a good chance there is greed right with it.

Now we're confronted with the fact that it's not only the boxers who have an insatiable appetite — it's everyone. Fans want to see the action (violence), promoters want their names mentioned and so forth. We're all a part of it.

We are allowing questionable happenings to go on without asking questions. We need to face up to things that are easier to put aside. Boxing is just one of them.

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