

K.U. introduces Perkins as new athletic director

LAWRENCE (AP) — Lew Perkins says he wants to put the "swagger" back in Kansas.

It's an air of confidence the Jayhawks used to have, Kansas' new athletic director said at a news conference Tuesday.

"Maybe that's due to the fact it left the Big Eight for the Big 12," said Perkins. "I really believe that's one of the first things we have to do."

Perkins' decision to leave Connecticut after 13 years and replace the fired Al Bohl became known Monday and was even confirmed by the governor of Connecticut.

But Kansas chancellor Robert Hemenway refused to confirm or deny anything until the formal news conference to introduce Perkins Tuesday.

Perkins, who was athletic director at Wichita State when that school dropped football in the mid-80s, said Kansas was one of the few schools he would have even considered.

"As most people know, I've had other opportunities to go to other great universities," said the 58-year-old Massachusetts native.

"But Kansas is a very special and a very unique place. It's one of two or three places I really had thought about my whole athletic career."

The former Iowa basketball player, who's dieted away about 125 pounds the past year, flashed a wry, self-deprecating wit that brought frequent laughter from a room packed with media, staff and big-money boosters.

"I like your tie," he told one television reporter. When another prefaced a question by saying 58 was "not all that old," Perkins walked out into the room and kissed the man's hand.

Turning serious, he insisted the ongoing crisis in the Big East Con-

ference had nothing to do with his decision to leave Connecticut.

At UConn, he was a leader in the bitter fight to fend off the Atlantic Coast Conference's bid to raid the Big East of Syracuse, Miami and Boston College.

If those three do defect, it could prove ruinous to the Big East and negate Perkins' greatest accomplishment — taking Connecticut's football program to I-A status and leading the drive to construct a new 40,000-seat stadium in East Hartford.

"It's very hard for people to understand, and I know there will be doubters. But it had nothing to do with issues there," he said.

"People who know me know I won't walk away from a battle. It has nothing to do with the Big East or the ACC.

"It's about Kansas. I took the job because I wanted to be here."

Also on Tuesday, Connecticut announced that Jeff Hathaway, a former assistant under Perkins, was appointed as his successor.

"I do have some real strong personal feelings about leaving Connecticut," said Perkins, who was also athletic director at Maryland for four years before taking the UConn job in 1990. "It's one of the great universities that I've been associated with."

Perkins' biggest challenges at Kansas will center on raising money and turning around football and women's basketball programs. In coach Mark Mangino's first season last year, the Jayhawks were 2-10 and the only Big 12 school without a conference win.

The women's basketball program, once a power in the old Big Eight, has won only three conference games the past two seasons and typically draws only a few hundred fans.

"Frankly, we have to make women's basketball a revenue-producing sport at Kansas," said Perkins, whose women's teams at Connecticut won four national championships.

Marian Washington, who will be entering her 31st season as women's coach, said she welcomes the change without feeling added pressure.

"Because of his success, he knows what it takes to have a great program," Washington said.

"It's going to be exciting for me to sit down and talk with him about what we need."

While Perkins never mentioned Washington by name in the news conference that lasted about 45 minutes, he did talk about Mangino, who was hired by Bohl from Oklahoma.

"I just met Mark for the first time. He's an excellent football coach," Perkins said.

"Everybody I talked to — and they're much better football people than I am — assured me he's the guy who can get the job done here."

In a news release, Mangino expressed excitement at Perkins' arrival at Kansas.

"Lew has an outstanding track record in college athletics," Mangino said.

"I am confident that he will bring the leadership and guidance that is needed from an athletic director."

The basketball program appears to be solid, with Bill Self being hired from Illinois in April to replace the departed Roy Williams following two straight Final Four appearances.

"At Connecticut, I used to think about what coaches I would be interested in if we had a vacancy in men's basketball," Perkins said.

"I can assure you, Bill Self would have been a candidate."

Eagle football camp nearing

By TOM (TD) DREILING
Free Press Publisher

Football? You never get too far away from it.

The Free Press is reminding its readers today that the Colby Eagle Football Camp is scheduled for July 21-24. Of prime importance at this time is the rapidly approaching registration deadline — June 30.

The camp fee is \$35 (and includes a practice jersey) and checks should be made payable to Brad Wildeman and mailed to 475 South Chick.

If you don't have a form, you can get one from the coach.

There will also be a camp T-shirt available for \$10. If you are interested you can pay for these at the camp.

The Colby School District and coaching staff are not liable for any

injuries that may occur during this camp.

The morning sessions for camp are from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. for athletes entering 7th and 8th grade.

The evening sessions are from 6 to 8:30 p.m. for athletes entering 9th through 12th grade.

The camp will be conducted at the Colby High School practice field, adjacent to the high school.

The camps, according to coach Wildeman's information, will focus on:

- Fundamentals, drills and techniques of football
- Colby Eagle Offensive/Defensive schemes
- 7 on 7 scrimmages.

Camp instructors include the high school coaching staff and former Colby High football players.

Two Trojan cagers eye future

Brian Ostermann, the Colby Community College men's basketball coach, said today that his top 2 players in the class of 2004 are considering a number of colleges as they look to further their basketball careers.

The two in question are standouts E.J. Drayton and Justin Williams.

Ostermann said Drayton, a 6'8 combo forward, from Charlotte, N.C., likes Charlotte, Florida and Oklahoma, and is also hearing from

others schools, including South Carolina, Clemson, Texas A&M, Southwest Louisiana and Oregon.

Drayton is averaging 18 points per game and 9 rebounds.

He was Freshman of the Year, First Team All-Jayhawk West, NJCAA All-America Team, one of the top 5 Junior college players in the class of '04.

Ostermann said Drayton could be pushed for a possible early commitment.

Williams, a 6'9 center from Chicago, likes Auburn, Wisconsin, De Paul, Texas Tech, Marquette and Indiana State, and is also hearing from the likes of Florida, South Carolina, Nebraska and Illinois State.

Williams was Third Team All-Jayhawk West, has an 11 points per game average, 10 rebounds, 4 blocks per game, the coach said.

Ostermann said Williams plans to sign in November.

Sports Briefs

Sosa appeals

BALTIMORE (AP) — Sammy Sosa appealed his eight-game suspension for using a corked bat.

A decision from major league baseball could come as soon as Wednesday.

Sosa was suspended for eight games Friday by Bob Watson, baseball's vice president in charge of discipline, but the appeal allows him to play until a ruling is made.

He was ejected from a game

against Tampa Bay on June 3 when his bat shattered after hitting a ground ball and umpires discovered cork halfway up the handle of the bat. Tests on 76 bats taken from Sosa's locker found no foreign substances, and five of his bats at the Hall of Fame were also determined to be clean.

New stadium eyed

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Baseball officials focused on financing for a new stadium when

they visited Portland to discuss the city's bid to lure the Montreal Expos.

Baseball's delegation included general counsel Tom Ostertag, executive vice president for administration John McHale Jr., and chief financial officer Jonathan Mariner.

The group met informally for three hours with Portland Mayor Vera Katz and David Kahn, head of the Oregon Stadium Campaign. It was the third meeting between locals and baseball representatives.

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