Jim Richards, coach of Glasgow high school state basketball champions and Kentucky's "Coach of the Year," will join the Western University staff as assistant basketball coach effective Sept. 1.

Dr. Kelly Thompson, president of Western, made the announcement of Richards' appointment Saturday.

Richards replaces Gene Rhodes, who was released last fall to accept the head coaching position with the Louisville Co-ops professional basketball team.

Richards was highly recommended by Western head coach John Oldham for the position. He will move to Bowling Green at the termination of his duties with Glasgow high school and will assist Coach Oldham with recruiting duties during part of the summer months.

At only 31 years of age, Richards has been one of the most successful basketball coaches in Kentucky.

He was selected as Kentucky high school basketball's "Coach of the Year" after his Glasgow High School team won the State Tournament at Louisville earlier this month. He was voted the honor in a poll of more than 20 of his fellow coaches.

He began his coaching career at Western with thesuccessive win-loss records of

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**A handful of tradition**

Richards needn't to coach Western, after all

By JOHN LYNN

Coast-Count's Tom Stchner Writer

Western Kentucky University dipped into the family circle yesterday and named Jim Richards, 34-year-old native of Adair County, as its third basketball coach of the modern era.

Richards, an assistant to John Oldham the past three years, had been the forerunner for the job since Oldham stepped aside two weeks ago to become athletic director in place of the retiring Ted Hornback.

However, his confirmation by President Doro Dowling at an afternoon press conference came suddenly—perhaps because Western was falling dangerously behind in the recruiting derby.

Richards did not find out until yesterday morning that he was to be the head man. By last night he was busy on the telephone talking to prospects who had delayed their decision on a college until Western named its head coach.

No signs yet

"We haven't signed a single prospect, so my No. 1 objective has to be getting some players," declared Richards. But despite the urgency of the recruiting situation, he still found time to marvel at his good fortune.

"It has to be the happiest day of my life," he declared. "Goodness sake's, when I started coaching, my wife, Annette, and I used to say how nice it would be if we could get the head job at Campbellsville or Greenville. Now what a thrill it is to be named head coach at Western Kentucky. Annette often has asked me how much I would PAY to be head coach here. And think of the tradition that has been handed down to me.

If Richards took a ge-who attitude well he should have. Ten years ago he would have been a million-dollar shore to follow in the footsteps of Ed Diddle.

Prepared for dentistry

He was, at best, a mediocre player at Adair County, failing to make the varsity until his senior year. He was "a regular in coach John Burris' system until about the eight grade," he recalled. "Then all the kids started shooting the jump shot, but I thought it was a passing fad so I stuck with my two-handed shot. Too bad. I suppose that's why I still wear my hair in a 'longstop.'"

At Western Kentucky, Richards played basketball and continued himself with keeping shot charts for Diddle's non-sports teams while preparing himself to become a dentist.

But sports ran too thick in his blood to turn away. So at the last moment he took up coaching and proved that a non-athlete could teach the game to others. He carved out eight successful seasons at Auburn and Glasgow high schools before moving on to Western in 1965.

"Coaching is my whole life," said Richards. "I hate to admit this, but other than text books in school I've never read a book from cover-to-cover that didn't deal with sports or coaching technique.

Sydnor may depart

Besides the recruiting, which, incidentally, Richards said he learned to dislike in his three seasons under Oldham, filling out his staff will require equal attention.

Back to Adair Oldham's other assistant, indicated yesterday that he would not be back this winter. "I would say that my chances of coaching at Western next season are slim and none," declared the 40-year-old Sydnor.

However, Richards said he had not discussed Sydnor's situation with him. "I don't know what is on Buck's mind," he noted.

But Richards admitted that he must add a recruiter to his staff—a man who can remove players that the win is clean, the girls are pretty, and the basketball is better in bowling Greens.

"It's a tough job," said Jim. "I know from experience."
JIM RICHARDS
Head Basketball Coach
Western Kentucky University

The 1975-76 season will be Jim Richard's fifth as head coach of the Hilltoppers. He succeeded current Western Athletic Director John Oldham in 1971 after three years as an assistant coach. He immediately, in the 1971-72 season, led Western to a tie for the Ohio Valley Conference title and a 15-11 record.

He and Oldham share a distinction held by no other coach in the history of the OVC, since they are the only coaches to win a share of the league title in their first years as head coaches. Oldham won his first OVC crown at Tennessee Tech in 1955-56, nine years before coming to Western.

In 1972-73, despite a wave of injuries that reached almost epidemic proportions in December, Richards brought the Hilltoppers back from an 0-6 league start to win six of their last eight games and finish with a 10-16 record.

The following year, another whirlwind finish gave the Hilltoppers an overall 15-10 record and fourth place in the tough OVC race with an 8-6 mark. The performance won OVC Coach-of-the-Year honors for Richards by vote of his fellow coaches. Last season, playing what may have been the Hilltoppers' toughest schedule ever, his team finished second in the league at 11-3 and with a 16-8 overall record that included important non-conference wins over both Purdue and then-fourth-ranked LaSalle.

He will enter the 1975-76 season with an overall 56-45 record for his four years at the WKU helm.

Richards' leadership of the Hilltoppers is another chapter in a continuing success story. His career as a player was no real indication of the phenomenal success he would later enjoy as a coach. He was a solid reserve player, but never a starter, at Adair County High before graduating in 1954.

As a student at Western, he was a baseball player who attracted several professional offers and kept statistics for the late E. A. Diddle's basketball team. After his junior year, he changed his mind about becoming a dentist and set his sights on a coaching career.

The 38-year-old Richards joined the Western coaching staff following a high school coaching career that could be termed nothing less than brilliant. It began at Auburn (Ky.) High School in 1959, where his teams won 64 games against 30 losses over three seasons. From Auburn he went to Glasgow (Ky.) High, where the Scotties' five-year record was 122-27, a winning percentage of .819.

His high school coaching stint was climaxxed in March, 1968, when he led Glasgow to the Kentucky State championship and a 32-2 record. Shortly afterward he was voted the state's "Coach of the Year" award by his fellow coaches across the Commonwealth. He joined the Western staff only a few months later.

Richards' teams have always been associated with an aggressive, pressing type of defense and a running style of offense. His basic basketball philosophy revolved around his defense.

"Whatever the sport, you like to build a strong defense first," he declares. "But there's more to the game than that. I believe that you have to be aggressive and active on defense—even more so than on offense.

"I also believe that if you have a lot of movement in your defense, you are likely to get a lot of movement, which is a basic necessity, in your offense. If you get lazy or static on one end of the floor, you'll probably get the same way at the other end."

Richards and his wife, Annette, who was a cheerleader at Adair County High when he was playing there, have two children, Steve, 12, and Ann, 10.

His relaxation most often takes the form of a fast game of Hearts with friends or a round of golf.

(MORE)
Western’s ‘Mr. Nice’

By TOM PATTERSON

Eastern Kentucky owner and sports enthusiast T. W. Caldwell has a story about Jim Richards, the Western Kentucky basketball coach. No one can argue that Jim Richards is a winner. He has been the winningest coach in the history of the game. He has won more games than any other coach in the history of the game.

Jim Richards is a man who has been a winner for a long time. He has won 700 games, and he has never lost a game. He is a man who has been a winner all of his life. He has won more games than any other coach in the history of the game.

Jim Richards is a man who has been a winner for a long time. He has won 700 games, and he has never lost a game. He is a man who has been a winner all of his life. He has won more games than any other coach in the history of the game.
Coach Richards conducts a quick strategy session during a timeout as his '75-'76 Hilltoppers won 20-0 win season and another Ohio Valley Conference title.

Jim Richards Won the OVC Tournament March 3-4
Posting His 101st win for the Western Hilltoppers.
WKU drew Syracuse in the NCAA 1st round at Knoxville

Coach and Gentleman

By ED GIVEN

When Western Basketball Coach Jim Richards announced his intention to withdraw from coaching, there were still five weeks to go in the season. During that five weeks, unsolicited testimonials to Richards' coaching ability and character were expressed by many people who are actively involved in Ohio Valley Conference basketball.

One opposing coach said, "I sure hate to see him get out of coaching. Not only is he a top-flight coach, but there just aren't enough nice guys left in this profession. And here is still another one leaving."

A veteran OVC referee reflected, "If every coach around this league was the gentleman Jim Richards is, officials would be asking to work in this conference for nothing."

The consensus of such remarks brought out two pertinent facts about Richards' work in the seven years he guided Hilltopper basketball fortunes:

1. Hardly anybody around knows the game better than Jim Richards; and
2. Few people in the coaching ranks have been more highly regarded for their conduct and character.

With that kind of reputation among "insiders," why, then, has he decided to move out of the coaching field? "The game isn't what it used to be, as far as my own feelings about it are concerned," was Richards' reply when the above question was put to him.

He added, "So much of the fun has gone out of it."

When asked to elaborate, Richards came across as something of a philosopher as he carefully tried to put his thoughts into words.

"Youngsters don't react to discipline and authority the way they did when I first got into coaching," he said.

Richardson and senior guard Darryl Turner try to solve an opponent defense on the Western bench during a recent Hilltopper game.

"Now, I'm not talking only about athletes or basketball players. I'm talking about youngsters in general. Players just happen to be a part of that group.

"So often now, when authority or discipline enters into a situation, somebody feels you're infringing upon their rights. People, especially young people, are talking and thinking in terms of TOTAL freedom.

"Basketball—at least the way I have always coached it—calls for togetherness, one-ness, unity. That means self-sacrifice for the good of the team, self-discipline."

"Basketball requires discipline even more than most other sports, because you have only five people involved in a game situation at a given time, and their overall effectiveness depends on CONSTANT interaction with each other. Total freedom for any individual just won't work.

"It has always been a game in which any individual had to virtually walk a 'tight rope' between individual abilities and actions, and the willingness to 'give in' to the team concept. I believe it's more difficult than ever for individuals to know where they fit into the

'tight rope' situation now because of the attitudes reflected in our society."

"The relaxation of authority and discipline all through our society, in sports, in education, in the home, has all played a part in this. We're all to blame. So, I guess, in a way, nobody's to blame."

The way Richards learned the game, first at Adair County High School under Coach John Burr, then as a statistician with Coach Ed Diddle at Western, he probably has learned more heavily on the team concept of the sport than many other coaches.

He explained, "I think this has been reflected in the fact that so many of our teams while I've been here at Western have gotten stronger as the season went on. It took us the early part of the season to work our squad into the kind of cohesiveness and unity that I believe it takes to play the game."

The Scots lack him up. His 1972-'73 team won six of their last eight games, the following year it was seven of the last eight, the next season six of the final seven, then nine of the last 10 in 1975-'76, and five of the final seven last season.

Speaking with obviously mixed emotions about leaving coaching, Richards said, "Sure, there are kids left around who will put the team above themselves, who will play hard every time out and really go out and break their backs for you." But I believe there is a lower percentage of that type of youngsters around now than ever before. Therefore, they are spread much thinner than ever. No one team is going to get many of that type very consistently.

Then, with a bit of an impish grin that let you know he was getting at least partially into a "put-on," he added, "You know, I was still wearing a flat-top (haircut) when I came to Western as an assistant coach (in 1968)."

"Sometimes, I get to thinking that the differences in the attitudes of players came into play at the same time that long hair came in style."

Then he added, "But I realize that the long, unkept hair was not the source of the problem. It was just a symptom."

In summing up his decision to hang up his coaching toga, he said, "I guess I'm just like an old oak tree. I've grown too straight for too long. It hurts now to try to bend too much."

He'll leave the coaching ranks with some credentials that are pretty impressive.

For example, of all the teams in the OVC, only Austin Peay had a better winning percentage in league games during Richards' six-year coaching tenure going into the 1977-'78 season.

Only the Governors won or tied for more OVC titles (3) in that span than Richards' Hilltoppers, who won one championship outright, tied for another and in 1977-'78 finished third and won the OVC post-season tournament. No other OVC school played as prestigious a non-conference schedule as WKU.

There is one tremendous plus about Richards' decision to retire from active coaching: he'll still be around to help guide, administer and promote Western athletics as contributing editor of Western Alumnae.

MR. GIVEN is assistant director of public relations at Western. He supervises sports information at Western and is a contributing editor of Western Alumnae.
Will conclude season

Richards to resign as Western's coach

JANUARY 26, 1978

Special to The Courier-Journal

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. - Western Kentucky University basketball coach Jim Richards has asked to be re- assigned to another position at the school at the end of the current season, thus relinquishing the post he has held for seven years.

Richards told the team of the decision at yesterday's practice.

"This is something I have been considering for three or four seasons," he explained, "so it is not a quick decision.

"I feel our basketball program is presently in a position that will enable my successor to have a good opportunity to be successful. By making my resignation known now, I will enable the university to commence the search for my replacement and permit the appointment of a new coach to be early enough for him to have an opportunity to recruit his own players this spring."

"I think it is fair to say that the recent performances of the present team provide the basis for a good nucleus for the immediate future."

Richards' Hilltopper squad is riding a four-game winning streak, has an overall 15-7 record and is tied for first place in the Ohio Valley Conference with a 7-1 record in league play.

Richards' coaching career at Western includes three seasons as assistant coach under present Hilltopper athletic director John Oldham, his overall record as head coach is 53-78.

Western Kentucky tied for the OVC title in 1971-72, his first season as head coach, and won both the league's regular season and tournament championships in 1975-76. His players have included eight All-OVC selections.

He was voted the OVC Coach of the Year in 1974 and 1975-76.

"I know there are many of you who have been critical of my coaching during this time, and for this I am truly sorry."

"In addition, I want to express my appreciation for the interest and support that have come from students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends."

In accepting Richards' resignation as head coach and acknowledging his request for reassignment, Western's president, Dr. Dan G. Dowling, said Richards, "I am firm in the belief that the tradition of excellence in athletics that has been established at Western is one that can carry on when the present team graduates."

Dowling indicated he would take immediate steps to appoint an advisory search committee to evaluate the position and its development of recommendations for naming a new coach.

University officials indicated that Richards would continue with the team.

Father of lawmaker,
Western coach dies

COLOMBUS, Ky. — DeMarre Richards of Columbus, father of Western Kentucky University basketball coach, Jim Richards, and state Rep. Jody Richards, D-Bowling Green, died yesterday in Columbus. He was 76.

Services are set for coach's father

COLOMBUS, Ky. — The funeral for DeMarre Richards, father of Western Kentucky University basketball coach, Jim Richards, and state Rep. Jody Richards, D-Bowling Green, will be at 10 a.m. today at Grissom-Magnen-Hickamp & Morrison Funeral Home here. Burial will be in City Cemetery here.

Richards, 76, died Wednesday in Columbus.

He was also survived by his wife, the former Mary Stevens.
Richards joins

Jim Richards of Western Kentucky University will join the Board of Directors at the Kentucky Chamber of the Council of the Alumni and Student Support of Education in 1986.

The election of officers and board members came during the Coo-K fall conference at Spindletop-Hill in Lexington. "I'm looking forward to it. I've enjoyed Alumni Affairs, and I like being where I'm at now," Richards said.

"I'm going to stay on and work on the auction only," Smith said, referring to the annual HAF auction.

Richards has served as Western's Alumni Affairs director since 1986. He was head coach of the school's men's basketball team starting in the 1971-72 season. When he gave way to Gene Keady after the 1977-78 campaign, Richards had compiled a 102-84 record with two NCAA Tournament appearances. His best season was 1975-76, when the Hilltoppers finished 20-9 and lost 79-60 to Marquette in the NCAA tournament's first round.

Richards declared comment on the athletic director's job.

As for the HAF, Richards will replace Gary West, who resigned effective Friday to become executive director of the Bowling Green-Warren County Tourism Commission.

Dissatisfied because he wasn't offered West's job on a permanent basis, HAF assistant director Delane Simpson has also resigned effective Aug. 30. However, Smith said Simpson will do work for the HAF until Dec. 15.
Richards is WKU's A.D. until June

By BOB WHITE
Staff Writer

Jim Richards will work one more winter, but it will be as athletic director at Western Kentucky University, where he has been employed for 26 years.

Richards, 57, was named boss of Western athletics yesterday after having served as interim athletic director since September.

"Once next June rolls around, I will have had 35 years in the public school system, and it will be time to move on," he said. "It will be time to get out of the business and let a younger man take over."

WKU President Thomas C. Meredith wanted Richards, a Columbia, Ky., native who graduated from Western in 1959, to stay on.

"There are some things cooking, and he thought it would make it better for all of us to have me continue another year," Richards said.

"Since he's the head coach and asked me to do it, that's what I'll do."

There is constant talk of restructuring college conferences, and Richards was involved in those negotiations over the past year.

"Jim could certainly retire but will continue to serve Western during the next year before stepping down," Meredith said in a release. "He is a true Westerner, and his loyalty to this university is evident in his willingness to devote his talents to supervising our athletic program at this critical time."

Richards said there are a lot of possibilities that could develop in the near future.

"We need a conference to play (football) in and a conference championship to play for," he said. "I thought we might lose football, but now that program is strong."

If the Hilltoppers' old league, the Ohio Valley, would allow Western to be a member for football but not basketball, "we certainly would," Richards said.

He said Western is "not looking to run off" from the Sun Belt Conference basketball but would listen to attractive offers.

Richards became interim athletic director after Dr. Lou Marciani left to become executive director of the National AAI in Indianapolis. Before that, Richards had been director of alumni affairs since 1986.

After coaching high school basketball for eight years, guiding Glasgow's boys to the 1966 state championship, Richards returned to Western as an assistant coach under John Oldham.

When Oldham became athletic director, Richards moved up to head coach and compiled a 102-94 record over seven seasons starting in 1971-72. His teams won OVC titles in 1972 and '76 and played in the NCAA Tournament in '76 and '78.

He was OVC Coach of the Year in 1974 and '78.

Richards worked as men's golf coach and coordinator of men's athletics until he went to the alumni affairs office.

"It's been a pleasure to serve this university," he said.

Richards retired from basketball coaching in 1978 and served as the coordinator of men's athletics and men's golf coach until assuming the director of alumni affairs position in 1986. He remained no director until moving back to athletics in 1993 as interim athletics director.

-- WKU --
RICHARDS
continued from Page 1

Dero Downing, Ed Diddle, Jimmy Feix, John Oldham and, now, Jim Richards. People who saw a whole greater than themselves. Folks whose loyalty became obvious because they remained involved.

Loyalty was tested more than Harbaugh’s? He and Feix stood and fought when Western’s football program stared into a basket, the budget as poised to fall in 1992.

Still scratching to buy adequate equipment and hire enough coaches to keep Western’s players safe, Harbaugh said before the 1993 season he was seriously considering leaving after that season. He had connections, but he accepted a four-year contract extension Meredith promised and the Board of Regents delivered after an 8-3 season.

Search committee members, usually learned and experienced people, can use savvy to weed out egos and hire those who show genes of loyalty.

Though loyal people were once called “good old boys” in this space, we’ve learned to distinguish the two:

Good old boys allow each other and their institutions to slide into mediocrity; loyalty would never let that happen.

Congratulations, Jim Richards, and much success.

Youth baseball: right for WKU

Jim Richards talks in terms of what’s good for Western Kentucky University, and that’s why he’s it. Bucking Western’s trend of hiring career-minded — which can mean self-oriented — people, Richards has been retained as athletics director, a position he has held on an interim basis since August.

It’s refreshing.

Richards has worked at Western since 1968 as an assistant men’s basketball coach, head men’s basketball coach, men’s golf coach, director of men’s athletics, director of the Hilltopper Athletic Foundation, director of alumni affairs and, finally, athletics director.

While stacking credentials of lifetime-achievement proportions, Richards has built a sense of caring for Western.

“I doubt they’ll find anyone who cares more about Western than I do,” Richards said during the national search to fill what’s now his job, a national search that produced Richards and just two other finalists.

“They might find someone who knows a few more things,” he said. “but not anyone who cares more.”

When asked Tuesday if dropping the word “interim” from his title satisfied him personally, Richards shot from the heart.

“What’s good for me is not the...
Richards named OVC's coach of year

Fly named player of year

By CLARK HANES
Western News Sports Editor

Richards, when contacted at his office in Diddle Arena Monday, was completely surprised by the announcement, which was not to be released until today.

In the same release from the office of OVC commissioner Art Guepe, Austin Peay's Fly Williams was named the conference's player of the year.

"You really mean it?" Richards asked in amazement when informed of the coaches' voting. "Man, I thought you were just kidding."

In his third year as the Hilltoppers' head coach, Richards guided his squad to an 8-6 league record, good for fourth place, and a 13-10 mark overall.

"That's what surprises me," Richards said. "Usually the conference champion gets its coach named, not the team that finishes in fourth place."

Richards' fellow coaches obviously were impressed with Western's strong finish the past season, which saw them win seven of their last eight league games — losing only a heartbreaking 86-84 decision to Morehead.

"It's always an honor to have people in your same profession do something like this for you," Richards added, "and especially when we didn't win the league this year."

But the guys that really deserve the credit are the players," he continued. "It would have been real easy for them to get down in the middle of the year when things weren't going so well, but they kept plugging away and never gave up."

Richards named OVC's coach of year

Fly named player of year

Richards won the honor by a narrow margin over Lake Kelly of Austin Peay, which tied for the OVC championship the past season after winning it outright a year ago.

Kelly was the league's coach of the year last season.

The voting for player of the year wasn't as close, and Williams being named probably surprised no one who followed the OVC even from a distance this season.

The Governors' 6-5 sophomore averaged 17.5 points a game this year, good enough for first in the conference and third in the nation, while his averaged of 10.9 rebounds per outing was third best in the league.

The moody but talented New York City product also hit 46 percent from the field and 77 percent from the foul stripe, and was named All-OVC for the second straight year by the league coaches Tuesday.
City youth dies in wreck

A Bowling Green youth was killed Wednesday in a one-car accident on Kentucky 252, eight miles north of Scottsville.

The victim was identified as Ann Richards, 17, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jim Richards of 813 Ironwood Drive. Richards is men's coordinator of athletics and men's golf coach at Western Kentucky University.

State police said Miss Richards was the driver of a car that failed to negotiate a turn, ran off the road and overturned.

Two passengers in the Richards car, Lori Remmert, 17, and Terr. Jance, 13, both of Bowling Green, were treated at Allen County War Memorial Hospital and released.

The accident occurred at 11:30 a.m.

Miss Richards was a senior at Warren Central High School and a member of State Street United Methodist Church.

Funeral will be at 1:30 p.m. Friday at State Street United Methodist Church.

Burial will be at a later date at Fairview Cemetery. Visitation is at J.C. Kirby and Son.

Funeral Home. Expressions of sympathy may take the form of contributions to a scholarship fund for Warren Central students which is being established through the College Heights Foundation at Western Kentucky University.

In addition to her parents, survivors include a brother, Steve Richards of Bowling Green, and two grandmothers, Mrs. E.P. Waggener and Mrs. Demarre Richards, both of Columbia.

Two Cosmonauts Launched

WKU promotes 6 administrators

Continued from Page B 1

their education otherwise, Alexander said after the meeting.

"This is not an attempt to increase our enrollment," he said, "but it does serve the people of this area."

The college will offer "an array of courses" that will lead to two-year associate degrees. Initially, no full-time faculty members will be hired, he said. Until enrollment builds, part-time faculty and existing WKU professors will teach.

State universities are authorized by the General Assembly to operate community colleges, Alexander said, and the money is available.

The community college needs to be separate from WKU's other programs because "society looks upon the university as being a quality academic institution," he said. A community college "has a more immediate occupational pursuit."

The board also approved a $72,000 million budget for the 1986-87 school year, an increase of $4.2 million over the previous year.

WKU faculty members and administrators will receive a 4.5 percent salary increase, with a possibility of an additional 1 percent merit increase. Staff members will receive a 5 percent increase.

Garmon replaces Paul Cooke, who was promoted earlier to executive vice president for administrative affairs, a new post.

Faculty Regent Mary Ellen Miller said she approved of the appointments but was concerned that the positions were not posted or advertised. "The faculty expected the positions to be posted," she said.

President Ker Kern Alexander said no advertisements were needed.

"We weren't seeking to go out and hire people," he said. "We have good people here."

Page said the new system will operate more efficiently in efforts to recruit and retain students and raise money.

As part of the reorganization, the Office of Scholaric Development will originate a community college, to start in the fall of 1987.

"This would be an effort to move Western to educating the non-traditional student," Alexander said.

"There are certainly many students out there who can't afford to go to school full time. They have to work a job," he said.

The community college could attract people within 50 miles of Bowling Green, who might not continue

See WKU PAGE 3, col. 2, this section
Richards is ‘getting out’ at end of season

The teacher, the cheerleader and the man

By CLAY HARRIS
Daily News Sports Editor

Richards has decided to

sit the bench for the final time

when his baseball team takes on

Western this week. Richards

since 1965 has been associated

with the school’s baseball program

as a player and coach. He has

been the school’s baseball coach

since 1972.

The decision was made

after Richards had seen

the team’s performance drop

off significantly in recent

years. Richards has been

in charge of the baseball

program for the past

seven years, and he has

been looking for a way to

improve the team’s

results.

Richards said he had

discussed the decision

with other members of

the school’s athletic

department, and they

agreed it was the best

course of action for the

team.

The team’s performance

has been disappointing

in recent years, and

Richards said he

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basketball teams and a destiny may. By his junior year, he had decided against becoming a dentist and wanted to coach — which he did, beginning in 1960, at Auburn High School.

Richards was principal of the school for a year, moved on to Glasgow High in 1963 to coach basketball and returned to his alma mater as Johnny Oldham's assistant basketball coach in 1968. After a three-year apprenticeship, he was promoted to head basketball coach and guided the Hilltoppers to a 101-84 record across seven seasons.

In 1978, he became men's golf coach and coordinator of men's athletics under Oldham, who had moved into the AD's spot. In 1986, he left the athletics department to head Western's alumni affairs office.

"There aren't many people who have had the number of different jobs with this university that I have," Richards said. "And there are very few people in the world who know more alumni of this uni-

dy director of the Amateur Athletic Union.

When Chuck West as July left his post as deputy director of the Hilltopper Athletic Foundation — Western's booster organization — it was Richards who was tabbed for the helm until a permanent director was named.

For Richards' tenure, the Hilltoppers became a force in college athletics, winning a string of titles and establishing a reputation as a program to be reckoned with.

Richards' departure from the Hilltoppers' most-called-upon pinch hitter.

Western President Thomas Meredith today named Richards, 57, interim athletics director. Lou Marciani, the school's AD since 1991, is leaving Western to become executive director of the Amateur Athletic Union.

Marciani's departure from and Richards' elevation to athletics director had been rumored for more than a month. "I was getting lots of teasing at the HAF (golf) tournament in Nashville yesterday," Richards said. "They had, of course, heard that Dr. Marciani was leaving and were speculating that I would be named interim athletics director.

"They were wondering if there's a Guinness record for interims. Richards will continue to work with the HAF until another interim director is named early next week.

"I hope so," he said. "My entire background has been dealing with people, trying to get them to know about them and understand you, getting along and pulling them together in a team relationship."

Tad Donnelly, president of the HAF's board, said, "Jim is so well known in the community and on a national level. Because of that, plus his energy level and his enthusiasm, he's the right man for the job." Because of his confidence in Richards and this being a poor time to develop a pool of applicants, Meredith said the university would wait until early 1994 to begin a search for Marciani's permanent successor.

As for his interest in becoming Western's permanent AD, Richards said he needs "to get into the job."

College track: Tom Campbell, 23, a Freshman on the track team, has replaced Pat Hume as men's coach at Kentucky Wesleyan College, who was an assistant

Western will be Western's interim A.D.

From Special and Staff Dispatches

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Richards has been at Western since 1968 and was head men's basketball coach from 1971-78. He be-

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Western will begin its search for a new athletic director after the first of the year.

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Richards to remain Western AD, plans to retire next year

By JOE MEDLEY
The Daily News

Jim Richards is no longer just the smiling face of the basketball program. Now, he is the Western Kentucky University athletics director.

Richards, 58, is now positioned to lead Western athletics to a new era. He has been in the position since 1988, and he has plans to retire in 2019.

Today, Richards dropped the word "interim" from his title to become just athletics director, and he plans to hold that position for another year.

Richards became an assistant men's basketball coach at Western in 1968, and then became head coach in 1971. In seven seasons as head coach, he won two OVC titles and reached NCAA Tournament play twice. He was OVC coach of the year in 1974 and 1976.

Since retiring from basketball in 1978, he has served as coordinator of men's athletics, men's golf coach and director of alumni affairs.

"He is a true Westerner," Richards said in a prepared statement. "And his loyalty to this university is evident in his willingness to devote his talents to supervising our athletic program at this crucial time.

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By JOE MEDLEY
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Jim Richards puts his pitch to remain Western Kentucky University's athletics director today.

"I doubt they'll find anyone who cares more about Western than I do," he said. "They might find someone who knows a few more things, but not one who cares more."

Including Richards, Western has interviewed at least three candidates for the job that Richards has held on an interim basis since fall 1993. Richards and Keith Inman, chief fund-raiser for the University of Maryland athletics, interviewed last week. Today, Western maintained East Carolina University senior associate athletics director Charlie Carr.

"I hope to talk with President Meredith next week," Ramsey said. "I'm sure he'll ask all of the people they (the candidates) have met with and get feedback. Then we'll go from there.

In 1959, Western graduate, Richards has been employed at the school since becoming an assistant basketball coach in 1968. He was head basketball coach from 1971 to 1978, compiling a 102-84 record with two NCAA Tournament appearances.

Richards has been coordinator of men's basketball and men's golf coaches and executive director of the Hilltopper Athletic Foundation and director for Alumni Affairs.

Richards became interim athletics director to soothe miffed supporters after former Athletics Director Lou Marciani's stormy two-year tenure.

Richards has a familiar split-toothed grin — he often says he parts his teeth in the middle — plus established relationships with Western supporters.

As interim athletics director, Richards has overseen hiring of a new HAF executive director, a new men's basketball coach, a marketing director and an assistant.

He chaired the search committee that recommended men's basketball coach Matt Kilkullen and conducted most of the interviewing. Ralph Willard's replacement was found about a week after he resigned.

**WESTERN**

In March, Richards juggled the men's and women's Sun Belt Conference tournaments plus the girls' State Tournament.

"I've not had time to feel much," he said. "I've just tried to keep up with the routines of the job, help our new people into the job and give direction."

Richards said it doesn't take a Ph.D. to see what Western athletics needs.

"Money, Loads of it," he said. "We could handle about 10 people bequeathing about $500,000 apiece into a trust fund."

Western awaits the NCAA's decisions on gender equality, which could make athletics more expensive, and restructuring, which could squeeze low-budget Division I schools out of the NCAA decision-making processes and, some fear, out of Division I in basketball.

Western will have $100,000 cut from its fiscal 1994-95 athletics budget, forcing Richards to cut the facilities and equipment manager's position and, spread those responsibilities among his staff.

How can Western compete financially?

"The direction has to be private giving," Richards said.

There has been talk of raising ticket prices.

"We're trying not to increase them," Richards said. "But when we finalize everything this year, there could be a slight increase."

Because current NCAA restructuring proposals are based on conference averages in areas like scholarships offered, sports sponsored and athletics budgets, Western could enhance its position by joining a conference with schools better-financed than those in the Sun Belt.

The trend for more well-off conferences looking to expand is to seek schools in metropolitan markets that have Division I-A football. Western has neither.

Richards takes heart in recent proposals in connection with restructuring.

"They want to grant a grandfath-hering of all Division I basketball teams in the NCAA Tournament," he said about a proposal made at the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics meeting this month. "So it would appear that the Western Kentuckys of the world will come out of this in much better shape than first thought."

Richards said the success of the new Corvette raffle as Western's chief athletics fund-raiser is another good sign.

"We've covered the cost of the car (about $28,000), so everything else is profit," he said. "As time gets closer to the automobile being given away, I believe we'll have even more ticket sales."

Sources close to Western said Richards was offered the permanent athletics director's job about a month ago but with restrictions. Richards said no one has been offered the job.

He said he would not fret if he doesn't get the job.

"It's not absolutely vital," he said. "I told everyone I talked with (in his job interview) to do what they thought was best for Western."

**Carr**

Carr became ECU's associate director for external affairs and executive director of the Pirate Club in 1988. According to an ECU media guide, the Pirate Club raised $51.7 million under his direction.

In 1991, Carr began coordinating NCAA compliance for ECU athletics while assisting in scheduling for revenue sports programs.

Carr played baseball at the University of North Carolina and two years in the New York Mets' organization. He became the Tar Heels' assistant football coach in 1971 and coached at Rice University from 1975-78.

He was associate athletics director at UNC from 1978-85 and became athletics director at Mississippi State in 1985. He held the MSU job for two years before returning to North Carolina to pursue private business.

**continued from Page 1-B Column 1, This Section**