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IMMEDIATE RELEASE - August 13, 1973

San Diego, California

Bernie Bickerstaff has resigned his position as head basketball coach at the University of San Diego to accept a job as assistant coach with the Capitol Bullets of the National Basketball Association.

"I'm leaving USD with mixed emotions," Bickerstaff stated. "The school gave me scholarship help while I was a player, let me work as assistant coach and then gave me a chance at the head coach position. I'll always be grateful to them.

"But the Bullets have presented me an offer I just can't turn down. Coaching on the pro level is the ultimate and I plan to give it everything I have."

Bickerstaff, 29, will join K. C. Jones, recently named head coach of the Washington, D. C., team. Jones resigned as coach of the American Basketball Association's San Diego Conquistadors, June 12.

"We are extremely sorry to lose the services of such a fine man and excellent coach," said USD President Author Hughes. "However, we are happy he has a chance to become a professional coach and we want to wish him every success."

Bickerstaff has been at USD four years, compiling a 55-49 won-lost record. His 1972-73 Torero squad finished with a 19-9 mark, best in school history, including a third place in the NCAA District 8 College Division playoffs.

Next year's USD team will have the first eight scorers including all five starters returning and, complemented by some strong high school and junior college enrollees, was expected to be his finest.

Bickerstaff became head coach at USD just prior to the beginning of the 1969-70 campaign. At 25, he was then the youngest head coach of a college team in the country.

He had a two year playing career with the Toreros from 1965-66, scoring 450 points, and was elected team captain and voted most valuable player in his senior season. He served as USD's assistant basketball coach under Phil Woolpert for two years.

Plans are being formed to begin a search for Bickerstaff's successor at USD.

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