



Sports

by
Larry McComb

County superintendent of schools, H. L. Joslyn, confirmed Wednesday that the contract of Jim Parkin, Smyrna basketball coach, has not been renewed for next year. At a meeting last week, members of the Smyrna school board voted 3-2 not to renew the contract. Parkin has been head coach at the Blue Devil school for the last three years.

When questioned about the reason behind the firing of Parkin, Mr. Joslyn stated that he had no statement to make in regard to circumstances that led up to the dismissal. Mr. Joslyn added that he considered this to be the school board's business and not his.

Smyrna principal Stewart Daniels declined to comment on the situation when contacted by telephone Wednesday.

Roland Salter, chairman of the Smyrna school board, confirmed Mr. Joslyn's statement that Parkin's contract had not been renewed, adding that it was, "not at Mr. Parkin's request."

Which all gives the impression that something's amiss. A large number of Smyrna school district people are up in the air over the firing. Petitions opposing the firing have been signed and cars are



Jim Parkin

displaying We Want Parkin stickers.

Parkin himself, in an interview, laid the firing on a "personality conflict." The reason for this is the fact that under the direction of Parkin, the Blue Devils have won two county baseball championships in three years and have finished as county runners up in basketball for two years. In basketball the Blue Devils have won 45 of 69 games under Parkin for a .652 winning percentage.

Parkin also revealed that members of the school board approached him the day after their meeting last week and offered him the opportunity of resigning which he refused.

Whether the school board has anyone in mind as yet as a possible replacement for Parkin isn't known, however it appears that no one has been mentioned for the job.

Parkin, meanwhile, has indicated that he will sign a contract next week as athletic director and head basketball coach at Swansboro high school. At Swansboro Parkin will also assist with the football and baseball programs.

Since Parkin's dismissal, it has been brought out that several other members of the Smyrna school staff have been relieved of their jobs.

When a popular and successful coach is fired by members of the school board, there is bound to be a lot of controversy. The firing of Parkin has been no exception.