Braves fire Torre, name Haas as replacement

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Joe Torre was fired Monday as manager of the Atlanta Braves after a three-year stint in which he steered the team to one Divisional Championship and a pair of second-place finishes.

The Braves made no immediate announcement concerning Torre’s replacement, but were believed to be leaning heavily toward Eddie Haas, who has held various jobs in the Atlanta organization for 10 years.

“He just felt we had reached a point and sort of stagnated there,” Torre said of owner Ted Turner, who told the manager of his dismissal during a 25-minute meeting in the offices at the Turner Broadcasting Co.

“The FEELS they are capable of winning, and I have to agree with him,” Torre said.

Torr said he had no plans, but listed managing as the No. 1 priority in his life and broadcasting as the second.

“He has offered to have me stay on in the organization and he wants to talk about that, but I’m going to wait until after the World Series,” Torre said. “There’s no immediate need for me to find employment.”

Turner signed Torre to a two-year contract extension last July 2 worth an estimated $425,000.

AFTER HIS meeting with Torre, Turner immediately went into what was expected to be a lengthy meeting with some of the Braves’ front office personnel, including General Manager John Mullen and Paul Snyder, assistant vice president for baseball operations.

Torre’s address was friendly.

“His good conformation,” Torre said. “I sort of had myself conditioned to go in and expect what I got because if he had said to me I was staying on and we were going to go one more year, obviously it’s a lot easier to get happy than it is to try to busy yourself up expecting the best.”

The Atlanta job was Torre’s second as a manager. He managed the New York Mets for five years and had a 286-420 record before being fired at the end of the 1981 season.

TUNNER THEN handpicked Torre for the Atlanta job, despite front office support for Haas. The Braves won the National League West title in Los Angeles Dodgers, and tied Houston for second season. 12 games behind the division winning San Diego Padres.

“Perhaps the worst thing that happened to me was winning the first year we were here because you got people’s mouths watering for what’s next, and we really never got to that next plateau,” Torre said at a news conference after his firing.

Torr said he had felt for two or three weeks that he would not be retained, and had said on Sunday he was 90 percent certain he was gone. He was sure of his impending departure that he called a team meeting Saturday to tell his players goodbye, and began packing his personal belongings in his office.

Torr said he foresaw a bright future for the Braves, perhaps going into 1985 as the NL West favorite if Turner is able to purchase a lottery-type selection.

“THAT THE most disappointing of all,” Torre said. “I have time to put something together. Next year I think I could have gone to spring training . . . with the feel we were going to win this thing.”

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