Holtz tells players he won’t be back

By STEPHEN FASTENAU

Coach Lou Holtz will enter at the end of the season, reputedly opening the door for former Florida coach Steve Spurrier to take over, a move close to the neon coasts of Alabama.

According to the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, Holtz told the player before Thursday’s practice at the gym in Camden, South Carolina, that he will not return to the Gamecocks for the start of the 2002 season.

The Four Seasons is a hotel chain with a number of hotels in various locations.

According to the source, Holtz expressed his desire to return to coaching, but the chain’s decision not to renew his contract with the team was the catalyst for his departure.

Several players expressed shock at the news, with some saying they were not aware of the source’s statement. Holtz has not commented on the reports.

The Gamecocks have struggled in recent years, finishing 4-8 in 2001 and 5-7 in 2002. Holtz has been under pressure to improve the team’s performance, but recent losses have cast doubt on his future at the school.

The source said Holtz was told he would not return to the Gamecocks after the season, and the decision was made in consultation with the university’s athletic department.

The source said Holtz was informed of the decision on Thursday, and the news was communicated to the players during practice.

The source added that Holtz was visibly shaken by the news, and some players expressed concern for his well-being.

Holtz has been a fixture at the university for several years, having been hired as head coach in 1999. He has led the team to a total of 31 wins and 20 losses, including four bowl appearances.

The source said Holtz was counselled by university officials before the decision was made, and the news was delivered in a way that was sensitive to his feelings.

The source added that Holtz has expressed interest in returning to coaching, but the decision was not based on his performance or the team’s success.

Holtz has been a coach at various levels of college football, having spent time at the University of Mississippi, the University of Kentucky, and the University of Notre Dame, among others.

The source said Holtz was given the opportunity to remain at the university and continue coaching, but he chose to leave voluntarily.

The source added that Holtz was supportive of his players and the team during the news conference on Friday, and that he has been a positive influence on the program.

The source said Holtz will remain with the team through the end of the season, and will continue to have a role in the program’s development.

**Note:** This report is not confirmed by any official sources at the University of South Carolina or the Gamecocks football program.