

## Lady Rebels finish season with win

by kirk hendrick

special correspondent

Amarillo, Texas — The Lady Rebel basketball team concluded their 1987-88 season this past weekend with an 84-80 win over Montana State.

The Lady Rebels entered the Women's National Invitational Tournament (WNIT) in Amarillo, Texas as the number one seed, but failed to live up to expectations.

Followed down to Texas by a rabid cheering section led by Mrs. Sylvia Maxson, and the sights and sounds of UNLV's Songleaders and Pep Band, the "Vegas Gang" watched as the UNLV team met the ladies of Illinois State University on Thursday night.

The game proved to be only a lackluster performance by the Lady Rebels.

Illinois State's Lady Redbirds who shot 75 percent from the field, and 83.3 from the charity stripe

to win 70-69.

The Lady Rebels had a rough night trying to shoot the ball inside the paint. When they did manage to work it inside, the referee's continually called fouls.

Despite the chastisement from the fans to "Let'em play, Refs!," the officials called a total of 40 fouls for the game.

Both teams received numerous "questionable" calls. Unfortunately, the majority of the calls went against UNLV. The Lady Rebels got into foul trouble early during both halves.

Led by Senior Karen Hall's seven assists, along with Pauline Jordan's 13 points and DeNise Ballinger's 12 points, the Lady Rebels kept the game close.

However, the tempo of the game belonged to Illinois State the entire night, forcing UNLV into playing a "catch-up ballgame."

While UNLV looked far

superior in talent and discipline, the Lady Redbirds made up for it in pure determination.

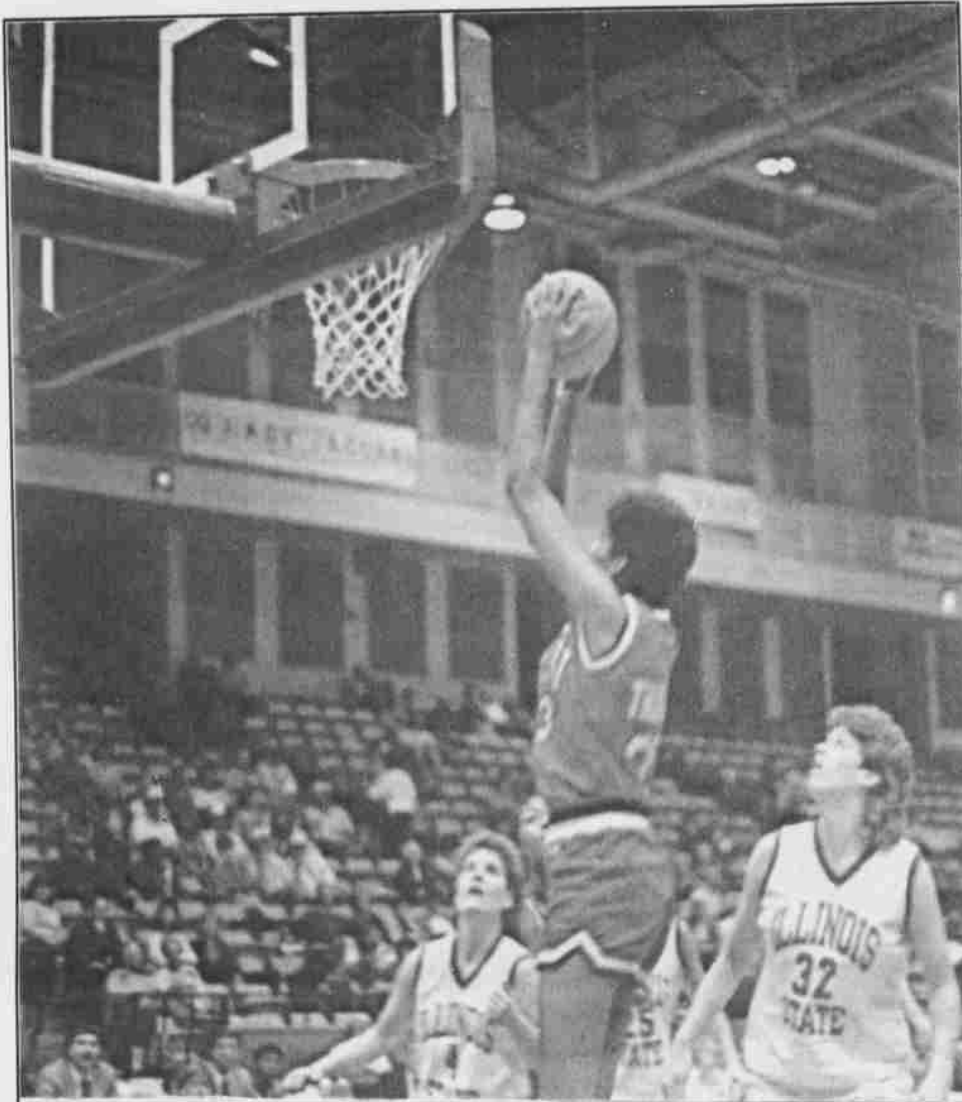
Jill Hutchinson, the head coach of Illinois State, summed up her team's approach the best when she said, "we came to play. Our kid's gave 100 percent from tipoff to buzzer."

Competing Friday afternoon in the tournaments consolation bracket, UNLV took on the University of Southern Alabama.

Once again, the Lady Rebels had a hard time making things happen inside.

Geannine Jordan was one of the few bright spots inside the key for UNLV. On the other side, Ella Williams and Angela Dennis of the Lady Jaguars of Southern Alabama played very physical basketball.

Ballenger proved to be the Lady Rebels long range gunner. The arena announcer was constantly echoing over the public address system



"Ballenger with three more from the twilight zone."

This was the first year the WNIT began using the 3-point shot, and UNLV established records for future tournament teams to aim at.

At the buzzer, Dennis of South Alabama hit a short jumper tying the game 75-75, and sending the game into overtime.

The last-second bucket by the Lady Jaguars gave them momentum going into the five minute overtime period.

Overtime action was kept close as both teams exchanged baskets.

With the score 85-88 in favor of South Alabama, the Lady Rebels brought the ball upcourt with no timeouts remaining. At the buzzer Ballenger's desperation 3-point shot went wide failing to send the game into double overtime.

Down 0-2 in the tourna-

ment, the Lady Rebels went into their final game of the season with the attitude of this one is for pride.

Coach Jim Bolla said after Friday's game that for the final game UNLV would be starting, "those with the heart, not necessarily the talent."

In the final game, the Lady Rebels matched up against the Lady Bobcats of Montana State.

After losing two squeakers, the ladies from UNLV weren't looking for an easy win.

They were right to go out and play hard because the Lady Bobcats played hard.

Again, UNLV had the superior talent, but Montana State was not intimidated. They kept the game close throughout the first half, but this time the tempo belonged to UNLV.

Led by Kim Crawford and Pauline Jordan, along

with the outside shooting of Ballenger the Lady Rebels pushed to a 43-45 halftime lead.

In the second half, the Lady Bobcats came out with fire in their eyes. The UNLV lead quickly turned into a three point deficit.

The Lady Rebels weren't about to give up though. The UNLV team battled back to a 70-70 tie with 7:25 remaining, then led the rest of the way.

The 84-80 final score ended up close again, but this time the Lady Rebels came out on the good side of a close game.

The team's only senior, Karen Hall, went out a winner. Toby Romer, UNLV's Video Yearbook Editor, followed the Lady Rebels all year and attended the WNIT, commented on Karen's career.

"Karen may not be wearing a championship ring or have played for the national title, but she will always be a winner to us."

