

# Almost the road to the Final Four

## First round: Idaho

by patrick beckwith

sports editor

BOISE, ID.

UNLV used a 12-2 run in the final five minutes of the first half to erase a five-point deficit and cruise to a 68-56 victory over Idaho in the opening round of the NCAA Tournament on Thursday, March 16.

The game was played before a sellout crowd of 12,241, mostly made up of Idaho fans, at the University Pavilion in Boise, Idaho. The Idaho Vandals play in Moscow, ID which is located about 180 miles from Boise and they have a vicious rivalry with Boise State University. But on this night, the Boise fans changed bandwagons.

"I think the people kind of sucked it up tonight and rooted for us," Idaho Coach Kermit Davis said.

But the fan support was not enough to offset the superior talent of the Runnin' Rebels.

Sophomore Stacey Augmon led the Rebel attack with 17 points, including three 3-pointers. Center David Butler added 16 points while Moses Scurry pulled down a game-high 14 rebounds.

Idaho led by six twice in the first half, the last time coming with eight minutes left in the half and the Vandals leading 16-10. But when Augmon slammed home his own miss to put the Rebels in front 24-22 the Vandals would never lead again.

"I felt the game got unfolded the way we wanted to get started," Davis said. "We had an early chance to go up by eight points, but we didn't capitalize."

While the Rebels shot just 39 percent from the field, they also held the Vandals to only 38 percent shooting.

"We didn't deny the passing lanes after a while," UNLV Coach Jerry Tarkanian said. "We did at first. What we did was deny the passing lanes and help out on defense. I think that helped us in the long run."

Idaho hung tough for a good portion of the second half, trailing by just eight points with eight minutes remaining in the game. An 11-3 run by the Rebels, though, opened the gap to 62-46 and sealed the victory.

The Rebels again showed signs of ending their free throw shooting slump, as they connected on 19 of 26 for 81 percent.

"If that team shoots free throws like that the rest of the tournament they'll be very hard to beat," Davis said.

## Second round: DePaul

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sports editor

BOISE, ID.

Despite being outrebounded by seven and having DePaul shoot an amazing 58 percent from the field UNLV was still able to come away with an 85-70 victory in the second round of the NCAA Tournament at the University Pavilion in Boise, Idaho.

The Rebels moved out to an early 30-20 lead, but over the final seven minutes of the first half DePaul outscored the Rebels 20-10 to tie the score at 40-40 at halftime.

UNLV had to feel good at the intermission, though. The Rebels had allowed the Blue Demons to shoot 69 percent from the field in the first half while they shot just 39 percent, and yet the game was tied.

With the game knotted at 44-44 early in the second half the Rebels went on 20-4 run over a five minute period to stretch the margin to 64-48.

"Obviously, our game plan was to stay in the game as long as we could," DePaul Coach Joey Meyer said. "They kicked it into a higher gear in the second half that

we don't have.

"Their defensive intensity was incredible. They took us out of everything we wanted to do."

While UNLV shot only 42 percent from the field for the game, they committed just three turnovers. The Rebels were executing on offense, the shots just weren't falling. "We played pretty good for the first 30 minutes," UNLV Coach Jerry Tarkanian said. "I didn't realize we only had three turnovers."

David Butler hit for a team-high 23 points while Stacey Augmon added 17 and Moses Scurry 13.

"I don't worry about the turnovers," Rebel point guard Greg Anthony said. "We just ran the ball well. The key for us was the big guys running the floor."

"We were better offensively," Tarkanian said. "We shot the ball well, hit the free throws and got some fast breaks."

DePaul could get no closer than nine points in the final ten minutes of play as the Rebels used several fast break layups to stop DePaul's final rally.

Senior guard Terrence Greene led the Blue Demon attack with a game-high 29 points while David Booth added 15 off the bench.

## Notes from Boise, Idaho

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sports editor

BOISE, ID.

When the Rebels arrived here on Wednesday, March 15 they were treated more like royalty than a college basketball team.

A police escort guided the UNLV buses full of players, coaches, boosters, cheerleaders and band members to the Red Lion Hotel. Upon arrival the Rebels were greeted by a group of local high school cheerleaders, about 40 pom-pom waving committee hosts and a synthesizer player. As the music played chants of "UNLV, UNLV" began.

The people in Boise were excited about the NCAA Tournament being in town and they wanted to make sure their guests knew that.

"Not only were the people in Boise great, but they have one damn nice arena. The University Pavilion on the campus of Boise State may only seat a little over 12,000, but it was a great facility for the tourney."

There are three decks in the arena, much like a baseball stadium, so they hand over each other. But because there are three levels instead of two like at most arenas, all the fans are close

to the action and the echo in the place can become deafening.

\*St. Mary's fans have to be the worst ever. During the Gaels 83-70 first round loss to Clemson, the St. Mary's fans displayed abusive behavior that rivaled that of the legendary Wyoming fans.

They spent most of the game yelling obscenities and racial slurs at the referees while showing a total lack of knowledge about basketball.

And I thought St. Mary's was a Catholic school. Foolish me.

\*Here's my choice for the all-sub regional team: Sean Elliott, Arizona. Is there anything this man can't do.

David Butler, UNLV: Showed that he will be one of the premiere big men in the country next year.

Stacey Augmon, UNLV: It will be frightening if he ever learns how to shoot off the dribble.

Terrence Greene, DePaul: Was key to DePaul's first round win over Memphis State and the Blue Demon's ability to stay close with the Rebels.

Al Lewis, St. Mary's: 21 points in the first half against Clemson, need I say more.

\*What does the bartender mean when he says "last call"?

## Third round: Arizona

by patrick beckwith

sports editor

DENVER, CO.

Anderson Hunt's 3-pointer with four seconds remaining gave UNLV a 68-67 win over top ranked Arizona in the West Regional semifinals at McNichols Arena.

The fourth seeded Rebels led by as many as seven points in the second half before Matt Muehlebach scored on a layup to give the Wildcats a 67-65 lead with 1:35 left to play.

A minute later it was Muehlebach's traveling violation that gave the Rebels possession at the :30 mark and set up Hunt for his end of the game heroics.

Hunt finished with a team-high 21 points, including five 3-pointers, as he was able to more than make up for two closing second mistakes earlier this season against

UC Irvine and Oklahoma.

"I had to learn from them," Hunt said. "The coaches, the players, they didn't get down on me. I had to get down on myself. I had to know not to make those mistakes again."

"We wanted to get the ball inside to either David (Butler) or George (Ackles)," UNLV Coach Jerry Tarkanian said of the winning play. "If they couldn't get the shot, they were to kick it back out to one of the guards."

But the ball never made it inside, and with 10 seconds to go Hunt decided to take Ken Lofton on one-on-one. As Hunt drove to his right and then spun around he made contact with Lofton and the Wildcat guard fell to the floor.

Hunt then looked down to make sure his feet were behind the 3-point arc before firing the shot.

"The minute it left his hand, it looked like it was dead center," Arizona Coach Lute Olson said. "That was money, no question about it."

Arizona got out of the gate fast, opening up a quick 12-4 lead four minutes into the game. But a 13-2 run by the Rebels put them out in front 17-14 at the 11:47 mark.

Stacey Augmon held Wildcat All-American Sean Elliott to only five first half points as UNLV led 37-36 at the intermission.

"Our plan was to first deny Elliott the ball and then play him with a cushion. That would make him shoot over us," Tarkanian said.

"I told our guys he may get his 20 points, but he won't get 10 assists."

Elliott finished with 22 points, but just one assist.

Butler added 16 points and Augmon chipped in 15 for the Rebels.

## Random notes from Denver

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I talked to Danny Tarkanian at the team hotel after the Rebels loss to Seton Hall. He said that he told God if they beat Arizona he wouldn't care what happened after that.

Obviously, God didn't care much either.

\*The 1989 NCAA West Regional All-Tournament team featured three Seton Hall players, Andrew Gaze, Daryll Walker and Gerald Greene along with Arizona's Sean Elliott and UNLV's David Butler.

Gaze was named the regionals most outstanding player.

\*Another note on the all-regional team. When the results were passed out to the media following the UNLV-Seton Hall game it listed one

of the team members as Greg Butler of UNLV. The mistake was corrected about 15 minutes later when a new list was handed out, but in all likelihood some newspapers will still list the name Greg Butler.

\*Mistake number two. In Saturday's edition of the *Rocky Mountain News*, one of Denver's two major newspapers, it had a picture of Jerry Tarkanian at the top of the front page with the caption "UNLV prepares to take on the Saints".

Unfortunately, Seton Hall's nickname is the Pirates. The only college I know of with the nickname Saints, is Siena.

Now if the Rebels could have just played Siena instead.

\*Congratulations to Yellin' Rebel Sports Editor Steve Spatafore for having his

photo of a Stacey Augmon dunk printed in both the NCAA West Regional game program and the special Tournament Preview section of the *Rocky Mountain News*.

\*Congrats number two. To UNLV Assistant Sports Information Director Bruce Meyers for winning the pop-a-shot contest at Wednesday's Coors Light Tipoff Party. Meyers won a silver Coors Light basketball for his efforts.

\*A good portion of the UNLV contingent and the Las Vegas media spent their spare time at Fat and Mike's, a bar and grill located about a block from the Rebel's hotel. The establishment is owned by Denver Nugget guard Fat Lever and Denver Bronco defensive back Mike Harden.

Nice atmosphere, but \$5.60 a pitcher?