

Lady Rebels upset by Ole Miss 66-62

By Tony Zuiker
YELLIN' REBEL

Now you see it, now you don't would be the ideal cliché for the Lady Rebels drive to win the NCAA Championship. In a 40 minute heart-beat, the Lady Rebels season was over as a capacity crowd shoehorned into the South Gym Saturday night froze and watched sand fall through their fingers as fifth-seeded Ole Miss shocked the NCAA Championship hopeful Lady Rebels 66-62.

Ole Miss came off an impressive win over Utah Wednesday in Oxford by beating the Utes 74-51; however, the Lady Rebels had an 11-day layoff before they would even play in the opening round of the NCAA Championship and it

looked like Jim Bolla's club would be well rested and ready to face Ole Miss. Not so. The only person smiling besides the Ole Miss fans was NCAA selection committee chairwoman Judith Holland as the Lady Rebels proved that the women's basketball committee wasn't so farfetched when they seeded UNLV fourth in the West region in the NCAA Women's Tournament.

What was so disheartening for the fans of the scarlet and silver is that the Lady Rebels did come to play. In the second half, the Lady Rebels ran it's lead up to 46-40 at the 15:50 mark; however, Ole Miss called time-out, regrouped, and went off on a blistering 14-1 run and never looked back.

"Mississippi played a great game," said Lady Rebel Coach Jim

Bolla. "For some reason, why I don't know, we weren't ready to play. We didn't play like we were capable of. We wanted to play the game in the 80s and they wanted it in the 60s."

Ole Miss outrebounded the Lady Rebels 35-31 and 18 of those were offensive rebounds. Ole Miss had two, three, four, even five chances to put the rock in the bucket, and it paid off midway through the first half when Ole Miss went on a 12-0 run to take over the lead momentarily 22-14. Seven turnovers were committed by the Lady Rebels and allocated for a scoreless drought of five minutes.

Nevertheless, the Lady Rebels, still showing why they were 2nd in the AP Poll for most of the year, came back and took over the lead

33-32 when senior guard Linda Staley put in a crucial lay up with 1:27 left to go in the first half. Half-time score had Lady Rebels by one 35-34.

In the second half, the Lady Rebels and Ole Miss were in a chaotic state of hoops. After the Ole Miss 14-1 run, the Lady Rebels came back as Vicki Lander, who played picture perfect defense, rolled in a two footer to cut the lead to 63-62 with 4:37 left in the game. When the score was 65-62 in Ole Miss' favor, Lady Rebel point guard Janice Holliday tried to jackknife a three to tie it, but it hit the front end of the rim and was rebounded aggressively by Jackie Martin, who led Mississippi with 17 points and shot 63 percent from the field. Martin was then fouled and sunk one of

two from the charity stripe and made it a four point game with 18 seconds left to go; however, time expired and the Lady Rebels came up empty as they ended their impressive season at 28-3.

"We're down right now but it's only a basketball game," Coach Jim Bolla said of the loss. "The sun will come up tomorrow and hopefully we'll learn from this. We've got some people coming back that we're counting on for the future, and starting Monday we have to go out and get some more people. I don't think anyone expected this. Maybe the committee was right. This just gives them more credibility."

Ole Miss will face the No. 1 seeded Stanford Cardinals Thursday in the regional semi-final at Maples Pavilion.

LADY REBELS UPSET



Yell Photo / Robert Anderson

-TOUGH FIGHT Lady Rebels Linda Staley #22 tried her best to help her teammates win over Ole Miss but came up short Saturday at the South Gym in the NCAA second round.

DISAPPOINTED



Yell Photo / Robert Anderson

-TOUGH LOSS Sorry fills the UNLV Lady Rebel bench Saturday while Mississippi took the Rebels dreams of reaching the Final Four away.

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