

UNLV Football Matchup

UNLV vs. New Mexico State

Where: Aggie Memorial Stadium, Las Cruces, N.M.
 When: Saturday, Oct. 13, 6 p.m.
 Records: UNLV, 3-3; New Mexico St., 0-5

Offense

UNLV

In their last four games, the Rebels' offense is averaging 31 points and 422 total yards per game. They are doing it on the ground and through the air.

The running game led by Hunkie Cooper and Marvin Eastman, is averaging 186 yards per game. UNLV ranks second in the Big West Conference and 35th nationally in rushing offense.

Quarterback Derek Stott has lit up the night air with his second straight 200-plus yard game and his third of the season. With a career total of 2,806 yards passing, Stott only needs 177 more to take over fifth place on

the school's all-time pass yardage list.

The man that paces the Rebel's offense is Cooper. He's averaging 168.8 yards per game in combined offensive yardage, the second highest total in the Big West Conference and seventh nationally.

The offensive line has improved greatly. They are giving plenty of time to the quarterback and opening up big holes that the Rebel runners have taken advantage of.

New Mexico State

The Aggies come into this contest with a 22-game losing streak, the longest in Division I-A. They have lost their last 29 Big West Conference games.

Their passing game, led by quarterback David Chisum, is their bright spot. This 6'0", 188-pound junior,

has passed for 1,026 yards and six touchdowns this season.

Chisum's favorite target is 5'11", 201-pound senior wide-receiver Richard Sanchez. Sanchez has caught 27 passes for 265 yards. He leads the Big West Conference with an average of 5.4 catches a game.

The running attack is anchored by 5'8", 208-pound junior fullback Jimmie Mitchell who has rushed for 386 yards this season. The Aggie running attack has averaged only 79.2 yards per game and no other back has gained more than 50 yards through five games.

The offensive line, which has given up 29 sacks, needs to provide more protection and open more holes for the running backs.

Defense

UNLV

The Rebel Defense is improving every game. In the last four games, they have forced their opponents to give up 12 turnovers.

The strength of the defense rides with safeties Carlton Johnson and Charles Anthony. Johnson is second on the team in tackles with 46 (36 unassisted).

Linebacker Rumone Hilton has solidified an already strong linebacking corps. He leads the team with 50 tackles (30 unassisted).

The defensive line is finally coming together as a unit on the pass rush and against the run.

New Mexico State

The Aggies are one of the worst teams defensively in the Big West. They have allowed 36.2 points per

game. The defense has allowed their opponents to trounce all over them with the running game. Opponents are averaging 241.5 yards per game on just the run. The Aggies have allowed teams 445 yards of total offensive per game.

Bill Stuersel, a 6'4", 290-pound senior defensive tackle needs only one and a half more sacks to break the New Mexico State school record of 26.

Special Teams

UNLV

The Rebels' special teams are also led by Cooper. He is averaging a league leading 15.4 yards on punt returns.

Luis Solorio is averaging 35 yards per punt and he also kicks field goals for the Rebels. He has made two of three attempts this season.

New Mexico State

Raymond Washington, a 5'7", 180-pound junior, is second in the Big West in kickoff return yardage. He is averaging 25.9 yards per game.

Prediction

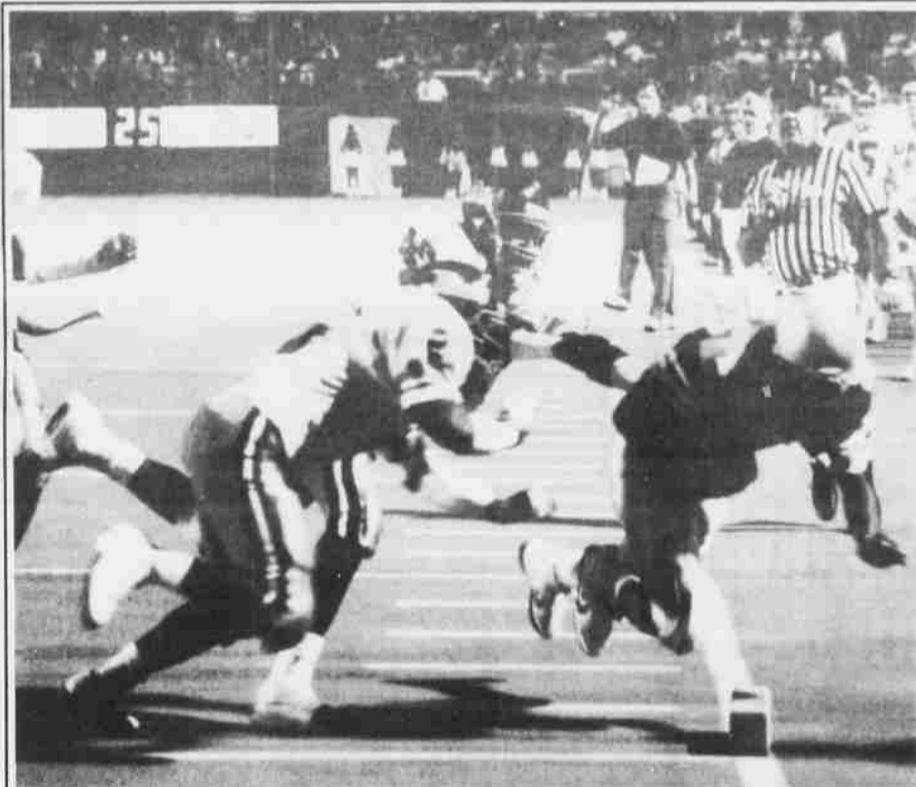
The Rebels are on a roll and they are RED HOT! Their high-powered offense should enjoy an easy day at the office.

The combination of Stott, Cooper and wide receiver Keenan McCardell should rack up some big yardage and a lot of points. Look for a big game from Cooper, last week's offensive player of the week.

In six previous meetings, the Rebels have never lost to the Aggies. So, don't expect it to happen Saturday.

My Pick:

UNLV 34, New Mexico State 10.



Yell Photo / Robert Anderson

Touchdown! - "Hunkie" Cooper (#14) dives past Fullerton defensive players (#2) Darrell Bruce and (#49) Stan Breland for the score.



Yell Photo / Robert Anderson

Sacked! - Raymon Walters (#20) sacks Cal State Fullerton punter Phil Nevin (#10) during Saturdays 29-10 Rebel win.

AP TOP 10

School	Record	LW
1. Michigan	(3-1)	3
2. Virginia	(5-0)	4
3. Miami (Fla.)	(3-1)	9
4. Oklahoma	(5-0)	7
5. Tennessee	(3-0-2)	6
6. Auburn	(3-0-1)	5
7. Nebraska	(5-0)	8
8. Notre Dame	(3-1)	1
9. Florida	(5-0)	10
10. Florida State	(4-1)	2

LW - Last week

BIG WEST CONFERENCE

	Conference			Overall		
	W	L	T	W	L	T
Fresno State	2	0	0	5	1	0
San Jose State	2	0	0	3	2	1
Utah State	1	0	0	1	3	0
UNLV	2	1	0	3	3	0
Long Beach State	2	1	0	3	3	0
Cal St. Fullerton	0	2	0	1	5	0
New Mexico St.	0	2	0	0	5	0
Pacific	0	3	0	1	4	0

Saturday, Oct. 13

UNLV at New Mexico State.

Long Beach State at San Jose State.

Pacific at Cal State Fullerton.

Utah State at Fresno State.