

# Runnin' Rebels eligible for NCAA tournament

## Tarkanian will coach team in quest for repeat title

by Victor S. Ingram  
Staff Reporter

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas Runnin' Rebels basketball team will be allowed to participate in the 1990-91 postseason NCAA tournament. The decision was announced Thursday, Nov. 29, by UNLV President Dr. Robert Maxson during a special press conference.

With both local and national media present, Maxson announced, "We are pleased to announce that the national champions will be eligible to defend their national championship and for us that's a great feeling."

Maxson also added that while the Rebels will be able to defend their national title for the 1991 season, they will face delayed penalties for the 1992 season.

"We do regret that next year's team will not be eligible for post-season play," said Maxson, "but it seemed terribly important to us that the national champions have a right to defend their championship."

These delayed penalties are the result of options presented by UNLV to the NCAA following the initial ban on postseason play. Following over a month of deliberation, the NCAA decided to give the university the choice of two optional penalties.

The new penalties offered were as follows:

Option 3: Ban UNLV coach Jerry Tarkanian from postseason coaching for the 1990-91 season. No 1991-92 tournament appearance for the Rebels.

Option 2: No 1991-92 tournament appearance. No live television play during the 1991-92 season.

The Athletic Department chose the second option. The change marks, historically, the first time that a decision of such magnitude has been reversed by the

NCAA.

During the press conference, Maxson praised coach Tarkanian and Interim Athletic Director Dennis Finrock for their efforts to find a resolution.

When asked about the possibility of further court actions should the Rebels repeat and hope for a third consecutive title, Maxson commented, "What's happened today folks ends offically, the 13 years of litigation between coach Tarkanian and the NCAA."

UNLV Legal Counsel Brad Booke noted the extensive process required to get the decision.

"We followed the NCAA rules, we took the steps that the NCAA rules require us to take and ultimately," said Booke, "we have gotten the decision that seems a fair resolution for all concerned."

The decision is expected to cost the university more than \$300,000 in lost revenue. Interim Athletic Director Dennis Finrock noted that while a \$300,000 loss is significant, the basketball program has a \$9 million total budget and will easily survive the deficit.

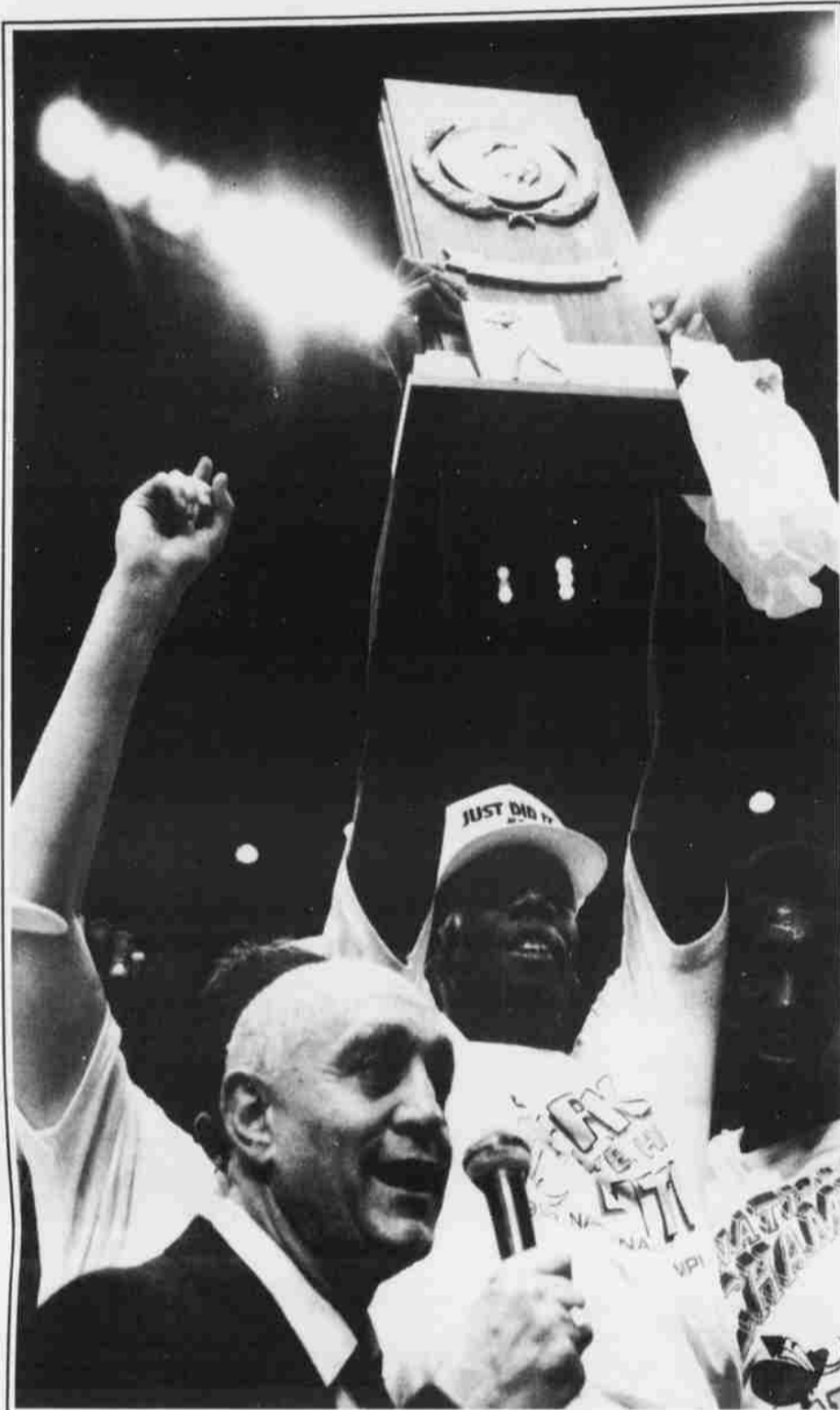
Total opinion regarding the decision varied. Coach Tarkanian expressed satisfaction in knowing the process was over, yet he also noted dissatisfaction with the outcome.

"In 1977 I went to court because I didn't get a fair hearing, so its not what we wanted, we're just glad to get it over with," said Tarkanian.

Players reactions were also mixed.

Senior guard David Rice said, after being informed about the team's reinstatement in the tournament, "That's what everybody works for is the tournament, now that we've got a chance to defend our title its going to pick us up in a hurry."

Sophomore Anderson Hunt said, "It feels good, but we still have to play."



Yell Photo / Robert Anderson

Another shot - David Butler holds up the NCAA Championship trophy which the Rebels will be defending again due to the NCAA's reversal of sanctions against UNLV this season.

## Runnin' Rebels get season underway, rip UAB 109-68

by Ched Whitney  
Sports Editor

The UNLV men's basketball team finally got the chance to begin defense of their national title on the court - the basketball court!

The Runnin' Rebels ran the Alabama-Birmingham Blazers out of B.C. Place stadium in Vancouver, British Columbia, 109-68, Saturday night.

UNLV put UAB away early, running off first-half streaks of 18 and 15 unanswered points. UNLV led, 7-6, when they went on the 18-0 run, and they were never challenged again. Midway through the first half it was 30-8.

Coach Jerry Tarkanian was able to substitute early and often.

The Blazers closed the margin to 32-18 after some wholesale changes by UNLV. But when Tarkanian put the five starters back on the floor, the Rebels exploded for the 15-0 run and kept running.

They led 57-25 at halftime. The Rebels shot 58 percent from the field in the first half to UAB's 23.

Everyone got into the act in the second half for the Rebels.

Backup guards Travis Bice and H Waldman, a freshman from Las Vegas, making his college debut, were both three of four from three-point range. Every Rebel played and 11 of the 12 scored.

All-America senior forward Larry Johnson picked up where he left off last season, leading the team with 26 points, while playing only 24 minutes. Fellow All-American Stacey Augmon scored 19.

Senior center George Ackles, playing in his first game since the 1988-89 season (he was redshirted last season because of a broken wrist), had 16 points, on eight-for-11 shooting, 11 rebounds, and was especially intimidating on defense, frustrating UAB's efforts to get any kind of an inside game going.

This was only the first game, but after a performance like the team gave, one wonders what Tarkanian will say to motivate his players for the San Jose States and UC Irvin's they will face this season.

The Rebels next game is Saturday at Nevada-Reno, a team that has lost its first five games.

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