

Comparisons likely over for 1990-91 Runnin' Rebel team

by Ched Whitney

Are they the greatest team ever? Could they have beaten Bill Walton's UCLA team of 1972-73? What about the Bill Russell-led San Francisco Dons of the late '50s? Indiana's undefeated 1976 national champs?

These unanswerable questions and all others like them have now probably lost their significance. The Runnin' Rebels' loss to Duke in the national semifinals of the NCAA Tournament likely cost them their place in history.

Though they will probably still be considered the best team of this season—both Duke Coach Mike Krzyzewski and center Christian Laettner said as much after their title game win over Kansas—the milestones have eluded them.

"What hurts so much is what I feel for these kids," Coach Jerry Tarkanian said after the Rebels' loss.

Tarkanian has said over and over this season what a great group of people this team is. Throughout the season, the Rebels have had to deal with controversy after controversy.

The athletic program has continued to problem-filled. Much of the talk has centered about the recruitment of a player who never enrolled at the university, never practiced with the team and never played one minute of any game at UNLV. Meanwhile the current players have had their characters questioned at various times.

The media have credited the players with certain reputations

that now seem intrinsic with UNLV basketball whether or not they were earned.

"They are the only college basketball squad that takes two team pictures—one full-face and one in profile," wrote one syndicated columnist from Washington, D.C. earlier this season.

Larry Johnson is not Lloyd Daniels, but that does not matter to those who try to play up the "good vs. evil" stereotype to make a good story.

At the end of the first semes-

"I'd rather lose with this team than win with any other." - Greg Anthony

ter when two players (Johnson and senior David Rice) made the dean's list and four others got better than 3.0 grade point averages people did not say, "Hey, UNLV's program is on the upswing." Instead they questioned whether the grades were deserved—actually though, I've never heard Rice's grades questioned.

The ironic thing is that character is exactly what set this team apart from past Rebel teams and most teams in the nation. And it's the reason they won 45 consecutive games, made two Final Four appearances and won a national title. They all put team accomplishments ahead of individual ones. Johnson and Stacey Augmon had the foresight to realize that they would benefit from another year in school and bypassed the

NBA draft last year.

Krzyzewski complimented UNLV after his Blue Devils beat the Rebels.

"UNLV was so gracious," he said. "They lost, but they lost like winners."

Former Chicago Bears great Walter Payton consoled Augmon after the game. Augmon, whose quiet nature has often been mistaken for coldness, seemed devastated.

"He's very upset," Payton said, fielding questions from a couple reporters. "He just went into the Duke locker room and congratulated Bobby Hurley. It takes a lot to do something like that. I don't know if I could have done that."

The loss was especially devastating for UNLV because with the success that they've enjoyed and the expectations that had been built up, anything short of a second straight title would seem like failure.

Greg Anthony, who did most of the speaking for the Rebels at the post-game press conference, offered no excuses but eloquently summed up what he felt for the team.

"We were basically outplayed," he said. "You can make excuses all day, but I credit Duke for out-playing us."

"This has been the greatest experience of my life, to play with Coach Tarkanian and the players. I'd rather lose with this team than win with any other. We just have to go and progress from here."

The Team With A Soul

1990-1991

by Joseph F. Wyson

For years men may argue while taking a poll Of the greatest sports legends, but the "Team With a Soul" Will always emerge to tower above All others, because of their singular power to love.

Reviewing the stats, the points, and one stat reveals A team character that one's heartstrings tugs. Their highest percentage? The number of hugs.

While the Woodens and Packers, for the other teams fine, Claim greatness, and higher ratings opine, Never in the history of sports poll Did a team achieve greatness by virtue of soul.

The '91 Rebels added, through attritions shove, Spencer, Ackles, Gray, Joyce, and ironically Love. Plus a new guard, Waldman, without a first name. All were ignited by the team's soul-flame.

The Tark, their coach, who rarely smiled, Whose tension, by towel was reconciled, Began to suspect that his team was blessed, Above obvious talent, with a gift unexpressed, Which permeated the basketball court, Igniting even the fans' soul support.

There were other teams in UNLV's lore, That had great ability to run and score; But this team's power to command foe's respect, So intangible was, only few could detect. So gracious were they in their only defeat, The basketball world heard their soul's heartbeat. Though they didn't achieve their "repeat" goal, They demonstrated to all the power of soul.

Sports pundits and writers will grind rhetoric, Explaining in detail their alternate pick, For the greatest sports team, while they talent extol, Unaware of this team's glory was found in its soul. Sports experts, fans and players expire; Outstanding sports records from memory retire; The reaper makes stubble of temporal whole, But no one can erase this immortal team's soul.

Only once in this century has it ever been done, That the soul of twelve players merged into one. There have been teams worthy of honor and scroll, But only these Rebels had a "Team With a Soul."

BIG WEST CONFERENCE

Baseball standings

| | Conference | | | | Overall | | |
|----------------|------------|---|-------|----|---------|----|------|
| | W | L | Pct. | GB | W | L | Pct. |
| Long Beach St. | 3 | 0 | 1.000 | - | 26 | 9 | .743 |
| Fresno State | 3 | 0 | 1.000 | - | 21 | 11 | .656 |
| CS Fullerton | 2 | 1 | .667 | 1 | 17 | 13 | .567 |
| San Jose State | 2 | 1 | .667 | 1 | 15 | 13 | .536 |
| UCSB | 1 | 2 | .333 | 2 | 20 | 11 | .645 |
| UC Irvine | 1 | 2 | .333 | 2 | 16 | 17 | .485 |
| UNLV | 0 | 3 | .000 | 3 | 13 | 15 | .481 |
| Pacific | 0 | 3 | .000 | 3 | 11 | 18 | .379 |

BIG WEST CONFERENCE

Softball standings

| | Conference | | | | Overall | | |
|----------------|------------|----|------|----|---------|----|------|
| | W | L | Pct. | GB | W | L | Pct. |
| Fresno State | 12 | 2 | .857 | - | 30 | 5 | .857 |
| CS Fullerton | 8 | 2 | .800 | 2 | 32 | 7 | .821 |
| UNLV | 11 | 3 | .786 | 1 | 31 | 9 | .775 |
| San Jose State | 7 | 3 | .700 | 3 | 14 | 9 | .609 |
| Utah State | 4 | 2 | .667 | 4 | 17 | 11 | .607 |
| Long Beach St. | 5 | 5 | .500 | 5 | 23 | 11 | .676 |
| Pacific | 5 | 7 | .417 | 6 | 16 | 20 | .444 |
| Hawaii | 4 | 10 | .286 | 8 | 20 | 14 | .588 |
| UCSB | 1 | 11 | .083 | 10 | 7 | 28 | .200 |
| New Mexico St. | 1 | 13 | .071 | 11 | 8 | 29 | .216 |

NCAA Softball Top 20

| | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1 UCLA | 8 California | 15 Texas A&M |
| 2 Fresno State | 9 L.Beach St. | 16 New Mexico |
| 3 Arizona | 10 Arizona St. | 17 Sacramento St. |
| 4 CS Fullerton | 11 S. Carolina | 18 San Jose State |
| 5 UNLV | 12 Florida State | 19 S. Florida |
| 6 Okla. St. | 13 Kansas | 20 Oregon |
| 7 Iowa | 14 Michigan | |

REBELEADERS

Baseball

Batting

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Average: | Tim Johnson, .408 |
| Hits: | Tim Johnson, 40 |
| Runs scored: | Ricky Scruggs, 26 |
| Home runs: | Nick Kuster, 7 |
| Runs batted in: | Nick Kuster, 23 |
| Stolen bases: | Tory Miran, 8 |
| Walks: | Tory Miran, 20 |

Pitching

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Wins: | Brian Boehringer, 4 |
| Earned run average: | T.J. Mathews, 3.94 |
| Complete games: | Brian Boehringer, 1 |
| Shutouts: | none |
| Strikeouts: | Brian Boehringer, 48 |

Softball

Batting

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Average: | Christine Parris, .382 |
| Hits: | Christine Parris, 47 |
| Runs scored: | Tricia Reimche, 27 |
| Home runs: | none |
| Runs batted in: | Christine Parris, 24 |
| Stolen bases: | Christine Parris, 13 |
| Walks: | Michelle Moreno, 20 |

Pitching

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Wins: | Kim Smith, 16 |
| Earned run average: | Lori Harrigan, 0.55 |
| Complete games: | Lori Harrigan, 21 |
| Shutouts: | Kim Smith, 10 |
| Strikeouts: | Lori Harrigan, 115 |

S. Africa return to Olympics?

The International Olympic Committee has agreed to conditional recognition of the Interim National Olympic Committee of South Africa. The following conditions must be met within six months for South Africa's return to Olympic competition:



- Abolish apartheid
- Comply with principles of Olympic charter
- Establish final National Olympic Committee and establish a federation for each Olympic sport
- Pursue unification of sports on a non-racial basis
- Acceptance of national Olympic committee by other African countries

Chronology

- 1908-1960: Olympic medals total 17 gold, 28 silver, 27 bronze
- 1960: Last Olympic competition (Rome)
- 1970: Expelled because of apartheid policies
- 1976: Black African governments walk out of Montreal Olympics to protest New Zealand amateur rugby match played against South Africa
- 1984: Runner Zola Budd obtains British citizenship that makes her eligible to compete in Los Angeles Olympics
- 1985: TV coverage of international games canceled when anti-apartheid banner is hung in stadium; national sporting organizations endorse declaration for non-racial sport and games at all levels
- 1991: Conditions set for South Africa's return to Olympics

World ranking of top male and female S. African track and field athletes: **David Tsebe**, marathon, 3 **Myrtle Bothma**, 400m hurdles, 2

SOURCE: International Olympic Committee, South African Embassy, AP. Research by ROY GALLOP

Yellin' Rebel Announcement

The winner of the Battery Slogan Contest for Earth Day will be announced next issue.

Attention:

The Yellin' Rebel needs sports writers, especially those that would like to cover baseball, softball and men's and women's tennis. If you are interested, please contact Ched or Rich at 739-3478.