

## Magnificent Seven: Part 4 of 7

## Softball is a family tradition for Leffler

## Outfielder calls UNLV 'the team to beat'

by Nick Haley

For UNLV softball left fielder Kenda Leffler, playing ball is what life is all about. The senior from San Marcos, Calif. comes from a family of five, all of whom play softball or baseball. Having played the game since age 5, she says she owes her post-high school education to softball.

Unlike UNLV's six other seniors, Leffler arrived only last year, transferring from Palomar College after her sophomore year. She chose UNLV over a number of schools, including UCLA, Cal State Northridge and UC Santa Barbara after a recruiting trip she spent here.

"They were really friendly, a lot more than any of the other schools I visited," Leffler said.

Leffler's success with the Palomar Comets made her one of the top junior college pros-

pects after the 1990 season. She made the junior college All-America team both years at Palomar, setting school records in home runs (17), RBIs (54), and runs scored (50). But Leffler said going from Palomar to UNLV was difficult.

"It was so easy to move from high school to JC, but when I moved from JC to division I ball, it was just a major stepping stone," Leffler said. "I took too long to get used to the game. I took a whole year and I only had two years left."

Last season, her first for the Lady Rebels, Leffler struggled at the plate, hitting just .203, but showed promise as both a power hitter and a speedster. Her goal for this season is to become more selective at bat. Her speed and powerful swing make her an all-around threat.

"They (UNLV coaches) leave it open for me, I can either swing away or bunt the ball. Most of the time, I just make sure the ball gets into play," Leffler said. "I need to concentrate (not to strike out)."

"Yesterday (March 23 against Missouri), I left people on base. That's another part I need to work on, to score those runs in scoring position."

Once on base, Leffler can put her primary talent to use—base stealing. Last year, she stole 17 bases in 21 attempts. Her strategy this season has been to concentrate more on singles and less on doubles and triples.

"I don't need any extra-bases (hits). I just need to get on base. I strive for (stealing) the next base, in that I'm a little faster than most people," Leffler said.

Like most of the team, Leffler believes the Lady Rebels will go all the way to the NCAA championship game this year. She says the only potential problem the team faces is maintaining their intensity going into the second game of a doubleheader.

"If we keep up like we did against Missouri, and play the second game as strong as we

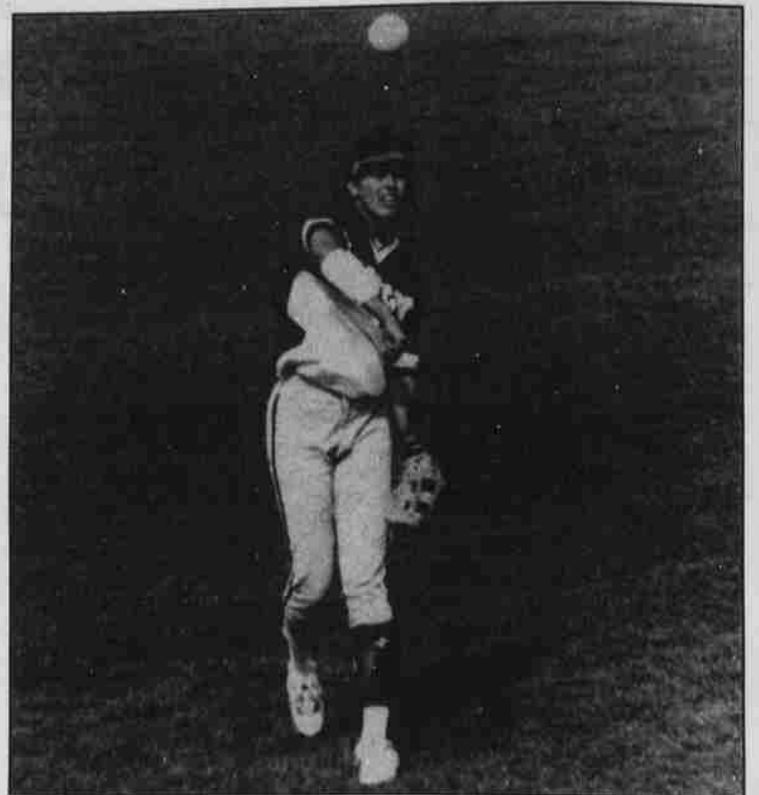


photo by Wray Halterman

Kenda Leffler sees 1992 as the Lady Rebels' "Big Year" for softball.

can, then there is no stopping us," Leffler said.

Leffler's success, however, doesn't end on the diamond. She has maintained a 3.0 grade-point-average in psychology and

plans to finish her degree next fall and pursue her teaching credentials. She will most likely here in Las Vegas, but would eventually like to return to San Marcos where all her family is.

## NORTHRIDGE

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baseman Scott Richardson and struggled with light-hitting shortstop Andy Hodgins to give him a free pass. However, UNLV shortstop Steve Biermann fatal *faux pas* on a routine grounder from the bat of CSUN left fielder Greg Shepard resulted in the first unearned run of the inning.

Matador Scott Mowl doubled down to right-center scoring both Hodgins and Shepard. After giving up a single to center fielder Greg Shockey, Dallimore summoned relief pitcher Danny Falcone.

But the UNLV hurler could not suppress the sudden Matador surge as the next batter, Matador right fielder Kyle Washington launched a Falcone fast-ball over the 335 Club down the left field line for a three-run homer. Kirk Kline replaced Falcone and retired the last batter.

UNLV third baseman Lino Diaz (one for four, 1 RBI) continued his hitting streak to twelve games. Rebel LF Dan Madsen contributed two hits in the loss.

In the rubber game of the three game series, the Hustlin' Rebels' defeated the Matadors, 5-0, in a rain-shortened contest. Tory Miran earned his fifth victory of the season.

The Rebels improve to 19-10 overall while the Matadors drop to 19-7-1.

UNLV scored all of their runs in the bottom of the fifth as the Matador defense plodded through the outfield swamp. Madsen clubbed a two-run double through the maligned outfield. Miran followed with another RBI double and Lino Diaz pounded a fly ball to Washington who unsuccessfully fought the downpour and the lights for a RBI three-bagger.

The umpires halted play as the rain pummeled down like cats-and-dogs on the Barnson marsh.

"There was just no place for the water to go," said Coach Fred Dallimore about the field. "There's more water underneath."

Diaz extended his hitting streak to 13 games with the triple.

This really isn't Rob Banks of Luminous Basement. But even if it were, we, The Rebel Yell Layout Staff, would still listen to his show as diligently as we always do on Wednesdays at midnight on **KUNV 91.5**



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