

## Rebels aim to 'Make It Happen' in '92

by Anthony Zuiker

The 1992 UNLV Rebel football team will attempt to "Make It Happen" at 7 p.m. Sept. 12 as they face the University of Texas-El Paso Miners.

The Rebels enter the 1992 season picked to finish fifth in the Big West Conference. Coach Jim Strong looks to improve his 8-14 record in his first two seasons at the helm.

"We are better, more mature, and very quick," Strong said. "Last year, we had a lot of freshman, straight out of high school, playing Division I football. We made mistakes and it cost us. This year, we have 68 players on scholarship opposed to 53 last year, so we are moving upward."

The Rebels return 36 lettermen, including 13 starters, from last season's squad and will have an influx of prep and junior college athletes.

With seven returning starters, the offense should get a boost from last year's experience. Junior John Ma'ae, a wide receiver from last year's team, will get the nod at the quarterback position, earning the job after an impressive spring practice, in which he displayed a strong, accurate throwing arm and excellent mobility.

"We need to throw the ball early to win," Strong said. "John Ma'ae is a leader and he will be well protected this year. Our line

is big and with players like Robbie Morrison, Mark Meham, Brian Massey, and Michael Collins, Ma'ae is going to have time to find open receivers."

Helping to fill the wide receiver position left open by Ma'ae are sophomores Henry Bailey and Demond Thompkins.

Bailey, who led the team in receiving last fall, also hopes to fill the shoes of departed senior Hunkie Cooper, a two-time all-conference performer. Bailey will be used as a receiver and running back, and will also handle the punt and kick return duties.

Thompkins was the second-leading receiver in the conference last fall, tied with Ma'ae.

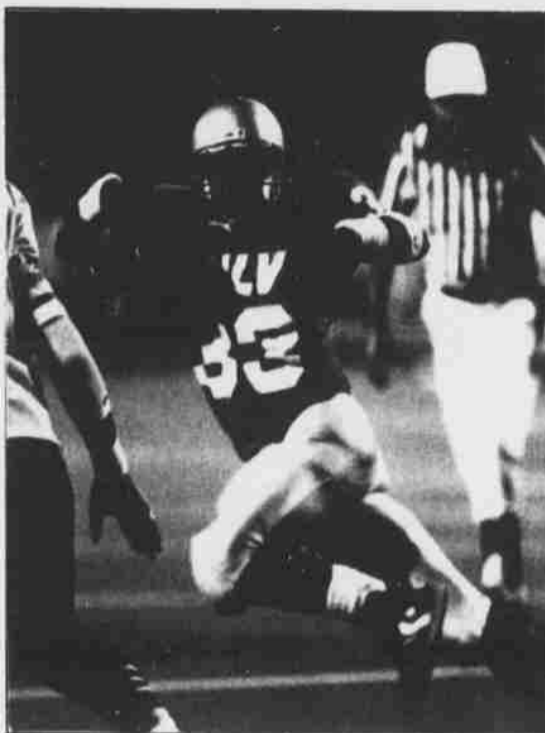
Junior Kenneth Crump, a converted linebacker, will be the starting tight end and should become a main target on passing downs with his soft hands and ability to get open.

The running back stable will be led by sophomores Shannon McLean and Jabbar Thomas and Matt Wills.

The offensive line will return all five starters from the end of last season.

Anchoring the line will be seniors John Hurley, right tackle, and Lonnie Palelei, right guard. Backing up Hurley and Palelei will be juniors Doug Roper, left guard, and Jerry Reynolds, left tackle.

Sophomore Howard McGowan, a preseason Academic All-



Photos courtesy of UNLV Sports Information

Quarterback John Ma'ae (above) will lead the Rebel offense in 1992. Henry Bailey (left) powers the defense.

America candidate, will resume his starting duties at center.

Defensively, the Rebels will return seven starters. The defensive line has the chore of replacing departed seniors Elgin Lofton and Chuck Reed, who combined for 86 tackles and nine sacks last fall.

Senior Tom Riley and sophomore Keith Washington will see action at defensive end. Riley recorded five sacks last fall to lead the squad. Washington, who started every game last season as a true freshman, is an outstanding prospect.

The linebacking corps returns all three starters and a solid group of reserves. Headlining the group will be senior Mike Smalls and junior Rumone Hilton. Smalls is a 1992 *Sporting News* pre-season All-Big West Conference first-team selection.

Hilton, a preseason second-team All-Big West selection at outside linebacker, has recorded 115 tackles in his first two seasons at UNLV.

The other outside linebacker will probably be junior Reese Thomas, who made vast improvements

during spring drills.

Sophomore Rodney Mazion will resume the starting job at free safety after missing the final five games of 1991 with a broken jaw.

Returning to claim the starting job at strong safety is sophomore Tyrone Scott, although he will be challenged by sophomore Jason Davis.

Junior Auntwan Armstrong and sophomore Clarence Mack enter the fall as the starting cornerbacks. Armstrong has spent the

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## Rebel kickers battle against heat and time

by Gregory Quinn

With the sweltering summer days still upon them, the UNLV soccer team anxiously prepares for their Sept. 6 opener against North Texas.

That doesn't give Rebel Coach Barry Barto much time for his team to recover from grueling double-session practices in 100-degree heat.

Barto will need time to work with new players, to build cohesion and to think about a schedule that includes 40 percent of Top 20. Thanks to the NCAA, Barto, in his 11th year at UNLV, has to cram a normal one-month training session into two weeks.

"It's no fun," Barto said. "Everyone (in the NCAA) has to do it, but it's not healthy for the players."

Indeed, Barto has his work cut out, especially in erecting a defensive line that has been the team's "Achilles' Heel" for the past three years.

Uncertainty looms at goalkeeper, where Dan Schell, returning from an elbow injury that sidelined him last year, and Clint Larson, a junior walk-on from California, will compete for the starting job. Barto is looking for someone, perhaps a newcomer to fill the void left by Mike Madrid, last year's stopper.

Lead by two-time All-Big West recipient Scott Uderitz, junior de-



Photos courtesy of UNLV Sports Information

Thies Carstens (above). Daniel Barber (left), senior All-American leads the 1992 Rebel Kickers.

fender Joe Cormany and sophomore sweeper Nathan King, the Rebels have at least a foundation to build a solid defense that could be their best in three years.

UNLV's strength will be on offense. All-American senior midfielder Danny Barder, first-team All-Big West senior forward Thies Carstens and first-team All-Big West junior forward Richie Louis make up one of the fastest frontlines in the West. Supporting the potent threesome will be sophomore midfielder Joey Mancuso, junior midfielder Ben Erickson, and junior forward Tom Miller, who some say has the potential to emerge as the top scorer for the Rebels.

"Offensively, we'll be very exciting," Barto said. He characterizes UNLV as, "an attacking team...out to score goals."

The Rebels will have their first big test when they travel to Dallas to play North Texas and national powerhouse Southern Methodist University, ranked third in pre-season. Conference play doesn't begin until the end of the season, when they will battle teams in the newly formed Mountain Pacific Sports Federation. The MPSF boasts some of the West's traditional heavyweights, like UCLA, Fresno State and San Diego State, making it "clearly the best conference in the country," according to Barto.

Here is what the Rebel kicker's will have to look forward to in the MPSF. For the UCLA Bruins, Coach Sigi Schmid returns another standout team loaded with US Olympic and National team players, along the usual harvest of high school All-Americans. Top stars are midfielder Joe-Max Moore (18 goals, seven assists), midfielder Zak Ibsen (12 goals, 11 assists) and goalkeeper Brad Friedel (0.66 goals-against average).

Coach Chuck Clegg of San Diego State returns 12 lettermen from a team that went 10-4-4 last year. "The transfer capital of the world," as Barto likes to joke, the Aztecs always unveil a few surprises among the myriad of transfer players on their roster. S.D. State's top returnees are forward Bill Demke (five goals, two assists), midfielder Amny Marrone (two goals, seven assists) and goalie Dan Dalzochio (0.93 GAA).

The Titans of Cal State Fullerton return a strong nucleus from a team that finished third in the Big West with a 6-4 record. Top players are forward Dino Torres (nine goals, five assists), for Ricky Rodriguez (four goals, two assists), and goalie Mike Ammann (1.29 GAA).

Recruiting from the soccer-rich San Fernando Valley, Coach Marwan Ass'sd consistently puts a good team on the field at Cal

State Northridge. Ten lettermen return from a 13-6-1 team, with forwards Danny Daniels (13 goals, six assists), Armando Valdivia (eight goals, 11 assists) and Belete Bekele (eight goals) as their key players.

The New Mexico Lobos with 13 players returning from last year's 11-8-1 season, along with some quality transfers, the Lobos are not to be taken lightly. Forward Richard Farrer (four goals three assists), midfielder David Peters (one goal, two assists) and goalie Essy Jimenez (1.08 GAA) carry the hopes of the Lobos.

The U.C. Santa Barbara Gauchos who were fifth in the Big West last year with a 3-6-1 record and 4-13-1 overall. Coach Mark Arya's team will have to put something different on the field to stay afloat. That difference might be Santa Clara Transfers Pat Griffith and Matt Arya, the coach's brother. "In conference play," Barto said, "they're always difficult."

Although the U.C. Irvine Anteaters won a scrimmage game last spring, Irvine has never beaten UNLV in conference. With losses to graduation and a few key players transferring, coach Derek Lawther will have to rebuild and wait until next year.