

Rollie: More than a father figure

BY PAUL GUTIERREZ
STAFF WRITER

Massimino takes a special pride in being a father-figure to his players and his players, in turn, recognize and respect that. "He kind of has the same philosophies as (former Runnin' Rebel Coach Jerry Tarkanian) as far as playing on the court," said UNLV star forward J.R. Rider. "But he stresses academics a little more. That's the biggest difference."

While at Villanova from 1973-1992 (the same tenure Tark had at UNLV), Massimino won 60 percent of his games (357-241) mostly against East Coast basketball factories. At the same time, all 62 of his senior student athletes have graduated.

Mass loves to talk about the time when former Nova star Eddie Pinckney was interviewed after being a first-round selection in the 1985 NBA draft. The entire first round class was interviewed and asked who had earned his degree. Only five could say they had, said Massimino, and Pinckney was one of them.



Rollie Massimino

"That's great," Coach Mass said. "But in order to get 62 people to graduate, you have to have 62 people that want to graduate. That's why it's so important (in recruiting) to pick and choose people who want their degree first. Everyone wants to be a pro, but they just can't handle it if

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they don't (make it). And that's what coaches are here for. To teach them that there's more to life than just bouncing the ball, and throwing the ball."

So far, Massimino's presence at UNLV has had a calming effect on the athletic program. In fact, it was the university's president, Robert Maxson, who in trying to woo Massimino over from Villanova, told Coach Mass that his mere presence would make UNLV a better place.

The family atmosphere and values which the new Runnin' Rebel coach preaches is based on trust, respect, and admiration, he said.

"If you're respected, you're liked. And if you're liked, you're respected. It's just like your own family," said Massimino, "your own people you associate with."

"Maybe that's why people criticize me, because I have my own inner sanctum."

Throttling

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Gauchos to come close.

UNLV continued its shooting spree in the second half connecting 18 out of 35 field goal attempts and converting 14 out of 16 from the charity stripe.

"The team played really well. We're real happy," said UNLV head coach Jim Bolla.

Lighting up the boards of the Lady Rebels were Jackson, who scored 24 points and added five rebounds and Hopgood, who contributed 17 points.

The Lady Rebels shined on defense as well.

"I thought the kids did a real good job defensively just defending their (the Gauchos) offense," said Bolla.

Junior guard Cherie Hogg led the defensive charge with a career-high eight steals against the mistake-prone, UC Santa Barbara assault. The Rebels ended the evening with 17 takeaways.

But early foul trouble doomed the Gauchos from the

get-go. With 10:49 remaining in the first half, UC Santa Barbara fouled the Lady Rebels seven times.

"(Becky) Brown got into foul trouble early and that kind of hurt them," said Bolla about the Gauchos' starting center who committed four faux pas in the opening period.

She and teammate Sasha Scardino eventually fouled out in the second half.

Also, Coach Bolla commended assistant coach Rick Glenn with getting the Lady Rebels ready against UC Santa Barbara.

Said Bolla: "This was Rick Glenn's game. He did a great job in scouting them (the Gauchos) and preparing the team for the game. The kids listened to him and executed very well."

The victory enabled UNLV to remain undefeated in the conference with eight victories. The Lady Rebels are 14-1 overall.

The Gauchos ended their five-game winning streak and are 9-8 overall and 7-2 in the Big West.

Dallimore

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complete with street access, is included in the plans.

All this was made possible by a \$1.25 million grant, donated by the estate of Hazel Mae Wilson on behalf of her late husband Earl E. Wilson. The gift was part of \$6.6 million donated to the university, as announced on Nov. 23 of last year.

"To have 3,000 seats on our campus, I think is going to create an opportunity for us to eventually create a revenue-producing sport in baseball," Athletic Director Jim Weaver said. "The weather in this community is perfect for it and there is a natural interest."

The stadium benefits more than the fans though. Weaver is optimistic about the income potential of the new park. Ticket sales and billboard advertisement could replenish the athletic department's overburdened coffers. Furthermore, hosting an NCAA Regional Tournament is now a possibility.

"In our experience at the University of Florida," Weaver said, "(Senior associate athletic director) Keith (Tribble) and I remember when we had a stadium that needed to be replaced and after that replacement we were able to generate revenues in excess of \$100,000 a year."

"That doesn't mean when you produce revenue it pays off all the expenses of the sport, but in

this day and age of cost containment, which is still one of the primary issues in intercollegiate athletics, every bit helps."

Perhaps the greatest dividend of all will be reaped by the team itself and by Dallimore. Marquee facilities attract marquee players and Dallimore sees the new stadium as the program's ticket to bigger and better things.

"I think this facility will give us the opportunity to recruit and compete on a national level," Dallimore said.

And as Wilson Stadium opens in 1994 and promises to be the pride of the program for many years to come, may Las Vegas remember the cast that made the dream come true—the Wilson family, whose generosity funded the stadium, Fred Dallimore, who waited patiently, tending his diamond for 20 years and the accidental fans who, after 25 years of watching from the rough, will finally have a place to sit.

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