

Win streak ends as Rebels fall to Louisville

90-86 loss ends Rebels' 59-game home-court win streak.

BY PAUL GUTIERREZ
STAFF WRITER

Though all good things eventually come to an end, hardly anyone, save the Louisville faithful, felt that UNLV's nation-leading 59-game home winning streak was in serious jeopardy for the remainder of the year.

The Runnin' Rebels, who have become notoriously slow starters lately, finally paid for their first half penchant of sluggishness as they were unable to overcome a 12-point deficit at the half.

The visiting Cardinals sent their fans the sweetest Valentine's Day gift possible as Louisville shocked UNLV, 90-86, in front of 17,207 at the Thomas & Mack Center Sunday.

It was the first home loss for a UNLV basketball team since Jan. 28, 1989, when Oklahoma upended the Rebels, 90-88, behind a 48-point effort by Stacey King, now with the NBA Champion Chicago Bulls.

"I thought we played a terrific ball game in terms of aggressiveness, and excitement," said a weary UNLV coach Rollie Massimino. "But Louisville, to-

day, was a terrific basketball team. We were just a little bit too small at times. The ball just didn't go in."

Things started off on the right track for the Rebels when Evric Gray and Dexter Boney both connected for treys in the first minute to lead by four, 6-2. The Rebels even stretched their lead to six, 15-9, on a dunk by Gray five minutes into the contest. But the Cards pecked away and eventually grabbed the lead on a Cliff Rozier layup at the 9:16 mark, 23-22.

Boney gave the Rebels their final lead of the afternoon on a layup with 8:54 left in the half, 24-23.

Louisville, which shot at a 56.8 percent clip from the field in the first half, went on a 26-13 run to close out the stanza. UNLV was just at a 38.2 percentage for the half.

The Cardinals scored the first four points of the second half to hold a game-high 16-point advantage, 53-37, 1:03 into the half.

The Rebels would close the gap to three on three separate occasions, but would get no closer. The first came with 12 minutes left in regulation on a Ken Gibson trey, 59-56. But less than three minutes later, the Cards were up by 12 again, 68-56.

UNLV closed the gap to five, 68-63, following a J.R. Rider jumper with just over seven minutes remaining. Gray fouled out 38 seconds later yet the Rebels still managed to get back within three, 69-66, when Reggie Manuel converted the charity toss on a three-point play with 6:16 left in the game.

U of L again went on a spurt that upped the ante to nine, 78-69, three minutes later. The Rebels again got within three on a Dedan Thomas jumper, 81-78, with 1:32 left in the game but would get no closer.

Louisville out-rebounded the Rebels, 44-38, and also went to the charity stripe 11 more times. The Cards were 16-of-27 while UNLV was 11-16.

Rider scored a double-double with a game-high 31 points and 11 rebounds. Gray scored 16 and grabbed 10 boards before fouling out while Boney pitched in 13 points.

Manuel had 11 points, Gibson nine on three treys, and Thomas scored six with just four assists.

UNLV (16-3 overall, 9-2 in Big West Conference play) gets back to league action with a Saturday night home game against New Mexico State.



PHOTO BY WRAY HALTERMAN

Despite 30 points by J.R. Rider, the Rebels lost to Louisville, dropping to 16-3 on the year.

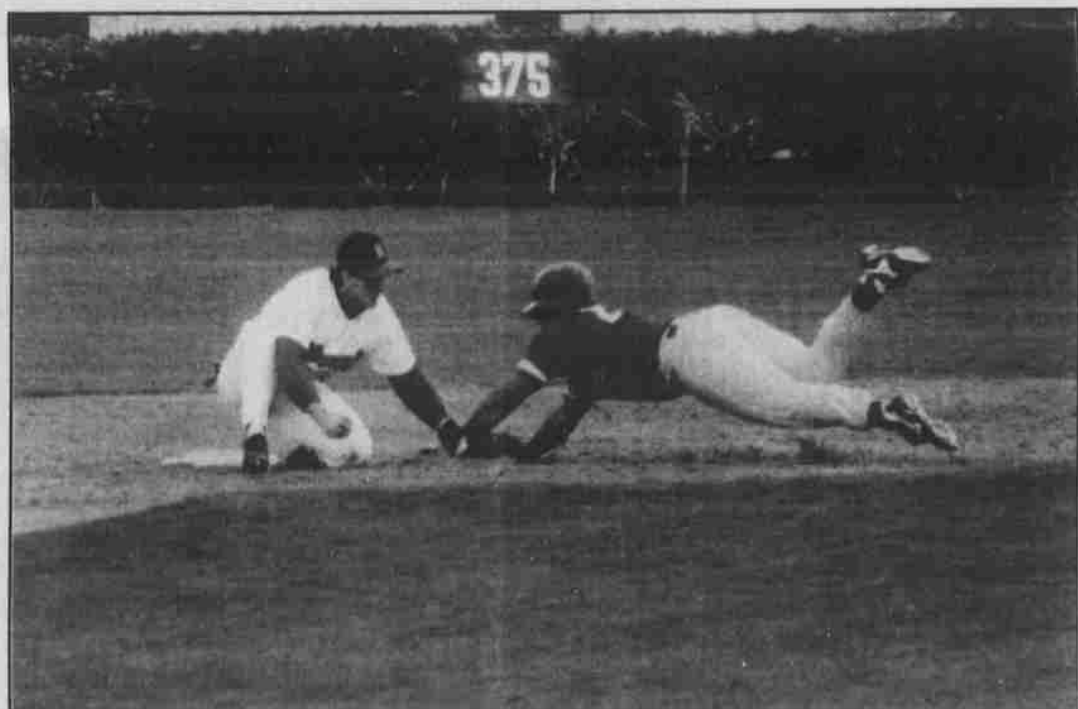


PHOTO BY WRAY HALTERMAN

Lino Diaz tags out a Lobo runner. UNLV is 3-3 after the series with New Mexico.

Hustlin' Rebels win battle, lose war

New Mexico wins two of three in weekend series as UNLV pitchers falter.

BY JAY SAPOVITS
STAFF WRITER

The Hustlin' Rebels managed to pull out a 7-3 win Sunday against the University of New Mexico.

Relief pitcher Derrick Cotton (1-0) tallied his first win of this young season. The 5-foot-11 junior from St. Louis, Miss., throttled New Mexico with five strong innings and allowed one run on four hits.

However, the UNLV baseball team (3-3 overall) lost two of three games against the University of

New Mexico (5-3) last weekend at Roger Barnson Field. The Rebels lost Friday 13-5 and again Saturday 8-6.

UNLV succumbed to the "big inning" in its two losses as the Hustlin' Rebel pitching staff surrendered five runs in the second inning Friday and Saturday.

Rebel pitcher Byron Klemaske (1-1) was tagged for seven runs on nine hits in six innings Friday. The UNLV starter, who struck out six batters, was wild on the mound walking five.

The next day, UNLV hurlers allowed seven runs in the defeat. Rebel right-hander

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'93 softball team reloads for another run

The Lady Rebels give promise of a more offense-oriented season with a solid lineup.

BY NICK HALEY
STAFF WRITER

Take away her starting catcher, third baseman, No. 1 pitcher and her entire outfield from a team that finished sixth in the nation last year, and where does that leave UNLV softball coach Shan McDonald?

Owing to a highly successful recruiting year, she is in pretty good shape.

McDonald lost seven seniors to graduation last May—six of which were four-year varsity players—from a class that never experienced a losing season and reached post-season play three straight times. But with the

passing of the Magnificent Seven comes a younger, more balanced team ready to pick up where last year's squad left off.

A season ago, McDonald believed she had found the formula for a national title, but a late season slump—five straight losses—left the Lady Rebels frustrated and sent them home much earlier than expected. This year, McDonald sees a completely new team with a different outlook.

"They (1992 team) would get tight because they were frustrated," McDonald said. "But that was last year and each team is different. We have different players and each team has its own personality."

Personality aside, this team has a composition incomparable to last year. All styles of hitters and throwers, depth on offense and a balance of youth and experience

give the 1993 Lady Rebels a little of everything. Coach McDonald stressed well-roundedness as the team's greatest asset.

"We're not expecting to find any weaknesses," McDonald said. "I think that's the key to the success of this team. We've got much better depth at the plate and a little more versatility."

On the mound this year are three returners from last year's 34-22 team. The trio combined for an 18-13 record overall but will all need to play solidly this season for UNLV to remain competitive in the always-tough Big West Conference.

"All three of them are going to have to be able to throw well for us to be successful this year," McDonald said. "Our pitchers are going to need to keep us in the ballgame."

Senior righthander Kim

Smith, 10-7 in 1992, will serve once again as the team's finesse hurler and will likely be expected to perform like she did her sophomore season when she won 25 of 31 decisions. A four-year player, Smith cited UNLV's ability to match any batter as a strength of its pitching.

"I think Coach (McDonald) is going to have to be smart, look at who we're playing and what kind of hitters they have and see which one of us will work best," Smith said.

Rounding out the three-pitcher rotation are Amie Stewart and Cyndi Hewitt, both power hurlers. Stewart, a right-handed sophomore, pitched eight games last year and threw a no-hitter against Toledo in her second outing of the year. Left-handed throwing duties fall upon Hewitt, also a sophomore. Hewitt played only six games last year as inju-

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ries kept her sidelined.

On the opposite side of the plate, McDonald's powerful recruiting class will back up infielders Tricia Reimche, Lisa Wilkins-Eames and Cyndi Parus, last year's three best hitters who have all returned. Long-ball hitters Sara Mallet, an outfielder, and junior-college transfer Kim Fritts, a catcher, join Smith in the middle of the order. Also on the power list are freshman Heather Siegel and sophomore Melissa Jantz, both catchers.

"We've got the speed, we've got the slap (hit) and we've got the power," McDonald said. "We've

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