

Cold Lampin' chillin' in effect

BY JAY SAPOVITS

Athletes who can't play intercollegiate athletics have a chance to compete in sports during intramurals. Some of these players are hacks; others are good.

The UNLV South Gym is the sight of all the games. No

admission is required; however, enrollment at UNLV is necessary. The referees are students who throw a black-and-white vest over their regular shirt. True fans of fast-break-in-your-face basketball would enjoy some of the teams in the over six-foot division.

Cold Lampin' is the defending six-foot-plus division champion. The team consists of eight players. Most of the eight received offers to play college basketball. For various reasons, each chose to simply pursue basketball as a hobby. These players gave up a dream of playing professional ball for a university education.

Sean Watkins, co-founder and point guard of Cold Lampin', doesn't view it as giving up a dream. "Everybody wants to move towards a new dream," Watkins said. "We all are working towards a common goal, 'get our degree' and we all love basketball."

Watkins has a national championship ring from the 1989-90 Rebel basketball team. In his sophomore year, he made the Rebels a walk-on. He played in the first game of the NIT against Loyola Marymount and scored two points. Watkins never saw action again. The ring and the bucket are the extent of his college career. But Watkins and his teammates still enjoy the game. "We all love basketball, that's why we're all out there having fun," Watkins said.

In 1989 he and Blake Webb founded the team. This year they are undefeated at 4-0 and will attempt to win their 19th straight game tonight. The streak began last year. If they win the championship this year, then they may be remembered as the greatest intramurals team in UNLV history.

When you're the best, however, challenges come in droves. Teams like the Bomb Squad and Scoring Unlimited are likely opponents in the playoffs. Both teams also adore up-tempo styles of offense.

Kim Smith broke out of her four-game funk last weekend by pitching a two-hit, 2-0 shutout against the 15th-ranked Utah State Aggies in the Arizona State Tournament in

Commentary

Tempe, Arizona. Smith pitched poorly for the Rebels dating back to last season.

Hopefully, this performance will escalate into another stellar year for the Vancouver, Wash. native. In her Rebel career, Smith has compiled a 44-15 record while tossing 25 shutouts.

In the first game of the season at home against UC Santa Barbara, Smith was shelled. After three innings of the first game she took a seat on the bench and watched her teammates climb out of a 6-2 deficit to win 11-10. She sat the rest of the doubleheader as UNLV swept the series.

Between her start in Las Vegas and Tempe Ariz., Smith became engaged to be married to former UNLV defensive back and current Saskatchewan Roughrider player Charles Anthony.

If Smith uses this engagement as an escalation point to her season, then All-American accolades won't be out of reach.

Shan McDonald's club aspires to attend the College World Series. They were there last year. And Kim Smith undoubtedly would pitch terrific if they obtain their goal.

Jim Bolla refuses to play substitutes with any sense of regularity. With a fifty point lead against San Jose State in the closing minutes—two days before they played Pacific—the starters were still in the game.

That's not wrong, it's just his style. My theory is simple. If everyone has a fair chance to make the starting line-up then bench players who want to play bad enough will work harder, get better, and play more.

Talking about the Pacific loss, Bolla said, "You can make all the excuses in the world, but I just didn't have them ready. It was my fault."

The Lady Rebel coach certainly does things the Sinatra way, "My", and had enough class to take responsibility for their loss. That's rare in sports today.

Rebels dominate Aggies

BY PAUL GUTIERREZ
STAFF WRITER

One. The UNLV basketball team has a new home-court win streak. Six days after seeing their 59-game streak stopped by Louisville, the Rebels, behind Reggie Manuel's career-high 21 points, ripped preseason Big West favorite New Mexico State, 97-81.

With J.R. Rider starting the game on the bench, it was Manuel who dominated. The 6-foot-3 sophomore scored 17 points as the Rebels sprinted to a 38-18 lead.

Dexter Boney took over late, helping the Rebels preserve the blowout Saturday night before a Thomas & Mack Center crowd of 18,125.

The No. 15 Runnin' Rebels improved to 17-3 overall, 10-2 in Big West play, while the Aggies fall to 18-6, 10-3.

"I thought we played a very good first half," said UNLV coach Rollie Massimino. "This game was for a first place berth, for now."

"Reggie (Manuel), Dexter (Boney) and Dedan (Thomas) really stepped up when they had to," Massimino added. "They really came through in the fold. We got a cushion on (the Aggies). We just got off to a jump."

That the Rebels got off to a quick start against New Mexico State was not all that surprising. The fact that they did it while leading scorer J.R. Rider sat on the bench was. Ken Gibson started as the John R. Wooden Player of the Year nominee.

"It was a coach's decision," Massimino said of Rider's not starting and subsequent limited playing time. "I felt like sitting him down."

In a game that saw only one tie, at two-all, and the Rebels never trail, UNLV stormed out to a game-high 20-point lead, 38-18, following three successful free throw attempts by Manuel with 7:22 remaining in the half. The closest the Aggies would get for the remainder of the half would be 11 on a Tracy Ware dunk.

"We haven't played a team that ran that fast and made that much," said Aggie coach Neil McCarthy. Indeed, the Rebels shot at a 56.3 percent clip from the field in the first half (compared to NMSU's 40 percent) while building a 49-36 halftime lead.

The Aggies did not close the gap to double digits until James Dockery got the visitors within nine, 64-55, with 9:33 left in the game. But Gibson answered with a trey to up the ante to 12 again and the Rebels were off.

In a battle between two of the best point guards in the nation, Thomas just outplayed Sam Crawford, the No. 1 assist man in the nation who entered the UNLV contest with an 8.9 avg average.

Thomas, who was No. 3 in the country averaging 8.3 per outing, finished with 14 assists, 11 points, and three rebounds, while Crawford had 13 assists, eight points, and three rebounds. Thomas also had just two turnovers while Crawford committed five.

Las Vegas native Cliff Reed led all scorers with a 24-point outburst for the Aggies.

Both Manuel and Boney scored 21 to pace the Rebels while Rider came off the bench to score 17 and grab 10 rebounds in just 25



PHOTO BY WRAY HALTERMAN

Reggie Manuel drives the lane for two of his career high 21 points Saturday. The Rebels won 97-81.

Manuel has a career day

BY PAUL GUTIERREZ
STAFF WRITER

With leading scorer J.R. Rider sitting on the bench to start this matchup to establish Big West Conference dominance, sophomore Reggie Manuel simply decided to "step up" and assume the scoring burden for the Runnin' Rebels.

The end result was a career-high of 21 points on 7-of-12 shooting, including three treys, in 28 minutes of play during UNLV's thumping of New Mexico State.

"Reggie's a very good basketball player," said UNLV coach Rollie Massimino. "We need his basketball ability, intensity, and aggressiveness. He's not just a defensive stopper."

Manuel has averaged just 8.6 ppg while assuming the

role of defensive specialist, often taking on the opponent's best offensive players. But Saturday, the Macon, Ga., native had a career night.

"Coach said he needed someone to step up (and fill the scoring role), so I just decided to do it," Manuel said. "(J.R. not starting) wasn't too much of a problem. Everybody just stepped up their game."

"We just came out, played hard, and took (NMSU) out at the beginning," Manuel added.

Manuel, the lone sophomore starter on the squad, scored 17 of his 21 points in the first half as well as hitting his three treys in the first 20 minutes.

"Manuel started off fast," said Aggie coach Neil McCarthy. "(It was) clearly an outstanding performance."

minutes. Evric Gray and Thomas both scored 11 points while Fred Haygood got some quality time (13 minutes) and seven points. Lawrence Thomas scored five, Gibson three, and Jason Brooks made a free throw.

UNLV shot 58.6 percent from the field, 38.9 from trey country,

and made 22-of-33 charity tosses. The Aggies were 42.3 percent, 26.7, and made 17-24 free throws.

The Rebels host intrastate rival Nevada Thursday, and close out the home schedule with a match-up against Utah State Saturday night.