

# Polson's late homer lifts Rebels past Pacific

Rebels' spirits boosted by successful home series

BY NICK HALEY  
STAFF WRITER

Entering last weekend's series against the University of Pacific, UNLV's baseball team appeared to be headed south. Injuries and a four-game losing streak brought a lot of long faces to Roger Barnson Memorial Field and a 10-6 series-opening loss to the Tigers didn't help matters.

But UNLV Coach Fred Dallimore rallied his squad this weekend and put together a pair of victories over the Tigers, 5-3 and 6-5. UNLV improved to 10-13 overall and evened up their Big West Conference record at 3-3.

Dallimore praised the Tigers (20-11 overall, 3-3 BWC) on their improvement over last year's last-place finish. Halfway through the season, Pacific has more wins (20) than they posted all last year (17).

"I've played (and coached) against them for 30 years and this is the best UOP team I've seen," Dallimore said. "For us, it's a great series. Anytime (we) win two games out of three we're happy. We needed this. We've been beat up, we've been hurting."

Where the Rebels hurt most is



Jon Polson

on the mound. Starting pitcher Eric Ludwick, whose foot has been heavily bandaged, is expected to miss another two weeks. In addition, Byron Klemaske, who came out of the bullpen to post Sunday's 6-5 victory, has suffered numerous inflammations and has had only soft-pitch practices for the past week.

"He (Klemaske) hasn't thrown all week," Dallimore said. "He pitched well (on Sunday). If he pitches like that all the time, we're in good shape. Klemaske's the guy we need. He can give you innings."

On Sunday, he gave the Rebels 12/3 innings en route to his fourth win of the season. Klemaske fanned three out of five batters, handing the Tigers not a single walk or hit.

But the junior right-hander can't take all the credit. If not for a go-ahead solo homer by Jon Polson in the eighth, the game might have run away from UNLV. It was also Polson who knocked in Lino Diaz and Rodney Mazion in the fourth to put the Rebels back in the game. Polson finished 2 for 4 Sunday with 3 RBI and a walk. For the weekend, Polson was 6 for 12.

Mazion's run came in after he crashed through third base coach

Rod Soesbe's stop signal.

Asked by Dallimore if he would knowingly defy Soesbe's signal, Mazion, a 90 percent base stealer, responded, "If I'm past him already."

In the end, it was extra efforts like Mazion's that put the Rebels on top. The Rebels put "Hustlin'" back in their name and the wins followed suit.

"I told the kids we're not going to change anything as far as giving them more time off or anything," Dallimore said. "We're just going to work harder, play smarter and get tougher on people."

Leading the way in the Rebel rally was pitcher Derek Cotton. Through the first 13 innings, UNLV's pitching staff had given up 13 runs, all of them earned. Cotton took the mound in the fifth inning of Saturday's Game 2 up by two and immediately quieted Pacific's batters. In five innings, Cotton allowed only one hit and one walk while striking out five.

Aside from hustle, Saturday was a day of returning to basics. After Friday's loss which saw catcher Mike Hubel playing first and right field and reserve Steve White behind the plate, Dallimore decided to keep it simple.

"They (Pacific) went with a left-handed pitcher and we thought we'd try to get as many right-handed as we could in the lineup," Dallimore said.

It worked offensively as UNLV turned 14 hits into six runs. Defensively, however, the Rebels were out of sync and Dallimore scrapped the plan for the second and third games.

With a newly established confidence, his squad now looks forward to playing in Grand Junction, Colo., where UNLV will compete in the Mesa State Colorado West Coors Classic.

## Rebel Rumble

UNLV softball receives highest ranking ever

In the first regular season poll of the year, UNLV's softball team was ranked No. 3, the best in the history of the program. UNLV soared from their previous No. 12 spot in the preseason poll.

The Lady Rebels enjoyed a successful break in which they went 6-2. UNLV swept CS Fullerton 4-2, 1-0 March 13; New Mexico State on March 15 6-2, 8-3 and Massachusetts on March 18 7-0, 16-1. UNLV's streak was broken by CS Northridge last Friday 3-0, 4-1. UNLV has boosted its overall record to 13-5 and stands undefeated (6-0) in Big West Conference play.

Senior pitcher Kim Smith improved her record to 7-1, giving her a .875 winning percentage thus far. Smith set the school record for best winning percentage in 1991 when she finished the year 25-6 for a .806 percentage.

Currently in the middle of a month-long road trip, the Lady Rebels play next at the Cal State Fullerton Pony Tournament. Pool play begins March 25 when the Lady Rebels take on Utah and Oklahoma State.

Track team ties for 16th at nationals

At the Hoosierdome in Indianapolis, Ind. March 13-14, UNLV's women's indoor track team finished the games with eight points, putting the Lady Rebels in a tie for 16th place.

Senior Crystal Irving placed second in the 400-meter with a time of 52.84. Teammate Judy Fraser did not place in the event.

Jean Fletcher, who ran in the 800-meter, was also unable to place.

UNLV's 4x400-meter relay team, the favorite to win, did not complete the race as the baton was dropped during an exchange.

The meet concludes the indoor track season and UNLV will begin its outdoor season.

Lady Rebels to play in NIT

The UNLV Lady Rebels basketball team will face Southern Methodist in first round action of the National Invitation Tournament Thursday at Amarillo, Texas.

UNLV enters the NIT at 23-5 while SMU is 18-9.

Teresa Jackson, the nation's No. 8 scorer with 22.5 ppg, was named the Big West Conference's Player of the Year and was a first team-BWC selection while both Gwynn Hobbs and Trudie Hopgood were second teamers. Cherie Hogg was an honorable mention.

The women's NIT is an eight-team competition. Hawaii, the Big West's regular season champ, was not extended a bid to the NCAA tourney and refused the NIT invite.

Game time Thursday is 8 p.m. Central Standard Time.

Cold Lampin' avenges earlier loss, wins championship

Championship Thursday featured three lop-sided finals in UNLV intramural basketball action at the North Gym, including two undefeated teams choking under the title game pressure, March 11.

The UNLV Mens Open Division is by far the most heralded of the three intramural divisions. In that division, Cold Lampin' avenged a regular-season loss to Scoring Unlimited, winning 64-34 to easily claim the championship for the second consecutive season.

Cold Lampin' (9-1) was hammered by Scoring Unlimited (9-1) during the regular season, 69-47, making Lampin's championship romp over undefeated Scoring Unlimited that much more gratifying.

"They beat us by 22 points the first time we met, but we came back and mercied them tonight," said Blake Webb, who co-founded Cold Lampin' along with teammate Sean Watkins in 1989. "We're building a dynasty here at UNLV."

"This is sweet," Watkins said after his team's repeat championship. "This was an excellent team effort."

"It's exciting," Jeff Woods said. "We just went out there and shot the ball like we know we can."

Woods scored a game-high 19 points. Watkins chipped in with 16 and Webb added 13 points.

Scoring Unlimited was led by acrobatic Demetrius Mitchell (10 points) and Kebu Stewart (nine points), an academic redshirt this season for Coach Rollie Massimino's Runnin' Rebels.

In the Women's Division, leading scorer Virginia Green helped guide A Touch of Class to a 52-28 championship win over the Runnin' Devils.

A Touch of Class concludes a perfect season with a 6-0 record while the Devils fall to 4-2 overall.

In the Men's Under Six-Foot Division, the Jorriques toppled the Cajuns, 55-24, in the championship game. The Jorriques finish the year with a 7-2 mark while the Cajuns, who entered the title contest undefeated, drop to 7-1.

—Scott Haverlock

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