

Neglect

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But sickness struck two weeks before the Big West Championship. Lutes was stricken to bed, missing both class and practice. A doctor's appointment two days before the Thursday event decided her fate.

"He told me I couldn't dive until Thursday," Lutes said.

Thursday was the day of the competition. She dove cold, having missed two straight weeks of practice. The unthinkable happened. Wearing

the proud colors of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Lutes spun and flipped the other schools back to the beach. Her mother was there to watch the victory. It turned out she was the only person who would know what her daughter accomplished.

Neither the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, the *Sun*, nor *The Rebel Yell* wrote about her victory. The champion of the Big West three-meter diving event admittedly felt ignored.

This time, however, would be the last at UNLV.

Next season she won't be the best diver in the Big West. She will be an

average diver in the Pac-10 for Arizona State. In fact, Lutes will walk-on the Sun Devils team and compete for even the lowest of spots.

This lead me to believe the \$450 was secondary, that a little attention was all she really wanted.

After all, she earned it, in and out of the pool. The UNLV athletic department praises the "revenue sports" athletes for their hard work. Athletes are athletes. It wasn't about a misplaced ego—rather pride.

Why would anyone be unappreciated?

Why wasn't this woman entitled to the same treatment the "revenue

sports" athletes get obligatorily?

If Lutes walked through the Thomas & Mack Center would anyone know who she was?

Ask the same question about any "revenue sport" athlete.

The message isn't about \$450, it's about neglect. In that holds a unique credo for the entire athletic department to follow.

If you can't do something right, don't do it at all.

—Jay Sapovits is sports director of KUNV and Rebel Yell columnist.

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