

# Lady Rebs tennis star prays for peace in her homeland

In the midst of political unrest, Kordic continues tennis career and education.

BY GREGORY QUINN  
STAFF WRITER



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Ljiljana Kordic

Even though Ljiljana Kordic is a thousand miles away from home, the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina strikes deep in her heart.

Each morning, when she reads the paper or watches the news, she sees the same awful images: tanks, body bags, mass graves, refugees. She walks to business class with the same sense of doom, wondering when it will end—the carnage, the madness. Her family and friends are still there, a stone's throw away from the thick of it. Lately, she has taken up prayer.

Kordic worries very much about her country. She worries about United Nations sanctions and possible military force against her homeland. Kordic is Serbian. She is from Panzevo (pronounced Pahnchevo), a small town seven miles from Belgrade, the center of the Serbian government.

"I must say I was lucky that I lived close to capitol," Kordic said. "That's the area where they're not fighting."

Kordic, a freshman, came to UNLV last July on a tennis scholarship. Like fellow expatriot Monica Seles, Kordic has kept her thoughts about the Serbian policy of ethnic cleansing to herself.

While she feels that "war is ridiculous" and that "you cannot solve problems by fighting and hating each other," she

also draws thick, clear lines between sports and politics.

"I'm an athlete," she says, "not a politician. I play tennis and it's not up to me to discuss (political matters)." While that may seem like a safe way out, Kordic cites the predicament of Seles, who has been the target of death threats for not renouncing Serbia.

"She's not interfering," Kordic said. "And she's still getting threatened. Imagine if she did (speak out)."

Instead of war Kordic would rather talk about sports.

She began swimming at age six, and went on to finish fourth in the breaststroke at the national finals. She discovered tennis at age 10, and realized she had to make a choice between the two sports.

"I decided to play tennis," she said. "I find it more interesting."

She blossomed with tennis, enough to impress a coach who gave her private workouts at no charge. For two years, she trained on a routine that included a four-mile warmup, stair work, weights (which she hates: "I get too big," she says. "My muscles show"), wind sprints, stretching and calisthenics.

Kordic, who plays the No. 6 spot for the Lady Rebs, is certainly built like an athlete. Short

and sturdy, she brings back memories of the powerful women athletes of the Eastern Block, before the Wall came down. She has a round, robust face with straight blond hair and spar-

klung blue eyes set off by a moderate tan. "I like the climate here," she says.

Academically, coming to UNLV was a risk because of the language barrier. But it was a chance to continue her tennis career and pursue an education, something the system back home did not afford.

"I talked to BYU and UNLV," she said. "And I decided that UNLV's better than BYU. It was like 'Las Vegas!' It was like 'wow, yeah, I want to go there.'"

So far, the language barrier hasn't been a problem. Her accented English is fluent and often sprinkled with a few Valley Girl colloquialisms (she says "like" a lot). As for tennis, Kordic has made the adjustment from her native clay to UNLV's hard courts and is off to a fast start in her first year, with a record of 11-5 in singles and 8-2 in doubles (with Becky Markosian). And last month, the athletic department honored her as a scholar-athlete for maintaining a 3.42 GPA.

"You have your ups and downs in your career," she says. "I guess since I came here, I'm going up."

## Rebel Rumble

Tracksters in Irvine for BWC Championships

The UNLV track team will be participating in the Big West Conference Championships beginning Friday and ending Saturday.

The Lady Rebs have already claimed the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation Indoor Championship under first-year head coach Karen Dennis.

Recent results include fifth and seventh place finishes for the 4 x 400 team in the Mt. SAC and Penn Relays.

Judy Fraser has already posted an NCAA provisional qualifying time in the 400-meter. Jean Fletcher and Michelle Brown are looking to qualify in the 800-meter while Diane McCarthy, the school record holder and favorite to win the 1500 and 3000-meter runs, will also be looking to qualify.

The NCAA Outdoor Championships are June 2-5.

Hustlin' Rebs in final homestand this weekend

The UNLV Baseball team (7-11 in Big West Conference, 20-23 overall) hosts its final homestand of the year beginning tonight.

The Rebs play New Mexico State in a three-game set with starting times of 7 p.m. tonight

and Friday and a noon start Saturday.

The Aggies invade Barnson Field with a BWC slate of 8-10, 29-20.

UNLV leads the all-time series, 10-1, including two of three last year at NMSU.

Lady Rebs in California for two twinbills

The No. 5 UNLV softball team travels to California this weekend for important Big West Conference doubleheaders.

The Lady Rebs (20-5-1 in BWC, 32-12-1) find themselves at No. 15 Cal State Fullerton Friday night and at UC Santa Barbara Saturday afternoon.

UNLV swept a twinbill at home from the Titans March 13, 4-2 and 1-0.

CSUF leads the all-time series 24-9-1.

The Lady Rebs host San Jose State in a doubleheader May 14 at 1 p.m.

Hustlin' Rebel baseball on the airwaves

Saturday's baseball home finale against New Mexico State will be broadcast live by KUNV, 91.5 FM.

Jay Sapovits and Scott Gulbransen will call the action from Barnson Field.

Game time Saturday is 12 noon.

## Intramurals Corner

BY SCOTT HAVERLOCK

A two-on-two volleyball tournament Saturday was the final event of the UNLV Intramural 1992-93 school year.

Twelve duos competed in the four divisions—Women's, Co-ed, Independent Men's and Intra Fraternity Council Men's.


Kappa Sigma, which posted a 4-0 record en route to the IFC Division championship, also defeated Cafe Sensations for the Men's Campus championship.

Cafe Sensations (3-1) won the Independent Men's crown before falling to Kappa Sig for the over-

all title.

Wendy & Jeremy defeated the Grasshoppers for the Co-ed championship.

In the Women's Division, Zeta Tau Alpha downed Alpha Gamma Delta for the title.



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