

SPORTS

REBEL
YELLAndre no giant on
the tennis courtBY CHRIS JONES
SPORTS COLUMNIST

Andre Agassi has done it again.

He blew it. Just like he did at the 1990 U.S. Open Final where the highly favored and always image-conscious Agassi lost to Pete Sampras in straight sets. And like in the French Open in 1991 when Agassi watched Jim Courier storm from behind to take home the championship. Then again, it could be like the time Agassi lost to... well, you get the point.

To his credit, Agassi did win Wimbledon in 1992. Unfortunately, that may be the only credit he ever receives.

What else has he won? Last week's loss to Thomas Enqvist (who?), the world's 61st-ranked player, was yet another disappointing one by Agassi in Grand Slam play. If the Grand Slam events (U.S. Open, French Open, Australian Open and Wimbledon) are where the world's best tennis is played, Agassi has yet to prove to anyone outside of Madison Avenue that he belongs at the top of the tennis

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world.

He has never won the Australian Open, nor has he managed to win in the clutch at the U.S. or French despite numerous trips to the finals. That Wimbledon cup must look lonely on his shelves next to his junior

That Wimbledon cup must look lonely on his shelves next to his junior high trophies and hairspray.

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Despite his lack of victories, Agassi lives in the limelight. The public is bombarded by Agassi stories ad nauseam. He plays "rock and roll" tennis for Nike. "Image is everything" boasts Agassi's Canon camera commercial while

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"Look at Professor Gulbransen's report card on the next page!"

Rebels earn respect against Clemson

BY SCOTT GULBRANSEN
STAFF WRITERUNLV 0-1
Next: at Texas-El Paso
Sept. 11, 6:05 p.m.

It was not even supposed to be close.

Jim Strong's UNLV football team quieted a crowd of more than 65,000 at Clemson's Howard Field, a.k.a. Death Valley, by keeping the game close into the fourth quarter.

But as expected, No. 22 Clemson prevailed over the Rebels, 24-14. Though the Rebels were supposed to be blown out by the national powerhouse, that did not discourage the Rebels as they played their best game yet under Coach Strong. Strong stressed the importance of the Clemson game even with the loss.

"The word I've been stressing is team," Strong said. "If we can take this game and gain maturity from it ... we have a good chance to be a good football team."

Strong was right. The Rebels played better than good.

Behind 10-7 late in the first half, quarterback Bobby Stockham was in the midst of an impressive drive when a questionable call killed UNLV's opportunity to tie the score.

With 29 seconds left in the half, Stockham hit Henry Bailey at the Clemson 44-yard line. The situation got better as Stockham once again connected, this time with Daemon Keener at the Ti-

ger 31, putting the Rebels well within Nick Garritano's field-goal range with 16 seconds remaining. But Stockham four-hopped his next pass toward a receiver and was called for intentional grounding. That set up a pie-in-the-sky 60-yard field goal attempt. It fell short. But the Rebels had still another half to go for the upset.

And they seemed destined to do it when the Scarlet and Gray attack retook the lead at 14-10 on a DeJohn Branch two-yard run. It was the final UNLV lead of the game.

Clemson then recaptured the lead 17-14 and the see-saw battle between national powerhouse and emerging program tightened.

UNLV had one more chance to gain momentum and upset a nationally ranked team. The Rebels drove through Clemson territory and fumbled on an option play that would have resulted in a touchdown. Stockham recovered the fumble which set up a Garritano field goal attempt. The 25-yard attempt seemed doomed from the beginning as the snap was high and the field goal try failed.

That would be the last time UNLV would be within striking distance.



STAFF PHOTO/YELL

Rebel quarterback Bob Stockham threw for XXX yards against No. 22 Clemson Saturday

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Williams thrives in San Francisco

BY PAUL GUTIERREZ
SPORTS EDITOR

RebelYell sports editor Paul Gutierrez served an internship at The Oakland Tribune this summer. While there he interviewed former UNLV baseball player and current San Francisco Giant Matt Williams. Following is the second installment of "Where are they now?"

Matt Williams is known around the major league baseball circuit as a quiet superstar. He lets his bat do the talking.

The same was true when the San Francisco Giants' third baseman was an all-american at UNLV in the mid-1980's.

Williams, the first player in UNLV baseball history to have his jersey retired, is an integral part of the Giants lineup, batting between Will Clark and Barry Bonds. As of Monday, Williams was hitting .301 with 30 home runs and 91 RBI's.

Still, Williams has been dogged by critics who say he has been lucky enough to hit between Clark and Bonds this year and Clark and Kevin Mitchell earlier in his career.

"That stuff doesn't matter to me," Williams said. "When you're winning everybody gets the glory. I just worry about my teammates. If you have the respect of your peers, that's all you can ask for."

Winning has been exactly what the Giants have been doing this year, posting baseball's best record at 88-48 as of Sunday night.

Regardless of where the Giants finish, Williams said he will never forget his days at Barnson Field. And why should he? Besides having his No. 15 jersey retired and being the all-time Hustlin' Rebel home run king with 58, he was also the baseball program's first preseason all-american selection in 1986 as a junior shortstop. He went on to

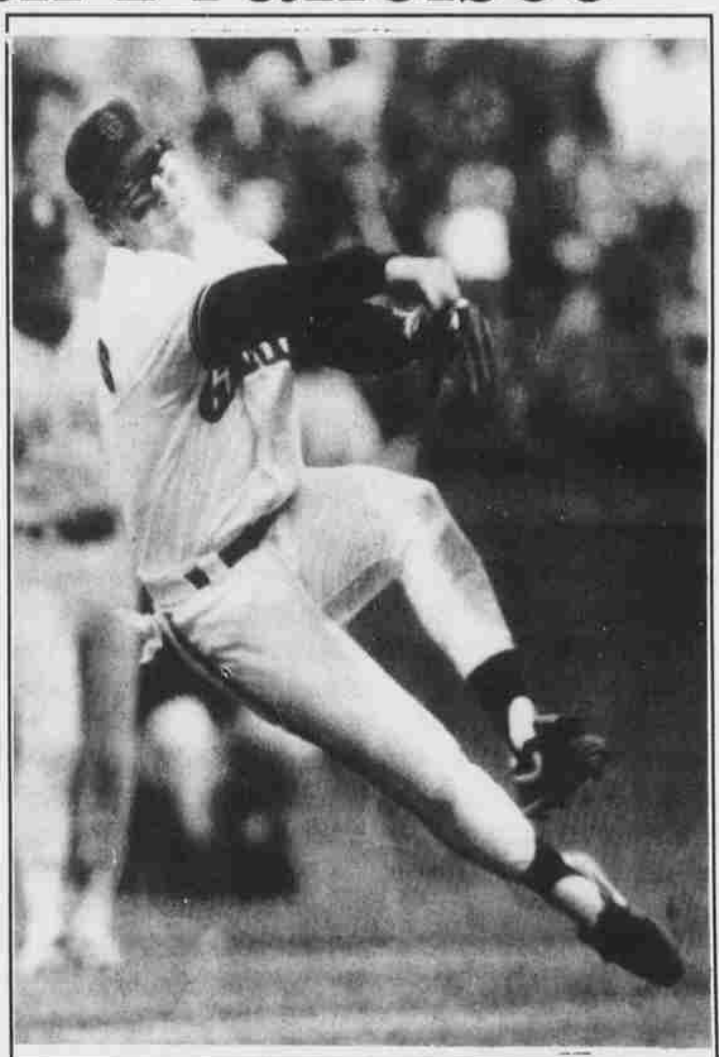
bat .351 with 25 home runs and 89 RBI's in 57 games and become a consensus first team all-american selection by Baseball America, The Sporting News and Collegiate Baseball.

Williams left UNLV following his junior year after being the third overall selection in the major league baseball draft by the Giants.

He has added milestones to his career in San Francisco. In 1990 he broke the record for most runs batted in by a third baseman with 122, eclipsing Mel Ott's 1938 record of 116. A year later he broke the Giants' record for home runs by a third baseman with 34. And he won a Gold Glove Award that year too.

Williams said his success is partly because of his days at UNLV.

"It was enjoyable," Williams said of his UNLV experience. "It was definitely a highlight of my baseball career."



AP PHOTO

Giants' third baseman Matt Williams makes another superb play at Candlestick Park.