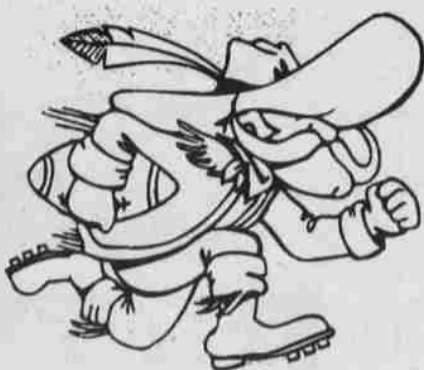


SPORTS

REBEL
YELL



UNLV vs. UNR
Saturday,
October 2, at
Reno
1 p.m. Mackey
Stadium

Gut check time for Rebels



BY CHRIS JONES
SPORTS COLUMNIST

As September comes to a close, the UNLV football team must face the fact that they should be undefeated.

A botched option play by quarterback Bob Stockham and a blown Nick Garritano field goal cost the Rebels a season-opening upset of then-22nd-ranked Clemson.

Week two saw UNLV collapse in the second half at UTEP, blowing a 24-7 third-quarter lead. The Rebels had control of the game, then gave up 34 unanswered points to a team that won only one game the year before.

The week three home opener saw UNLV rally from a seven-point halftime deficit to defeat Central Michigan 33-20. Led by backup quarterback Jason Davis, the second-half effort was some of the best football the team has played all year and led to the team's lone victory of the season.

Last Saturday, Coach Jim Strong saw his squad give up 106 penalty yards and four turnovers to Kansas State. An unrecovered fumble by linebacker Jason Medlock and a huge, tackle-breaking touchdown reception by the Wildcats Andre Coleman were the key plays as UNLV was outscored 26-6 in the second half on their way to a 36-20 loss and a 1-3 record.

There were some definite problems in each of these games. If Strong hopes to go anywhere this season (or remain at UNLV for the next), he needs to fix them before Big West Conference play begins this Saturday in Reno.

The first concern is sustaining the level of play throughout the game. The Rebels have yet to play an entire four quarters of football

this season. They have outplayed every opponent at one time or another, yet still made enough mistakes to allow the other team back into the game. This can't continue if UNLV plans to play in the Las Vegas Bowl later in the year.

The next concern is consistency in the offense. There have been times when Stockham looks like a great quarterback, standing in the pocket and finding the open receiver. There have also been times

The final concern is in the minds of the team. Despite last season's winning record, there are still doubts about this UNLV team and its place in college football.

receiver. There have also been times when tailback Omar Love has run over, around, and through the defense at will. We have the three best receiving threats in the conference with Demond Thompkins, Henry Bailey and newcomer Randy Gatewood and a sterling offensive line. So why can we only score an average of 23 points per game?

The final concern is in the minds of the team. Despite last season's winning record, there are still doubts about this UNLV team and its place in college football. Last year's 6-5 mark was so underwhelming to the rest of the country that *Sports Illustrated* ranked the Rebels 93rd in the nation. A 1-3 start does nothing to boost the confidence of a team still learning how to win.

Will a win at intrastate rival Reno cure all the Rebel's ails?

No.

But it will go a long way to restoring some pride and confidence that the team so desperately needs. Bringing home the Fremont Cannon, a ceremonial artillery piece that goes to the winner of the UNLV-UNR game, will do a great deal towards bringing back the team's self esteem. And a "W" on the scoreboard wouldn't hurt, either.

Despite the slow start, UNLV has the talent to win the Big West. Conference play will determine if the Rebels are an up-and-coming program or just another flash in the pan.

UNLV battles Nevada for bragging rights and the Fremont Cannon

BY SCOTT GULBRANSEN
STAFF WRITER

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas and the University of Nevada don't seem to like each other.

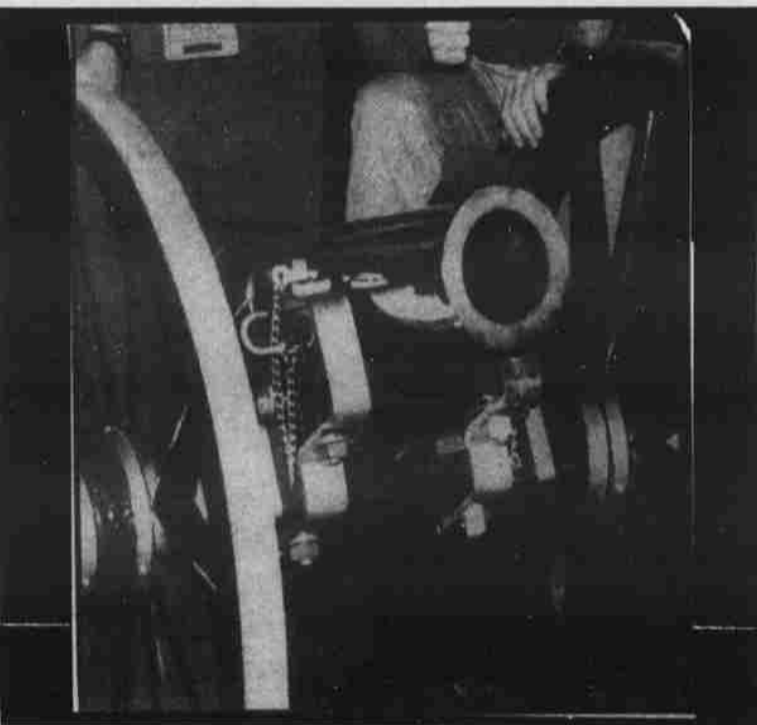
The school in Reno has a long, rich history while UNLV has one of the world's most appealing locations for a university. Arguments can be heard all over the Silver State as to which school is better.

Saturday that question will be answered—on the football field.

The history of the rivalry between UNLV and UNR, which insists on being called Nevada, is rich in tradition. The whole idea came about when UNLV's first football coach, Bill Ireland, decided a trophy would be a good incentive for both teams. Since the first "cannon" game, the Rebels have won the trophy nine times while the Wolf Pack has also snatched it nine times.

Though the two schools first met on the football field in 1969, the first game for the replica Fremont Cannon was played Thanksgiving Day, 1970. The Rebels pounded Reno, 42-30. The last battle for the pride of Fremont was in 1992 when the Wolf Pack beat the Rebels at the Sam Boyd Silver Bowl, 14-10.

The teams have played annually since 1969 with breaks in 1980-



UNLV SID
The Rebels' (1-3) travel to Reno to face upstate rival Nevada for the Fremont Cannon. Game time is 1 p.m. The Wolf Pack are 2-2.

82, '84, '86 and '88. The all-time series is tied at nine wins apiece.

Nevada's Sports Information Director Paul Stuart alluded to the importance of the game in the Reno area.

"Since UNLV always whips us in basketball, this is our chance to compete with our intrastate rival."

- Paul Stuart
UNR Sports Information Director

"The Fremont Cannon is the nicest trophy in the country," Stuart said. "Since UNLV always whips us in basketball, this is our chance to compete with our intrastate rival."

The cannon is a replica of John

C. Fremont's howitzer that was dumped on his westward trek in 1843. The cannon was abandoned in a Sierra Nevada snowdrift. The replica itself is valued at over \$20,000.

But perhaps the biggest prize that arises from the UNLV-UNR matchup is momentum. For either team to win the coveted cannon is a tremendous emotional lift. It carried UNR to the Big West title in 1992, its first year in the league.

Along with the mystique surrounding the cannon, there is also the actual game. The Rebels and the Wolf Pack are both coming off tough losses. The Pack lost at home to Northern Illinois, 46-42, in their conference opener while UNLV fell at Kansas State, 36-20.

This will be the first Big West conference game for the Rebels.



About the Wolf Pack

Jeff Horton was a former assistant coach at UNLV from 1990-91 under Rebel head football coach Jim Strong...Horton graduated from Nevada in 1981...The overall series record is 9-9 between both teams...Nevada's school president, Joe Crowley, is the president of the NCAA...This is Nevada's first Big West Conference game of the 1993 season...Last season, the Wolf Pack finished in first place in the conference with a 5-1 record...At the 1992 Las Vegas Bowl, Nevada fell to the Mid-American Conference champion Bowling Green, 35-34 at the Sam Boyd Silver Bowl.

Source: UNLV Sports Information

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