

Commentary

Family and Tradition

The hiring of Tim Grgurich as men's basketball coach is, quite simply, a link to the past.

After more than two years of alienation, former Rebel stars are now ready to embrace the program that nurtured them.

Why, even Monday, former players

and coaches were among the visitors at the Rebels' practice in the North Gym. Among them: Ken Gibson, Travis Bice and Keith Starr. And sightings of the Shark himself, Jerry Tarkanian, were reported Tuesday.

Gibson, who redshirted under Tark and Gerg in 1991-92 before playing two years for Rollie Massimino, said Grgurich's hiring was the best remedy for a struggling program.

"I think he's going to get the community back, involved, and get some support for these guys," said Gibson, now an assistant varsity coach at Green Valley High. "The last couple years we haven't had the support from the community. And I think we're going to get that back. That's what makes Rebel basketball so fun."

"I can remember back my first year here when Gerg and Coach Tark were here," Gibson said. "The stands were full, people were excited and it was great. I think it's going to get back to that point. It may take a year or two but I really think Coach Gerg can bring it back."

Some would say Grgurich's hiring would open the door for former Rebel stars to come back and make cameos at practices and games.

"...that would be wonderful if I am a link for the old guys to come back," Grgurich said. "I can't answer that. They know I need them. They know I want them. I told them that the team wants them. They need to come back, put their arms around these guys and say 'let's go, we're supporting you all the way.' I think that's what these guys need."

According to the *Las Vegas Sun*, two of the program's most famous alumni are more than ready, willing and able.

"...if they bring Coach Gerg back, you know I'll be back," Charlotte Hornet Larry Johnson said before Massimino was bought out. "The man cares about people, not just

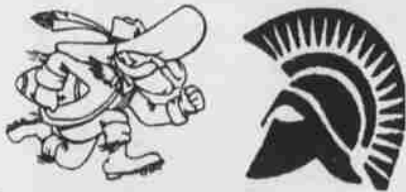
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PAUL GUTIERREZ

Back to Business

Football: Rebels ready for Spartans after bye week



BY KEVIN LEWIS
STAFF WRITER

The UNLV football team has put away the iced teas and sunglasses after a bye week to prepare for invading the San Jose State Spartans (1-1 Big West Conference, 1-6 overall) Saturday at 7 p.m. at Sam Boyd Stadium.

The Throwin' Rebels (3-0, 4-3) are in second place behind Nevada, and gives them a chance to

focus on the stretch run of the Big West race.

"The bye week came at a good time in the season," Rebel coach Jeff Horton said. "We were a little beat up and coming off three emotional wins and a tough loss at Tulsa. It gives us time to regroup and refocus on what we need to do."

UNLV trainer Kyle Wilson reports that Brittney Posey has a bruised knee and a sprained an-

kle from Tuesday's practice but should be fine for Saturday.

San Jose State coach John Ralston and his Spartans have played a rugged non-conference schedule that included three Pac-10 teams along with Baylor and Fresno State. Last week, they were pounded by Nevada, 42-10, and find themselves at the bottom of the Big West in passing defense, and now face an eager Rebels' offense looking to get back on track.

"If anybody would have told us that Nevada would have done that to us," coach John Ralston said in a release, "I would have

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Buses Ready To Take Students

Free transportation to Saturday's football game will be provided by the UNLV Athletic Department and Ray & Ross Bus Transport.

Buses will leave the Dining Commons parking lot at 5:30 p.m. and return at approximately 10:30 p.m.

The first 100 students able to present a valid school ID will be permitted on the buses.

For more information contact John Purdie, Residential life coordinator, at 895-3089.

Grgurich Out to Restore Rebel Pride

Basketball: New head coach wants to repair fractured community

BY JOHN SANTANA
STAFF WRITER

Most college basketball coaches at big-time programs this time of year talk about conference championships and NCAA tournament berths.

New UNLV coach Tim Grgurich has different goals.

Instead, Grgurich wants to rebuild Rebel pride, and is working to bring the community back to Rebel basketball.

"We just gotta work hard and be ourselves," Grgurich said before Monday's practice. "We have to bring the students, the athletes and the university back together. We want to get through to the community that the kids need your support."



Tim Grgurich

Grgurich, 50, had been an assistant with the NBA's Seattle SuperSonics for the last two years. He spent 12 years as an assistant to former Rebel coach Jerry Tarkanian. Prior to that, he spent five years as head coach at the University of Pittsburgh, his alma mater, going 71-70.

Gerg's First Act: Halloween Hoops

The UNLV men's basketball team, under the direction of new head coach Tim Grgurich, will make its first public appearance Sunday night with Halloween Hoops.

The events will raise food

and money for the United Way.

Admission will be either a canned food item or a money donation.

Halloween Hoops will begin at 8 p.m. at the Thomas & Mack Center.

But listening to him, you'd think he earned his physical education degree from UNLV.

"The Runnin' Rebels are very special to me and it's an honor to come back," he said.

Part of restoring pride in UNLV basketball is bringing back former Rebel player and assistant coach David Rice as his top assistant.

"Dave's a special guy," Grgurich said. "He wasn't a top player, but he just did a great job for us. He brings back a special thing. He knew he had to work hard."

Rice's presence will also help Grgurich stress academics to the players. During his playing days

at UNLV, Rice was a Rhodes Scholar candidate.

"I always preach education," Grgurich said. "You have to take advantage of your education. This is how they pay you in college. We have to tell them they can all be good students."

While Grgurich may get Las Vegas excited about Rebel basketball again, he faces some serious obstacles to returning UNLV to the NCAA Tournament after a three-year absence.

NCAA sanctions have limited the Rebels to just nine home games (all against Big West opponents)

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Scoring Drought Continues

Soccer: Rebels shut out for school-record ninth time

BY STEVE SEELIG
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Another shutout. Another loss. Another record set.

The UNLV soccer team was held scoreless for a school-record ninth time this season in a 1-0 loss to Cal State Northridge. This after 2-0 loss at UC Santa Barbara Friday.

"I can't understand it," Rebel coach Barry Barto said. "The talent is there, but just can't seem to generate any offense."

"We were really hoping that these two games would serve as building blocks in our pursuit of finishing the season at .500."

The Rebels are now 5-11 overall, 1-5 in Mountain Pacific Sports Federation, Pacific Division play.



PHOTO LESLIE LITCHFIELD
The goal has been distant for P.J. Roberts and the Rebels, who have been shut out nine times.

"We need to get it together," freshman Damon Bradshaw said. "Once we get the offense going, we'll be fine."

The Rebels matched up well against Santa Barbara, but were lacking the cohesiveness the team displayed earlier in the season, Barto said.

"We have lost some of our enthusiasm," he said.

Coming home to face the Matadors wasn't much help.

The lone score came at the 18:55 mark from Cal State Northridge's Steven Faggiolly.

"It hard to lose 1-0, 2-1, whatever, on a regular basis," Barto said. "We've been competitive in most of our matches. It's not like we've been blown out or anything."

The Rebels finish up the season this weekend in the UNLV Rebel Invite, hoping to salvage some pride from this season.

"We just want to finish the season with a couple of wins," Barto said.

The Rebels will face Maryland-Baltimore County Saturday at noon, and Sacramento State Sunday at noon.