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That way, they could be easily mistaken for UNLV across the nation. You mention the word "Nevada" to a sports enthusiast anywhere outside Northern Nevada, and they'll immediately think of UNLV. No joke.

UNR subscribes to the Gatorade theory - rather than wanting to be like Mike, they want to be like UNLV. And why not? While UNLV was invited to join the Western Athletic Conference and become part of the largest league in the nation in 1996, Reno was snubbed, left for dead in the Big West.

And when the Battle for Nevada gets underway Saturday at Sam Boyd Stadium, more than just bragging rights will be at stake. So will respect. And, possession of the Fremont Cannon, a prize UNLV has not held since Ickey Woods led the nation in rushing in 1987.

It has come full circle. It's Old Lion vs. Young Lion. North vs. South. Blue vs. Red. Darth Vader vs. Obi Wan.

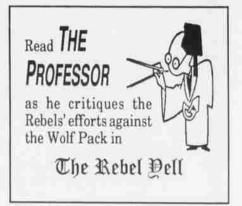Ever since Nevada Southern University alienated the North by becoming UNLV and moving on to greater success, both in the classroom and in the athletic arena, bitterness and jealousy have reared their ugly heads in the form of a Wolf Pack.

The Old Lion is still game, but he's a little long in the tooth and gray in the beard. The Young Lion is, simply put, the hungrier of the two.

Rebels 42, 'Pack 40. Get over it.

—Paul Gutierrez is
sports editor
at The Rebel Yell.