

Commentary



Kebu Stewart

Under the Big Top

All that was missing was a tent.

Ever since Rebel basketball coach Tim Gergurich went down with an undisclosed illness, he has been adamant in his stance: "I don't want this to turn into a circus."

Too late.

Ward on the street is both Ringling

Brothers and Barnum & Bailey have requested their respective big tops be placed over the Thomas & Mack.

And it's not just because Gerg is well enough to run marathon practices but too sick to sit on the bench during games. It goes much deeper than that.

Even before Leonard Nimoy was summoned to bring his campy '70s TV docudrama to the North Gym to film "In Search Of ... Kebu Stewart," the program had become somewhat of a laughingstock in the eyes of the nation.

Some will point directly to Stewart.

But the whole year has been slightly off kilter from the start, ever since Gerg was hired a week after the rest of the country began practice.

The latest circus truly began though, when the losing did. An 0-4 start preceding Gerg's exhaustion got the ball rolling.

Then Lawrence Thomas transferred to Hofstra, the injuries mounted with the losses and frustration, Howie Landa stepped down as acting head coach, leaving two assistants running things, and the A.P.B. for Kebu went out.

But it's all under control now. At least that's what they tell us.

Stewart has been diagnosed with acute patella tendinitis, the same thing Anderson Hunt used to have when he was at UNLV. Seven to 10 days of rest have been prescribed for 1994's Big West Player of the Year. And even though

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PAUL GUTIERREZ

In This Corner

An Act of Defiance

Basketball: Lady Rebels host NMSU this weekend

BY KEVIN C. LEWIS
STAFF REPORTER

After Friday's 71-64 win that knocked UC Irvine out of first place in the Big West, UNLV's women's basketball team suffered another mental relapse in Sunday's ugly 59-54 loss to visiting Cal State Fullerton.

"It wasn't as if the coaching staff didn't prepare them for Fullerton," UNLV coach Jim Bolla said. "There were no surprises to us at all. Fullerton didn't do anything we didn't know they would do. We had a bunch of breakdowns."

The Lady Rebels fought back from a first-half deficit of 14 points to trail 55-54 with two minutes remaining in the game. The nation's leading scorer, Koko Lahanas (26.1 ppg) was held to eight second-half points to lead the Lady Titans to a 39-28 lead at the intermission.

The Lady Rebels awoke from their slumber to allow Fullerton only 20 second-half points, but stalled their defensive effort with 29 turnovers and impatient shot selection.

"We had a time out and told them we didn't want a jump shot, and they went out and shot two jumpers," Bolla said. "For whatever reason, they are not listening to what we tell them and it shows. I don't know why. I don't have an answer to them not listening. It's been that way a lot."

If it was an isolated act of defiance, then the failed lob passes was open rebellion.

"We have a no-lob rule, but we must have had six turnovers on lobs," Bolla said. "They don't understand we've looked at this and know the percentages. There are reasons for what we tell



PHOTO BY HYUN-HO HAN
Sophomore guard Loriessa Randle turns the corner on a pick set by senior center Tracy Titus in Friday's win.

them."

The Lady Rebels were led by LeAnn Kazmer and Tracy Titus with 11 points each. Titus had 16 rebounds in only 26 minutes of playing time.

In the Irvine win, Gwynn Hobbs scored 34 points on 13 of 19 shooting, including 4 of 7 on 3-pointers. The Lady Rebels led the entire contest and opened up a 14-point lead in the first half.

"It seemed that we were ready to make a move in the Big West race," said Bolla, who must prepare for New Mexico State at home on Saturday. "But the key is you can't play like that against

anybody and expect to win."

The Lady Rebels fell to 6-5 in the Big West, 7-11 overall.

UNLV leads the series against NMSU 12-5 and defeated the the Roadrunners 74-68 at Las Cruces, N.M., Jan. 14. The Lady Rebels finished with 3 players in double figures: Hobbs had 21 points, Angie White added a career-high 20 and Kazmer finished with a double-double of 15 points and 10 rebounds.

As the ninth-winningest active Division I coach, Bolla needs only eight more victories to reach the 300-win plateau.

UNLV Upset by NMSU

Tennis: Men fall to 2-3, 1-2

BY MICHAEL MELISSA
STAFF REPORTER

Something was missing from the UNLV men's tennis team Sunday.

Could it have been the victory that should have been there, or was it the fact that No. 41 ranked Roger Pettersson was absent from the lineup?

Either way, the Rebels (2-3 overall, 1-2 in the Big West) lost a close match, 4-3, to New Mexico State, without Pettersson, who was in bed, sick. The Rebels, who are currently ranked No. 32 in the nation, fell to an unranked team for the first time since 1992.

"New Mexico State is a lot tougher than people think," coach Larry Easley said. "They have a lot of experience while we got some young team."

Luke Smith was promoted to the No. 1 spot, and lost a tough three-game match. With his left



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LACY

First-year player Brett Taitz competed Sunday against New Mexico State at the Frank and Vicki Fertitta Tennis Complex.

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Depleted Rebels Gain Road Win

Basketball: UNLV splits on So. Cal road trip

BY SEAN DEFRANK
STAFF REPORTER

After two consecutive road losses, the UNLV men's basketball team discovered what it needed to do to win—sit four starters.

Starting the weirdest line-up seen in years, if not ever, the Runnin' Rebels went to Cal State-Fullerton and beat the Titans 69-53 Saturday. The win improved UNLV's record to 8-9, 5-6 in the Big West.

"I really expected to win," interim coach Cle Edwards said. "I thought that we would have a great team effort."

With starters Reggie Manuel, Patrick Savoy and Clayton Johnson on the bench because they missed Friday's practice due to injuries, and Kebu Stewart back in Las Vegas with knee problems, UNLV played as a true team to beat the Titans, something they couldn't do at home on Dec. 17, when they lost to CSF 82-80.

The Rebels started walk-on Wes Reid, former walk-on Mike Curtis, freshman Eric Lee, Damian Smith and Sunshine Smith. Savoy, Manuel and Johnson checked in the game with the game tied at seven.

Manuel only played four minutes before hurting his right ankle when he was fouled driving to the basket. He is listed as probable for this weekend.

D. Smith continued his improved play by leading UNLV with 19 points. Johnson contributed 17, while Savoy finished with 13, plus a career-high 13 rebounds. Lee also set a career-high with 11 boards.

Titan star Winston Peterson, averaging 18.2 ppg, was held to 13, two in the second half, largely due to the defensive play of Reid, who guards Stewart daily in practice.

"That was probably the easiest thing I had to do," Reid said about guarding Peterson. "Not that I'm dogging him as a player, but Kebu's a lot harder to guard."

On Feb. 2, UNLV was outplayed in every aspect of the game as they lost at UC Irvine 82-69.

The Anteaters were led by Kevin Simmons (21 points), Chris Brown (20 points, 6-10 3-pointers) and Raimonds Miglinieks (a school-record 17 assists).

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