

# Rebels Looking to Rebound Against San Jose State

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After three consecutive losses at home, the UNLV men's basketball team looks to rebound with road games at San Jose State Saturday, and at Pacific Monday.

The Runnin' Rebels (9-13, 5-9 in the Big West) are currently in seventh place in the conference. With only four regular-season games remaining, the Rebels need to look ahead to the confer-

ence tournament.

"We have to win now," UNLV guard Damian Smith said. "There's no tomorrow. ...As long as we finish above seventh, we'll be fine going into the tournament."

If UNLV finishes any worse than sixth place, the team would have to play an extra preliminary game in the tournament. That would mean the Rebels would have to win four games, instead of three, in the tournament to make it to the NCAA tournament.

The Rebels are one full game behind UC Santa Barbara, a team UNLV faces in the Thomas & Mack Center on March 2, and just a half game ahead of UC Irvine and Cal State Fullerton.

San Jose State is currently 2-20 on the season, 1-13 in conference, and could be just what the Rebels need to boost their confidence.

UNLV pounded the Spartans 80-59 in the T&M on Jan. 28. In that game, Clayton Johnson scored 24 points to lead the Rebels. Kebu

Stewart added 19 points and 14 rebounds.

Junior guard Brad Quinet leads the Spartans, averaging 12.3 ppg. Quinet had a season-high 34 points in San Jose State's 86-77 win at CSF on Saturday.

Other probable starters include sophomore guard Tito Addison (7.9 ppg), senior center Mike Brotherton (8.9 ppg), freshman forward Marmet Williams (5.7 ppg, 2.6 apg) and junior forward Darren Greene (8.0 ppg, 5.4 rpg).

Pacific (13-9, 8-6) fell to the Rebels, 83-78, at the T&M on Jan. 26.

Reggie Manuel had 23 points to lead the Rebels. Stewart contributed 18 points and a season-high 17 rebounds.

Junior forward Charles Jones, third in the Big West with a 17.6 ppg average, leads the Tigers.

Other probable starters include senior forward Marzell Clayton (8.1 ppg), sophomore center Vic Trierweiler (4.9 ppg).

## Basketball

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from the field, including 45 percent from 3-point range, but allowed the Aggies to shoot 55 percent.

UNLV led 95-91 with 2:09 left after a Patrick Savoy steal led to a Clayton Johnson slam dunk, but went scoreless the remainder of the game.

The Rebels battled back from an 11-point deficit with 16:05 left in the second half, taking a 85-81 lead with 1:24 left after Reggie Manuel hit two free throws.

NMSU tied the game at 85 with 25 seconds left on a lay up by guard Rodney Walker. The Rebels had a final chance to win in regulation, but Manuel fired up a wild shot with under five seconds left to send the game into overtime.

"I didn't know how much time was on the clock," Manuel said.

Edwards said the play was designed to go to guard Damian Smith, who had a career-high 28 points. Smith hit 9-13 shots, including 8-12 3-pointers.

"(Manuel's) man came out and rushed out towards him," Edwards said. "(Manuel) fell down. He could have kicked the ball to Damian. I guess he didn't see him."

Johnson rebounded from a 1-15 shooting night against UNR by finishing with a career-high 25 points. Savoy added 17 points and 10 rebounds.

UNLV finished with a season-high 14 3-pointers on 31 attempts. The Rebels also finished with a season-high 23 assists, seven by Manuel, but committed 20 turnovers.

The Aggies (19-7, 10-4) had six players score in double figures, led by Crafton Ferguson's 20. Daniel Hicks had 16, while Walker finished with 15.

On Saturday, UNLV shot a season-low 30 percent from the field, 23 percent in the first half, while allowing UNR to shoot 52 percent in the 73-57 loss.

UNLV also shot a season-low 21 percent (6-29) from 3-point range.

The Rebels took an early 3-0 lead, their only of the game, before trailing 13-7 with 14:20 left.

UNLV then went scoreless over the next 11:05, allowing the Wolf Pack to take a 36-10 lead, before Savoy hit a 3-pointer to the sarcastic cheers of the T&M crowd.

The Rebels closed the first half with an 8-0 run to carry a 39-18 deficit into halftime. Any momentum built up was nullified when UNR scored the first seven points of the second half.

"When you shoot that poorly in the first half, and then come out in the second half, and you start off by giving them seven quick points, it's hard to come back," Edwards said.

The Wolf Pack got their lead as large as 29 points, and still led by 25 with two minutes left.

The Rebels closed out the game with a 13-4 run as Edwards refused to clear the bench, instead choosing to go with the best available players.

"We wanted to try to keep those

guys focused so they know that you have to play hard no matter what," Edwards said.

When asked about the prospect of fights breaking out due to frustration, Edwards downplayed the possibility.

"I didn't see any of that," Edwards said. "Did you see any fights?"

UNR coach Pat Foster supposedly did. According to Foster, who received his 300th career coaching victory with the win, Kebu Stewart punched walk-on Kris Hackbusch after the game.

It was the Wolf Pack's third straight win over the Rebels.

Brian Green had 22 points to

lead the Wolf Pack. Faron Hand chipped in with 18, while Eathan O'Bryant had 10 points and 10 assists.

Stewart led the Rebels with 19 points and 12 rebounds. Savoy finished with 13 points and nine boards.

UNLV outrebounded UNR 44-35, but 24 of those came on the offensive end, mostly due to the Rebels' inept shooting. UNLV also committed 25 turnovers.

On Feb. 16, the Rebels found another way to lose, this time leading throughout most of the game before ultimately falling 76-72.

Utah State never led in the

game until Corwin Woodard, the Big West Player of the Week, hit two free throws with 13:39 left to give the Aggies a 48-46 lead.

Utah State extended that lead to 72-65 with two minutes left, but a Manuel 3-pointer and Johnson layup cut the lead to 72-70 with 55 seconds remaining.

Woodard and Eric Franson both made two free throws down the stretch to clinch the victory, the first ever for Utah State at the T&M. The Aggies went 16-16 from the line in the second half.

"It's one of the biggest wins I've ever been associated with as a player," Franson said. "When the conference championship's

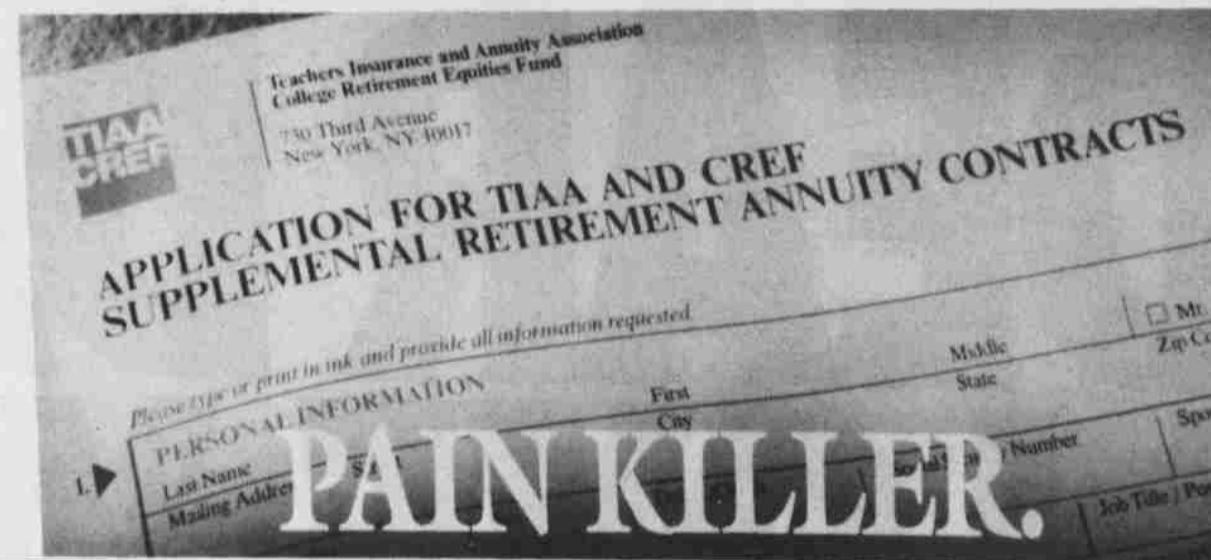
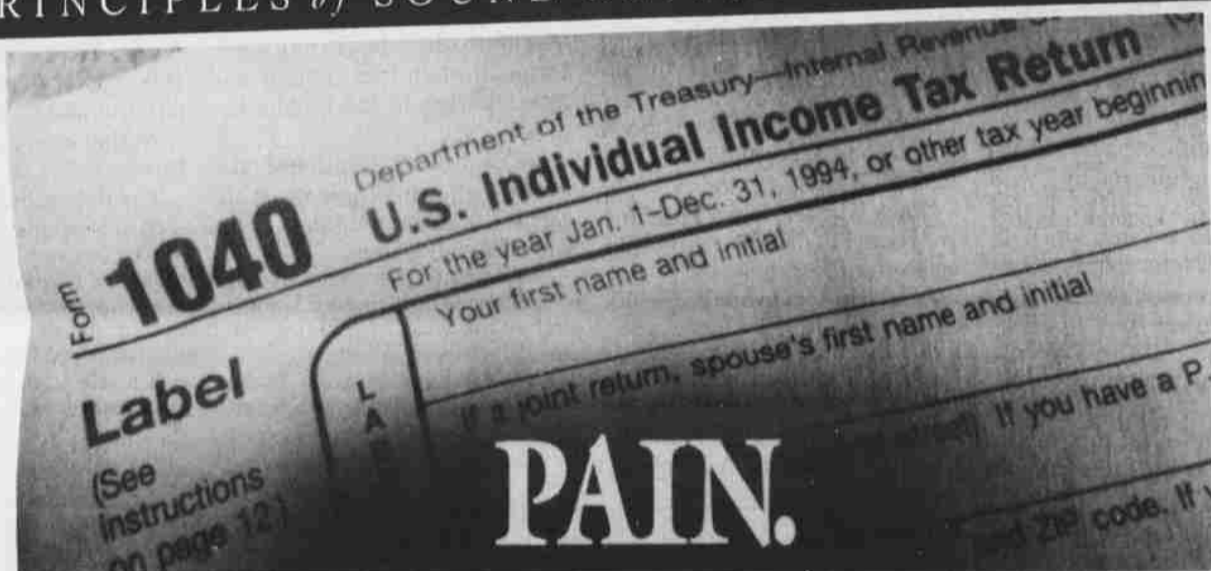
on the line—to go on the road and win a game like this, against this kind of talent, is really big for us."

The Rebels hit 49 percent from the field (27-55), but only 22 percent from behind the 3-point line (5-23).

Franson, who was leading the Big West in scoring (19.7) and rebounding (10.3) through Monday, helped cement his status as Player of the Year with 23 points.

"It helps our team more than it helps me," Franson said. "We showed that we have a lot of character on this team. Whatever comes for me is fine, but the team comes first obviously."

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