

Commentary

The Unanswered Question

It just doesn't make any sense.

Why was an ailing Tim Grgurich on the recruiting trail if he didn't have anything left to give? Why did he keep UNLV and its basketball program hostage for so long before resigning last Friday? And why did he bail on the players who had been through so much emotional hell this chaotic season?

It doesn't make sense.

If it was a truly a life-threatening situation, as they'd have us believe, then Gerg's resigning is understandable. The pressures and expectations were immense. Hell, we here at *The Rebel Yell* even put Gerg's head onto Marty McFly's body with the theme of "Back To The Future" in our preview issue. And there is talk that Gerg couldn't exorcise the ghosts of the Tark-Maxson Feud that led to his health and possible mental problems. The man was seriously sick.

But if he accepts another coaching job before the start of the next collegiate basketball season, Gerg will commit a bigger crime against the UNLV program, campus and city than Rollie Massimino ever dreamed of.

The reasoning?

Ever since he came back Oct. 22 as the man to bring Runnin' Rebel basketball back to national respectability, Grgurich spoke of what it meant to be a "true Rebel," having "Rebel pride" and utilizing that "us against the world" mentality. It's what the great Rebel teams of the early '90s thrived on - controversy.

Evidently, that lifestyle is what cost Gerg his health.

So if it truly is a health issue, enjoy the lull, spend time with your family, get well. But don't talk about "Rebel pride" and what it means to be a "true Rebel" if you take another job before the start of next season.

Why the time frame?

If Gerg truly cared about the program and the kids involved, he could have simply stayed away for the summer and rested until it was time to start practicing. Rest up and come back with a vengeance next season.

He did, after all, receive

Please see Corner—14



In This Corner

PAUL GUTIERREZ

Rebels Rebirth!

Basketball: UNLV one of league's hottest teams entering BWC Tourney

BY SEAN DEFRANK
STAFF REPORTER

The real season begins today. Forget the coaching carousel and the Kebu Stewart sideshow. Those are artifacts from a season that officially ended Friday morning.

It's tournament time now—March Madness—a time that can make or break a team's season.

It's the kind of time the UNLV men's basketball team would like to put to good use to forget the past events of this season.

What would a Big West Conference Tournament crown, and the automatic NCAA bid that comes with it, mean to this team?

"It would take away all the adversity that went on all this year," senior guard Reggie Manuel said. "This is a new season; and we're 2-0 right now."

While some players are able to put the past behind them more easily, others said nothing will erase the turmoil from their minds.

"It won't really make us forget," junior forward Clayton Johnson said. "We've been through hell this year."

Whether or not the Rebels forget the events of this past season one thing is clear; all the adversity has brought this group of players closer together.

"That's the only way you can make it through things like that" freshman center Eric Lee said. "You've got to be together as a

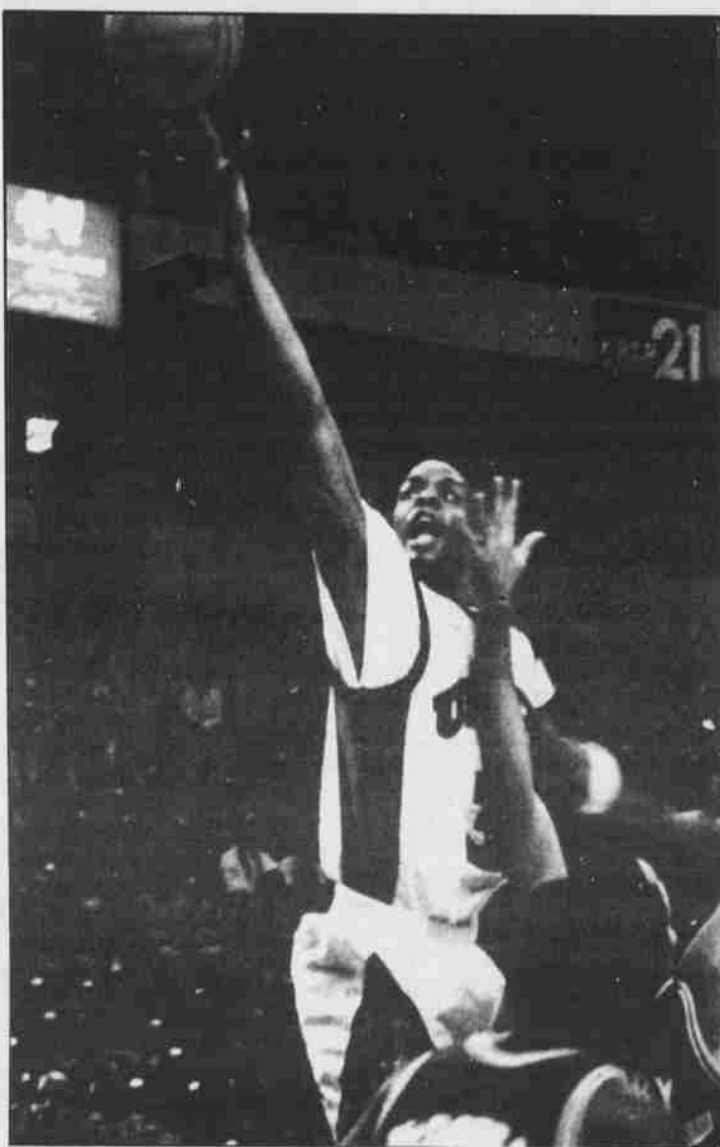


PHOTO BY HYUN-HO HAN

If there's one thing Reggie Manuel can do, it's finger-roll for the deuce. He's being looked at more as a leader this week.

team. If you're not together as a team—you're going to fall by the wayside."

The Runnin' Rebels (11-15, 7-11 in conference) enter today's 12:35 p.m. first-round contest at the Thomas & Mack Center as the No. 7 seed. They face the No. 10 seed, San Jose State (4-22, 3-15), with the winner advancing

to play No. 2 seed New Mexico State Friday at noon.

Today's game marks the first time the Runnin' Rebels will play a first-round game.

With UNLV essentially playing an eight-man rotation, and facing the prospect of four games in

Please see Rebirth—15

Hats in the Ring

BY PAUL GUTIERREZ
SPORTS EDITOR

My, how times change.

In the weeks following Jerry Tarkanian's departure as coach of the Runnin' Rebel basketball program in the spring of 1992, the UNLV administration and athletic department had to fall back on an advisor to fill the slot - Rollie Massimino.

Candidates were few and far between and no one wanted to touch it, what with the looming NCAA sanctions. Candidates then included Utah's Rick Majerus and Florida State's Pat Kennedy among others. But one-by-one they pulled their respective names from consideration. The UNLV situation was too much of a powder keg waiting to blow. So thus began "Rollie's Run in the Sun."

And after Massimino accepted the \$1.88 million buyout in mid-October, there really was only one candidate—Tim Grgurich.

But now, less than a week after Gerg's resignation, names are being thrown around with abandon.

"A lot of people are pursuing the job," UNLV Director of Athletics Jim Weaver said Wednesday afternoon. "But officially, we have not contacted anyone."

Weaver said he, along with the Associate AD David Chambers and President Kenny Guinn, are doing the

Please see Hats—15

Bolla Looking for Two Solid Halves

Basketball: Lady Rebels will face NMSU tonight if they get past Pacific

BY KEVIN C. LEWIS
STAFF REPORTER

The UNLV women's basketball team, 11-14 overall and 10-8 in the Big West, enter the conference tournament with a No. 5 seed and squared off against fourth-seed Pacific, 18-11, 11-7, on Wednesday evening at the Thomas & Mack Center.

The Lady Rebels split their two meetings with the Lady Tigers by winning in Stockton, 88-81, before losing at the buzzer, 72-70, in the South Gym on Senior Day.

"We're pleased with our seeding," said coach Jim Bolla, who owns a 19-6 record in the tournament. "We finished the season on a high note so I'm sure we'll be fine. This is about as wide open a tournament as it could possibly be. We've beaten every team in front of us and if we put together two strong halves, we can go the distance."

Big West Women's Basketball Tournament

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	SATURDAY
Cal State Fullerton (7) 6 p.m.	UC Santa Barbara (2) 12:30 p.m.	Cal State Fullerton	Semifinals 6 p.m.
San Jose State (10)	Cal State Fullerton	UC Irvine (3) 2:30 p.m.	
All games at the Thomas & Mack Center	UC Irvine (3) 2:30 p.m.	UC Irvine	Championship 1 p.m.
	Long Beach State (6)	Pacific (4) 8 p.m.	
Nevada-Reno (8) 8 p.m.	UNLV (5)	UNLV (5)	Semifinals 8 p.m.
Hawaii (9)	Nevada-Reno	New Mexico State (1) 6 p.m.	
			NCAA Qualifier



UNLV has won five Big West tournaments under Bolla, including last year's.

Pacific enters the tournament with a three-game winning streak and five wins in six games. The Lady Tigers are 4-19 lifetime against UNLV, but their last

two wins have come on the Lady Rebels' home floor. They have never advanced to the league's title game and are coached by Melissa DeMarchi, who has a 102-96 lifetime record and 65-61 in the Big West.

UNLV finished the regular sea-

son by winning four of its last five games due to a balanced scoring attack and solid rebounding.

Senior guard Gwynn Hobbs, 15.7 ppg. and 7 apg., was named

Please see Bolla—17