

Commentary

A Breath of Fresh Air

Hey, did you hear? UNLV got a new men's basketball coach.

Yeah, so what else is new? After four coaches in seven months, it's hard to get excited about these kinds of things.

But this time it's different.

When former Massachusetts assistant Bill Bayno accepted a three-year, \$750,000-plus contract March 30, it was a breath of fresh air. No quick-fix Rollie Massimino-type agreement, no link-to-the-past Tim Grgurich-type transaction, just the hiring of a good, young coach.

Although he lacks the Division I head coaching experience President Kenny Guinn was looking for, his coaching pedigree is still impressive.

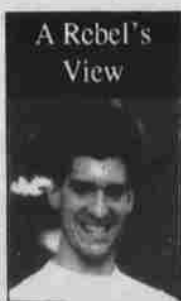
After graduating from Sacred Heart of Connecticut, where he played in two Division II NCAA tournaments, he began his coaching career as a graduate assistant under current Portland Trailblazers' coach P.J. Carlesimo at Seton Hall. He then served as associate head coach of Kansas' junior varsity team under current Indiana Pacers' coach Larry Brown.

After one season as an assistant at Baptist College in South Carolina, Bayno became John Calipari's first assistant at UMass in 1988.

At that time, UMass hadn't received any national exposure since Julius Erving left for the ABA. But due in large part to Bayno, UMass has since become a Top 10 power, landing quality players like Lou Roe and Marcus Camby.

While critics suggest future academic problems, citing past investigations of Calipari's program, those claims are unfounded. UMass has suffered no NCAA infractions due to recruiting violations or academic episodes of any kind.

Besides, if any players of questionable academic background get into UNLV, who should that reflect on — Bayno or the school's admissions de-



SEAN DEFRANK

A Rebel's View

partment?

So while some may balk at Bayno's hiring, I embrace it. While academics is certainly the primary importance of any university, the fact remains that the Runnin' Rebels put UNLV on the map. I've lived in the Las Vegas area for many years, and served in the U.S. Army for two years before coming to UNLV, and I've met many people from all over. Not once has anyone said to me, "UNLV—don't they have that killer Hotel Administration program." But everyone knows the Runnin' Rebels.

That's why Bayno's hiring was so important. This school needs young blood to lead UNLV into the Western Athletic Conference in 1996. One may even compare Bayno's hiring with the hiring of football coach Jeff Horton. Bayno, 32, brings the same hunger and intensity that Horton brought to the Throwin' Rebels. And look how well that's turned out so far.

It's time for a new basketball tradition to be started. With Jerry Tarkanian's hiring at Fresno State, Grgurich's resignation and senior guard Reggie Manuel's collegiate career over, the only link to the past still remaining is assistant coach Dave Rice, a former player under Tarkanian, and a member of the 1990 National Championship squad. But Rice was an excellent student-athlete, graduating with a 3.95 grade point average in business. He was also a Rhodes Scholar candidate, so at least he knows about books as well as boxing-out.

The seeds have been planted. Now it's time to leave them alone, and breathe in the air. Can't you smell it? It smells like a breath of fresh air.

—Sean DeFrank is a sports writer at The Rebel Yell.

Rebel Stringers Move Back into Rankings

BY MICHAEL MELISSA
STAFF REPORTER

The UNLV men's tennis team thought the weekend was going good.

The Rebels (8-9, 3-1 Big West), unranked for about two weeks, finally moved back into the ranks of the top 50 when they jumped to No. 36. The leap came after big wins against No. 38 Michigan, No. 46 Arizona and No. 48 San Diego.

But that all changed Saturday for the Rebels when they faced No. 4 Pepperdine in Malibu, Calif. Although Pepperdine picked the Rebels apart, beating them 6-1, it was far more difficult for the Waves than the score indicated.

Pettersson, who dropped three spots in the singles rankings, going from No. 17 to No. 20, raised his season record to 23-8 with the straight-set victory over Simon Aspelin, 6-3, 6-1. Pettersson, teaming up with Smith, pulled out a big doubles win as well, winning 8-4.

After that it was all Pepperdine. However, it was not too easy as Smith and Jules Pohjola went the three-set distance before losing their matches and Brett Taitz forced a second-set tiebreaker before he went down.

It was the same way on the doubles courts as the teams of Tim Blenkiron/Norton and Pohjola/Schrader both lost 8-4.

The Rebels will be home until April 11, when they will travel to No. 9 USC for their final regular season match. It will be their seventh straight match against a nationally-ranked team.

Women's Tennis

The Lady Rebels' (12-5, 3-0 in the Big West) weekend also began to shape up quite well when they moved up from No. 42 to No. 39 in the nation. This followed the big 5-4 upset over No. 29 Oklahoma State on March 26.

Then they went to Arizona. The first stop was at No. 8

Arizona State, where the Lady Rebels were quickly disposed of. Next up was No. 5 Arizona, who seemed to have a bit of trouble with the Lady Rebels. The match was highlighted for the Lady Rebels when the team of Copano/Vallin upset the fifth-ranked doubles team in the nation, Vicky Maes and Eva Maria Schurhoff, 8-6. This was only the second loss of the season for the Arizona duo, which has a 9-2 season record.

The teams of Annebro/Stuart and Kordic/Linusson both lost in doubles action. As for the singles, while keeping the Lady Wildcats on their toes, the Lady Rebels could not pull out any big victories. Vallin was the sole Lady Rebel to go distance, taking Maes to three sets, before finally going down, 1-6, 6-2, 2-6.

The Lady Rebels will close out the season at home next week by facing two Big West opponents, UC Santa Barbara and Utah.

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