

Sports Schedule

A listing of events featuring Rebel sports teams and UNLV facilities

Fri., Sept. 8
Dustdevils vs. San Jose, 7:35 p.m. Thomas & Mack
Kickin' Rebels vs. Marquette, 7 p.m. Peter Johann Memorial Field

Sat., Sept. 9
Rebels vs. Arkansas State, 7 p.m. Sam Boyd Stadium
Rebel Cross Country at CS Fullerton invitational

Sun., Sept. 10
Kickin' Rebels vs. Boston, noon. Peter Johann Memorial Field

Wed., Sept. 13
Kickin' Rebels vs. Seattle Pacific, 7 p.m. Peter Johann Memorial Field

Fri., Sept. 15
Rebel Golf at Preview International in Portland, Ore.

Sat., Sept. 16
Rebels at Eastern Michigan, 3 p.m.
Kickin' Rebels vs. Cleveland State, noon. Peter Johann Memorial Field
Rebel Cross Country at UC Irvine international

Sun., Sept. 17
Rebel Golf at Preview International
Kickin' Rebels vs. CS San Bernardino, noon. Peter Johann Memorial Field
Dustdevils vs. Portland, 7:35 p.m. Thomas & Mack

UNLV turns game over to Rice

Four turnovers and no passing attack figure in loss

JEREMY E. MARTIN
STAFF WRITER

With senior wide receiver Demond Thompkins declared academically ineligible just two days before the season opener, it is no surprise the receiver-thin football Rebels passing game sputtered in a 38-0 loss at Rice Saturday night.

The team, known for their "Throwin' Rebels" type of offensive game plan, managed only 115 yards in the air and the quarterback duo of Jared Brown and Jason Davis combined for four interceptions to go along with two fumbles.

The running and passing games combined for only 273 total yards, thanks in most part to work horse runners Tony Burton and Shannon Wilson.

The trouble started early for the Rebels. On UNLV's second offensive play, Brown threw an interception and Rice defender Warrick Franklin returned it 22 yards for a touchdown.

Despite the quick Rice score, the Rebels kept it close in the first half.

Linebacker Rossie Johnson intercepted Owl's quarterback Josh LaRocca midway through the first quarter and returned it 30 yards to the Rice 39. A Burton fumble at the 31 killed the Rebel drive.

"In the first half there were five times that we were inside the 40-yard line," Coach Jeff Horton said. "That was the biggest disappointment—being inside the 40 five times and not coming away with any points. That is going to hurt."

In the second quarter, the Owls took advantage of Franklin's second interception of a Brown pass when Yoncy Edmonds ran for a 75-yard touchdown.

The Rebels had a chance to close the gap before half time when LaRocca was sacked and stripped of the ball by Johnson. Charles Fisher recovered the ball at the Rice 44-yard line but the team could not capitalize.

The Owls took the opening drive of the second half 80 yards down the field and full-back Spencer George capped it off with a 1-yard touchdown

run that put the Rebels in a 21-0 hole.

From then on it was all Owls. They scored two more touchdowns, including a 63-yard run by Jamey Whitlock.

With one minute left in the game, the Rebels had a chance to avoid the first shutout since a 69-0 blanking by Houston at Sam Boyd Stadium in 1989. The first-team unit had a first-and-goal situation on the 1-yard line and

failed to score on four tries. "That was the most disappointing thing all night," Horton said. "We had a first and goal on the 1-yard line and could not score."

That just summed up the whole night," he said.

Despite the shaky passing game, which was reeling from the loss of Thompkins, UNLV did manage to scratch out some yards on the ground against a strong Rice running defense.

Wilson gained 79 yards on 19 carries and the Rebels finished with 156 yards on the ground. The Owls finished 21st in the nation in rushing de-

fense last year and returned nine players from a squad that allowed an average of only 120 ground yards per game.

"I was very happy with our running game," Horton said. "If we can get our passing game going I think we will be a pretty good team."

Horton was pleased with the defensive effort but cited offensive turnovers as a major factor in the loss.

"Other than two long scoring runs, (the defense) really played well," Horton said. "We gave up 24 points just from the offense turning the ball over and one fumbled punt."

"The defense was the biggest question mark coming into the game, but I thought that they played the best," he said.

Brown, who was replaced by Davis in the second quarter after throwing three interceptions, completed 6-of-13 passes for 50 yards. Davis finished with 65 yards on 5-of-14 passing and one interception.

The loss of Thompkins, the team's deep threat receiver, left a big hole that no player stepped up to fill. No Rebel receiver caught more than two balls in the game.

Thompkins, who was expected to play until Thursday night, was four credits short of the mandatory 75 percent of degree completion demanded by the NCAA, Horton said.

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— Coach Jeff Horton

Rebel linebacker gets his chance to play ball

Senior Kevin Bass ready to make his presence felt

BY RON HIBBLE
STAFF WRITER

A returning senior from the 1994 co-championship team, Kevin Bass has paid his dues as outside linebacker and a special teams member.

Playing behind Mark Byers last year did not give Bass the chance to play much at linebacker, but he made that time up with quality play on special teams. This year, because of the lack of depth on the defensive line, Bass will be playing defensive end and will continue to perform on special teams as well.

When it comes to practice, it's not just a job, it's a way of life to Bass.

"We have to learn the opposing teams' offense and their blocking schemes, which sometimes is difficult to grasp, especially when every team is different," Bass explained. "But it takes a couple days to get used to it, where they are moving and where they are going to be and what not. But one takes a lot of beating on the defensive line, because you are always down in the pits."

As far as injuries go, Kevin has never been seriously hurt. "You are going to get banged up and bruised a lot and you

are going to feel sore throughout the season, but that's the price you pay for beating your boots in the pit."

Before graduating from Blue Ridge High School, in Pine-top, Ariz., Bass was a member of three state championship squads. He also set the Yellow Jacket record for most tackles in a season with 156 and was voted to the All-Area and All-State teams in football, bas-

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—Rebel Linebacker Kevin Bass

ketball and baseball.

Bass played for two junior colleges before coming to UNLV. At Yavapai Junior College in Arizona, he played baseball for one season as a pitcher, but his heart was in football. He transferred his sophomore year to Mesa Junior College and was honored as Special Teams Player of the Year.

Bass's mental game plan is to block out everything around him and focus solely on the game at hand.

"Once you start pre-game, and what not, you don't really

think about what's in the crowd. You don't worry about outside things; you are basically thinking about being mentally focused on your job, your assignment during the game. You don't really have time to think about who's watching, you know, who's going to see me this week or whatever, basically you are thinking of what you have to do to win. Get the job done, get the victory. That is basically all that is on your mind."

Bass has determination and a strong work ethic, and can never be classified as a quitter.

At practice Bass looked like he was coming out of combat. Like his fellow teammates, the blood and sweat was proof of their dedication for a winning season.

Bass is a senior and he knows he will not be coming back next year, but those facts have not diminished his drive to give a 110 percent effort everytime he steps onto the field, be it at practice or game time.

Near the end of practice, while most of the squads were running their laps, Bass became ill and took a 30-second break. The physical stress of giving as much as he had become more than his body could sustain.

After his meeting with the devil, Bass made those laps he missed, plus a couple more for good measure.

Bass looks back at last season's game against Nevada, Reno as probably the most



PHOTO BY RON HIBBLE
Rebel linebacker Kevin Bass, number 52, runs onto the practice field to give his 110 percent.

memorable of his career.

"I really don't think I will ever forget last year when we won the Big West Title against Reno. Being a first year player here at UNLV and a trans-

fer, the only thing I had ever heard was the great battle for Nevada between Reno and UNLV. I will never forget the

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