## Basketball lands three recruits

### Coach Bayno still has three spots open

BY MICHAEL MELISSA SPORTS EDITOR

Size has been the question mark for the Rebels at the beginning of this season and it looks like it has just been answered by coach Bill Bayno.

The Rebels have just two players on the roster who are over 6-8, and six over 6-5. Two of the recruits signed today by Bayno are listed over 6-8.

The first recruiting class by Bayno includes Keon Clark of Dixie College in St. George, Utah; Issiah Epps frcm Maine Central Institute in Manning, S.C.; and Donovan Smith who comes from Chesire Academy in Connecticut. Each player signed their national letter of intent to play for UNLV next season.

Clark may appear in a Rebeljersey as early as Dec. 16 when the Rebels face Ball State. Clark is 6-11 and will provide some size underneath the boards as center.

"Keon is a big man with guard skills who is probably more comfortable facingthebasket," Bayno said. "Defensively, he can play center because of his shot blocking ability. His strength of rebounding is he can get at the ball quick and get above the rim. He has the ability to score inside and out and can run the floor."

A native of Danville, Ill., Clark also attended Irvine Valley College last year and earned first-team All-California Juco honors.

Another big man that signed on to play with the Rebels was Epps, who is listed as a 6-10 center. Epps has been regarded by most experts as one of the top five centers in prep basketball and a top 30 prospect according to a variety of different scouting services. Epps rejected offers from North Carolina, Clemson, Connecticut, Maryland and Pittsburgh.

"Issiah Epps is a 6-10, 240 pound power forward who can play both positions, forward and center," Bayno said. "He loves to score from the post and is a great athlete."

These two signings should help out sophomore center, Eric Lee, who has been projected as this season's starting center. Lee is also 6-10, and the addition of these two players a little muscle could add to a quick offense.

UNLV also added some size at the guard spot by recruiting Stewart. A 6-5 guard, Stewart averaged 25 points and seven rebounds last season. He was recruited by California, Louisville, Minnesota, Seton Hall and Washington State.

Stewart played last year in the Las Vegas Big Time Tournament and was the fifth leading scorer. The next week, Stewart was named MVP of the Grand Finale Tournament when he led his team to the championship.

"Donovan has tremendous outside shooting ability," Bayno said. "He should have a chance to provide immediate scoring and the ability to make plays in the transition and half court game."

With these additions to the UNLV basketball program, there will be some power players on the floor for the Rebels.

"Absolutely (there is going to be power). Keon has gotten stronger and Donovan likes to bang down there on the floor," Bayno said.

The Rebels, who have three guys under six feet, have the speed that seemed to be missing in the past couple of seasons. With Clayton Johnson, Warren Rosegreen, Damian Smith and Jermaine Smith all running the court, the addition of Stewart will only strengthen the core of this

# UNLV's tent folded up

#### Basketball: Last season saw Rebels in a circus light

BY MICHAEL MELISSA SPORTS EDITOR

The big top has been folded up and all the clowns are gone from last year's UNLV basketball program.

The Rebels were 12-16 last season and suffered through their second worst season in school history. The only other team to have less wins were the 1958-59 Rebels who went 5-13 in their first season.

They were also the first team in 21 years to not have a winning record, the last team to do that was John Bayer's club, who went 14-14. The following season UNLV hired a coach from Long Beach State, his name—Jerry Tarkanian.

Last season had a circus atmosphere around the team, which is nothing new to UNLV, but usually they win despite the controversy.

Against teams that they used to control, intimidate and thoroughly dominate, the Rebels looked ordinary. They lost to UNR at home, 73-57, along with Cal State Fullerton, 82-80. The Rebels also found a nemesis in New Mexico State, whom they have not beat in seven games.

They began the season with four straight losses. They won only twice in their first seven games, forcing head coach, Tim Grgurich, to enter the hospital claiming mental ex-

In comes Howie Landa, Grgurich's right hand man. Landa pilots the team back to .500 ball by going 5-2 in his tenure as UNLV's head coach. Then the team is handed over to Cle Edwards, who heads the team for the remainder of the season. They finish up at 12-16, weathering a six game losing streak and humiliating losses to San Jose State and UC Irvine. In the end, UNLV set a record for most coaches in a season with three.

The positive light in the season were the young players who possibly would not have

received the playing time they did get if the Rebels were tournament bound.

Eric Lee was arguably the biggest surprise for the Rebels last year. He averaged just 17.8 minutes per game, but managed to come away with the team lead in blocks with 19 and also shooting a respectable .453 from the floor. Lee was named to the Big West Conference All-Freshman Team last year.

The big story was the trials and tribulations of Kebu Stewart, though. He was missing for three days, he was hurt for part of the season and he wasn't attending classes. But he still scored points. Twice last season, Stewart had 31 points, against Central Florida and Cal State Northridge.

Stewart is not returning this season due academic ineligibility and has transferred to Cal State Bakersfield.

Patrick Savoy led the team in scoring with 411 points and was named to the All Big West Conference second team while Stewart had the best scoring average with 17.0 per game. The one player who really turned the season around was Damian Smith. He was fourth in points with 347, and nearly perfect from the free throw line, shooting at an .840 percentage.

The unofficial captain for this season, Clayton Johnson, showed some muscle at the small forward position along with Stewart averaging 13.2 points per game and was second with 369 points. He was also third in rebounds with

Other players who made an impact last season were Reggie Manual, Jermaine "Sunshine" Smith and Mike Curtis.

How will the Rebels fare this season? Will their fourth coach in two years be the savior everyone is expecting? Will they climb out of mediocrity and back into dominant form?

All these questions will be answered throughout the season.

One thing is for sure, the tentisfolded up, the elephants are gone and most of the clowns have left the circus.

All they have to do now is play basketball.

### Again

ride, however, with only six players returning from last season, four of which are seniors. Jermoine Brantley, Johnson, Wes Reed and Damian Smith are all being looked at to lead this team. Brantley and Reed saw limited playing time last year, while Johnson and Smith were leaders in scoring and minutes played.

Forward Patrick Savoy led the Rebels in almost every offensive category, but Johnson was right behind him. He finished up the year with 369 points and averaged 13.2 a game. Playing at the small forward spot, alongside Kebu Stewart, Johnson also grabbed 116 rebounds and led the team in playing time with 913 minutes.

Smith is the other senior on the crew who is being considered as the other leader. He is currently listed as day-to-day after having arthroscopic knee surgery to take out some cartilage and torepair a chipped bone. He should be ready for action in time with the game against Loyola-Marymount on Dec. 2.

Last season, Smith led the team in three pointers with 63 and a .432 average. He also finished up with 347 points, averaging 12.9 a game.

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While Smith is out, much of the shooting guard duties will fall on junior Jermaine "Sunshine" Smith, who had 11 points against Marathon and freshman Ben Sanders who caught the eyes of the coaches in the game with 10 points in 26 minutes played.

Anotherguard who has been turning the heads of Bayno's staff has been Dixie College transfer, Chancellor Davis. The 5-8 point guard had eight

points and six rebounds while playing 27 minutes against Marathon. Size has been the missing

Size has been the missing piece in the Rebel puzzle this season, with sophomore center, Eric Lee (6-10) and junior forward/center Eddie Corbett (6-8) being the only two players over 6-8. They will both be seeing time at center until newly signed 6-11 Keon Clark arrives at UNLV in mid-December.

Lee was one of the bright spots last season, where he was named to the Big West Conference All-Freshman team. He only averaged three points a game, but had 34 blocks which led the team. In the exhibition game, Lee displayed the new side of his game as he dished up 11 points and eight rebounds. He was also perfect from the charity line, going five for five

"We tried a lot of different things tonight," Lee said after the game. "We got down in the second half but came back."

The high flyer for the Rebels this season, other than Johnson, will be Rosegreen. During Monday's scrimmage, the small forward had 15 points, and slammed the ball home twice.

If there were any concerns about whether the Rebels will still be running or not, one does not have to look too far to find the answer. With the backfield of Davis, Reed, Sanders and the two Smiths, it will be the Runnin' Rebels again.

Last season, while Reggie Manual and Lawrence Thomas sat out with injuries, the

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Smiths filled in with solid play and kept the Rebels in most of the games.

the games.
They are not big up front, and that may be exploited by teams like Michigan, UCLA and USC, who do have big guys up front, but the Rebels could make up for it in their quickness and their defense. That's something Bayno has

season.

"We could win games with defense; we may have games with low shooting percentage, but could win with defense," Bayno said.

been talking about all pre-

The Rebels schedule this season is a fear some sight with the likes of the NCAA champions, UCLA, Michigan, USC. Not only do they face national powerhouses, they also will have to battle against Big West clubs, such as New Mexico State, Utah State and UNR.



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