

Who will be back next season?

Head coach, Bill Bayno said all along this was going to be a rebuilding year for the Rebels.

Coming off a 12-16 year, and losing five players from last

Off the Bench

MICHAEL MELISSA

year's squad, you can see why he called this a new-look club. Three of the players graduated last season (Mike Curtis, Reggie Manual and Patrick Savoy), while two of them transferred out of the program (Kebu Stewart and Lawrence Thomas).

Both sophomore Eric Lee and senior Damian Smith, who started on last year's squad, have also missed the majority of this season and both had to red-shirt due to injuries, leaving "Sunshine" Smith and Clayton Johnson as the sole survivors of the horrendous Grgrich-Landa-Edwards tag-team coaching staff.

Just two players, that's it. Makes your head kind of shake at the thought, doesn't it?

This season seemed like it may be different at the beginning of the year. But once Lee and Smith went down, Bayno was forced to dive head-first into his bench to see what he could pull out.

What came out was the tandem center job for Eddie Corbett and Tony Lane. Both have done an admirable job in the post, but neither are as physical as Lee is nor do they control the post like the 6-10 center can. Oftentimes, junior Warren Rosegreen has come down to help, pushing them into the post and many times out-leaping the center that Corbett/Lane are playing off of.

Corbett has been getting the nod to start the game and is usually spelled within the first two minutes by Lane. Corbett is averaging 2.9 points and 1.5 rebounds, while Lane is hitting the floor at a 9.6 points per-game average and 4.8 rebounds.

Rosegreen has almost doubled the total amount of rebounds (189) that Corbett and Lane have (103).

The one thing that would have helped the Rebels out at center this season would have been getting junior college transfer, Keon Clark, to

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Runnin' Rebels hit the Lane

BY MICHAEL MELISSA
SPORTS EDITOR

San Jose St. knew they had to stop Clayton Johnson and Warren Rosegreen if they wanted to stay in the game.

But they didn't figure on Tony Lane being the third threat in the Rebels' arsenal.

With the Spartans busy keeping Johnson and Rosegreen in check, the Rebels began to feed the ball down low to Lane, who laid in 30 points (a career high) in the Rebels' 84-75 win Thursday night.

"I'm just trying to help out the team," Lane said after the game. "(We) came out and played hard. Chance (Davis) did a good job getting me the ball in the post, they were all getting the ball to me, and I was hitting it."

Lane was in his own zone, hitting the bucket 14 out of 15 times, and also grabbed eight rebounds.

With the victory, UNLV snapped a four-game losing streak and moved their record to 7-11 overall (4-6 in the Big West). The Rebels are currently tied with the University of Pacific for the sixth and final spot in the Big West Tournament.

The Rebels were up by as much as 19 late in the second half and kept the Spartans at bay for most of the game. It was 36-31 at the half and the Rebels broke out on a 14-4 run to start the second frame.

With a 19 point cushion (81-62) and 1:15 to play, head coach Bill Bayno went with the third string to finish out the game. The Spartans took advantage of Rebel mistakes and were able to charge back into the game, or at least make the score look closer than the

game actually was.

The Rebels' 19-point lead evaporated to an eight-point lead and a couple of regulars were reinserted back into the lineup to help the game that seemed to be getting out of hand.

The difference for the Rebels was their ability to capitalize on 17 SJSU turnovers. With the Rebels going to a full-court press early in the game, they were able to gain more steals and better looks at the basket. Something they did not have in the UNR loss, or the other games in the past few weeks.

Starting the press early, Bayno explained, helped get the kids fired up early and work harder at getting the Spartans out of their rhythm.

"It's been something we've worked on in practice (the full-court press)," Bayno said. "But it didn't work as well as it has in practice. We hurried people a lot and forced their plays."

UNLV finished up with eight steals while the Spartans had nine, most of which came in the final minute of the game.

Bayno also did a little more experimentation in the game with Ben Sanders spelling Kevin James at the point in the first half. But Sanders did not last and Bayno went with Davis, who was the starting point guard at the beginning of the season.

The junior guard responded with a career-high 10 assists, along with three steals and seven rebounds (also a career high). Bayno had not gone to Davis for much of the UNR game and had a talk with him during a practice before Thursday's game.

"Chance and I had a heart-to-heart talk (Wednesday),"

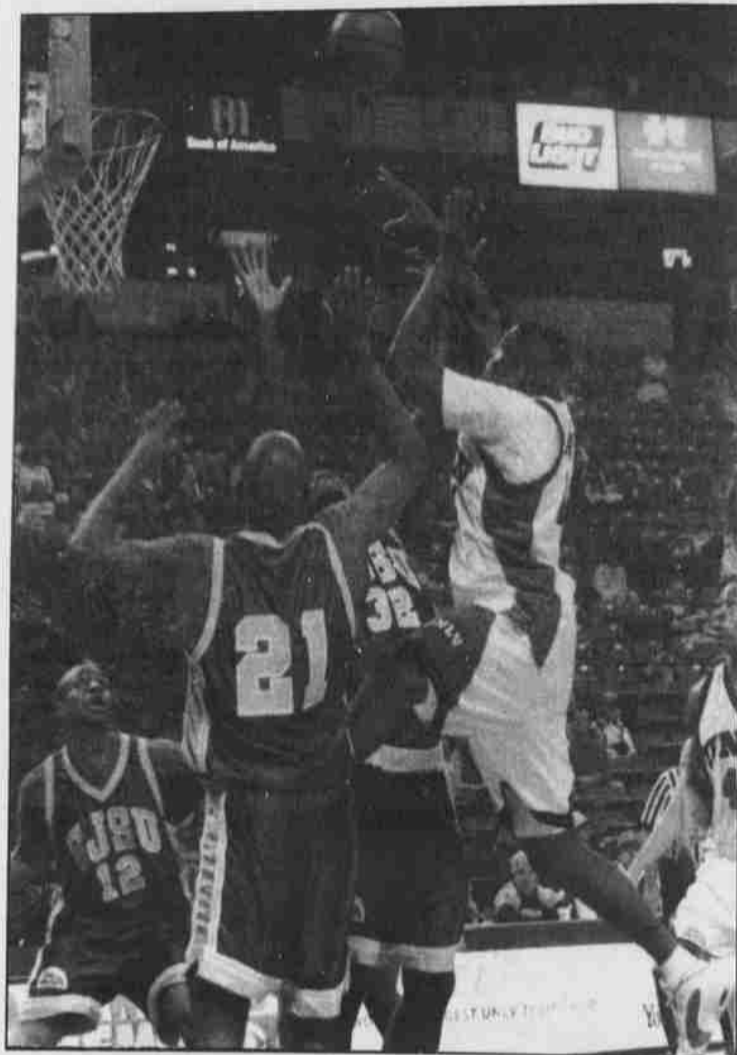


PHOTO BY MIKE LACY

Rebel Tony Lane was in his own Lane with a career high 30 points.

Bayno said. "It was about dealing with adversity; things haven't been going his way, he hasn't been playing as much as he liked. (But after the talk) he had his best practice in a long time and he came out tonight and ran this team."

Also coming in and helping out in the low post was Eddie Corbett, who Bayno has been looking for to step up for the Rebels. Corbett finished with nine points and was 3-5 from the foul line.

"Ed (Corbett) gave us good

minutes down there for us," Bayno said.

Although SJSU was gearing their defense around him and Johnson, Rosegreen still came through with 14 points and seven boards. Smith also gave the Spartans trouble with 15 points, nine of which were from the land of trey.

Next up for the Rebels will be a televised affair at Long Beach St. on Monday night at 9 p.m. The game can be seen on ESPN (Cable 19) in Las Vegas.

Rebel softball prime for regular season

By Ray Brewer
Staff Sports Writer

In their tune-up for the regular season, the No. 5-ranked UNLV softball team started the pre-season off on a high note.

The Rebels hosted Central Arizona Junior College for a double header on Saturday and battled with CAU and the Puerto Rican National Team on Sunday.

"A weekend like this is good preparation," head coach Shan McDonald said.

Game one saw the spirited Rebel squad pull-off an exciting come-from-behind victory that sent the home-faithful at Rebel diamond into cheers.

The Vaqueras struck early when shortstop Jamie Smith led off the third inning with an infield single. Smith moved to third on a Jennifer Miller single, then scored on a Jodi Otten single, giving Central Arizona a 1-0 edge.

The Rebels couldn't answer back, as Vaquera pitcher Chelsea Sakizzie struck out the side in the bottom half of the inning.

Central Arizona was again active in the top of the fourth when Dana Cubic advanced safely to first on a Heather Markowitz throwing error. Cubic moved to third on an-

other single by Smith, and scored when Smith slid under a Andrea Long tag stealing second, allowing Cubic to trot on in.

After taking the two-run advantage the Vaqueras continued the scoring when Smith moved to third on another Miller single. Then, Amy Criswell singled off of Rebel hurler Teresa Branch, and Miller beat a Kim Rodina throw to second, as Smith scored her second run of the day.

Smith, a freshman, went two for three with two singles, a sacrifice, two runs scored and a stolen base. She was solely responsible for all of Central Arizona's runs. Her heroics continued onto the field when she journeyed into foul ground to make an Ozzie Smith-like diving grab.

The Rebels finally got on the scoreboard in the bottom of the fourth when sophomore third team All-American Julie Crandall drove a Sakizzie offering off of Smith, scoring freshman outfielder Amy Alves, who walked to start the inning. A Heather Siegal strikeout ended the inning, as the Rebels inched closer 3-1.

The top of the fifth saw the Rebels dodge a bullet when they successfully nailed Mel-

issa Godin at the plate on a force play with the bases juiced.

UNLV struck again in the bottom of the sixth when Crandall's bat came alive, as she drove a high fast ball to the right center gap, scoring Sara Mallett who beat a bunt to start the rally.

With the Rebels down one, the game entered the bottom of the seventh, their last hope to complete the comeback.

On a 2-2 pitch Markowitz did something the crowd was waiting to see all day: hit a homerun. Her shot out of the yard easily floated 20 feet over the fence.

This round-tripper for Markowitz made up for two earlier throwing errors.

With the game knotted at three, the officials decided to send the game into an international tie-breaker. In the tie-breaker each team places a runner on second base with one out, and must get the runner in before the third out.

Behind the support of the vocal fans, the Rebels pulled it out in the bottom of the eighth when Rodina flied out to deep center, easily scoring designated runner Jaime Maher to seal the 4-3 come-from-behind victory.

Branch earned the victory,

while throwing four strikeouts and allowing two base-on balls.

"We were pleased with the things we saw," McDonald said. "We made some mistakes, but it's nothing to be worried about."

However, the Rebels fell 8-4 in the second game of the doubleheader, which was stopped after the fifth because of darkness.

In this game, the Rebels committed a good amount of errors, which led to their defeat.

They bounced back on Sunday with a 3-2 victory in another shortened game.

In their weekend and pre-season finale, the Rebels tied the Puerto Rican team 4-4 behind a Sara Mallett homerun.

Freshman pitcher Tanya Edwards yielded five walks before being replaced by Branch.

"She threw better than the umps called," McDonald said. "She came back, threw, and never quit."

The Rebels will start the regular season in Arizona at Arizona State University in the ASU Coca-Cola Classic. It was the Wildcats who knocked UNLV out of last year's College World Series.