

Commentary

From the outside looking in

Bill Bayno has probably never been happier than he is now.

Despite losing 16 games this season, and missing the Big West tournament by a two-game margin, the 33-year-old Bayno is exactly where he wants to be...head coach of a NCAA Division I basketball program.

Off the Bench

And **MICHAEL MELISSA** may be one of the most noted basketball programs in the nation, UNLV.

"I wouldn't rather be anywhere else in the world than right here," Bayno said after the win against Cal State Fullerton back on Feb. 16. A game that started a strong run for a tournament bid where the Rebels won three of their last five, including their only road win against UNR at the Lawlor Events Center, 64-61.

Meanwhile, back on the east coast, UMass (Bayno's other team) seems to be on a pre-destined course to reach the Final Four in East Rutherford, NJ this season.

Last season Bayno found himself in the final eight of the NCAA tournament, as assistant coach to UMass head coach John Calipari. They fell to Oklahoma State, however, 68-54 in somewhat of an upset. UMass went into the Big Dance with a 26-4 record, and had the No. 2 seed in the Eastern regional.

This year the Minutemen look even more pat, with the same core of players (that Bayno recruited, but more on recruiting in just a bit), including center Marcus Camby, who has ignited UMass to a 27-1 record.

Bayno described his old crew as killers on the court who can play with poise and heart, as well as play-make their shots. The Rebels tried to do all three of those aspects of the Minutemen's game, but only one could be seen on the court this season...heart.

No matter how much the Rebels tried to work the defense, or the offense, they always seemed to come up a shot or two short. But if you could get points from having a strong team heart, the Rebels would have went undefeated, and Bayno believes that.

"We came so close so many times this year and came up short," Bayno explained. "But it's a tribute to this team and their char-

See Bench, pg. 10

Strong pitching leads to victories for Rebel Softball

BY RAY BREWER
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

The seventh-ranked UNLV softball team had another impressive outing, going 4-2 at the National Softball Coaches Association Leadoff Classic in Columbus, Ga., last weekend.

The Rebels had their four-game winning streak snapped, losing to No. 20 Illinois-Chicago, 4-1, in their tournament-opener Friday.

Illinois-Chicago pounded Rebel hurler Teresa Branch for two home runs, dropping her record to 2-2.

She was taken deep in the fourth inning when second baseman Jennifer Bolin hit a three-run homer. Then, in the fifth inning, centerfielder Lynn Corylo hit a solo shot to round out the Illinois-Chicago scoring.

The Rebels bounced back in their second game Saturday, however, behind the strong pitching of freshman Tanya Edwards, defeating the University of Connecticut, 3-0.

All-American catcher Julie Crandall was the offensive hero as she belted a two-run double in the first. That was all the offense Edwards needed as she pitched a shutout, improving her record to 7-2.

The Rebels were perfect Saturday, defeating head coach Shan McDonald's alma mater, Texas A&M, in their third tournament

game, 5-3.

The offensive hero of this game was designated hitter Heather Siegal who was 2-for-4 with three RBI's, including a monstrous two-run dinger in the second inning.

Branch avenged her loss in the first game, hurling a complete-game five-hitter with three strikeouts.

Next, the Rebels, behind a gem of a pitching performance from Branch, defeated the University of California, 2-0.

In her second straight win, Branch struck out seven, while only yielding one walk and three hits, to improve her record to 4-2 for the season.

First-team All-American Kim Rodina took care of the offense against Cal, going 2-for-3 with two RBI's.

The Rebels won their third game of the day, defeating Louisiana Tech 3-2, on a three hitter by Edwards.

She was a little wild, however, walking six batters, while only striking out one.

The Rebels struck first in the third inning, scoring two runs, and got their final run in the seventh inning to put the victory on ice.

Senior centerfielder Sara Mallet led the Rebels with two hits, two RBI's, and one run scored.

Branch contributed on offense, going 2-for-3 with one run batted in.

After winning all three games on Saturday, the Rebels

See Pitching, pg. 10



PHOTO BY HYUN-HO HAN

Rebel catcher, Julie Crandall, sets herself up for a foul ball at the UNLV tournament. The Rebels will be playing at home this weekend for a 3-game home stand.

Soccer strengthens line-up

Size and winning experience may help UNLV in the WAC

BY RAY BREWER
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

In hopes of improving on their losing season, the Kick-in' Rebels have added three players to beef up their line-up next year as they enter the Western Athletic Conference.

Joining the squad next season will be All-American junior forward Darek Rensing from St. Louis (Mo.) Community College, freshman defender Rob Delgado from El Paso, Texas, and freshman Josh Sweeney from San Diego.

Rensing, 6-foot 155 pounds, is a first-team All-American honoree and scored 11 times last year for St. Louis Community College. He also had seven assists, leading his team to the NJCAA Tournament finals. Named to the NJCAA Tournament All-Tournament Team, Rensing helped his squad finish with a 15-7-1 record en route to capturing the Region 16 champi-

onships.

"He has a real enthusiasm for the game, and brings maturity to our program," head coach Barry Barto said.

Sweeney comes to the Rebels as a winner. He led his high school team to a number-one ranking in nation, rated by *USA Today*. Sweeney, the captain of the top-ranked team, was a three-time first-team All-Rio Hondo league selection. In 1995 he led his squad to a 25-0 record, while capturing the California Interscholastic Federation-Southern Section Division 4 Championship. Last season he scored 14 goals and had 17 assists.

"He is a versatile player who is strong in the air and reads the game well," said Barto.

The final addition of the trio, Delgado, comes to UNLV to strengthen up the defense. Weighing in at 18 pounds, Delgado, a marking back, should add some aggression to the back line. At Cathedral High School, he accumulated 12 goals and 15 assists, leading his team to the league championship. He was a first-team selection his freshman, junior, and senior seasons.

"He is a technically sound player who has a good understanding of the game," said Barto. "He will help stabilize our defense."

These three recruits help put the pieces of the Rebel soccer puzzle together as the voyage into WAC play next season.

UNLV football names new offensive coordinator

BY MICHAEL MELISSA
SPORTS EDITOR

With the ink barely dry on former Rebel offensive coordinator Steve Hagen's new coaching contract at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, Charlie Stubbs was named Wednesday as his replacement.

It was just eight days ago when Hagen resigned to take the head coaching job at the Division III school.

Stubbs, who will be the offensive coordinator and quarterback coach, spent the past season running the offense at University of Tennessee-Martin.

Under Stubbs, the Division I-AA Skyhawks averaged 279 yards passing per game in 1995, which led the Ohio Valley Conference. In total offense, the Skyhawks averaged 378 yards on the year, and scored 97 points in one game against Bethel College.

Stubbs, 40, comes to UNLV with strong ties in the Pacific-10 and Western Athletic Conference, which could provide added help in UNLV's first season playing in the WAC.

Stubbs has spent time over the past six seasons at Oregon State as offensive

coordinator and was also a coach during Brigham Young University's championship season in 1984.

At BYU, Stubbs coached the wide receivers and tight ends, where the Cougars posted a 24-1 record during his two-year stint.

At Oregon State, the passing offense under Stubbs led the conference and was also ranked within the nation's top 10 from 1986-90. While with the Beavers, Stubbs also help groom the Pac-10's all-time leading passer, Eric Wilhelm, who went on to throw for 9,393 yards. Wilhelm went on to play for the Cincinnati Bengals.

Stubbs was also offensive coordinator at the University of Memphis in 1994. Prior to that, Stubbs was head coach and athletic director for Boiling Springs High School in Spartansburg, S.C.

Hagen resigned Feb. 28 as UNLV offensive coordinator and quarterback coach after spending two seasons on the sidelines for the Rebels. In 1994, Hagen helped lead an explosive Rebel offense to a Big West Championship and a Las Vegas Bowl victory, beating Central Michigan, 52-24 at Sam Boyd Stadium.