

# Rebel softball improves season record

BY RAY BREWER

Staff Sports Writer

The seventh-ranked UNLV softball team played 10 games over the Easter recess, chalking up five wins, four defeats, and one tie. They improved their overall record to 27-13-1 for the season.

On March 27, they took a doubleheader from UC Santa Barbara at Rebel Diamond, posting 5-2 and 5-3 victories.

In the first game against UCSB, Tanya Edwards went the distance, striking out three and scattering seven hits to earn the victory.

The Rebels did their damage in the bottom half of the second inning, scoring three runs to give Edwards all the offensive support she needed on the afternoon.

Audrey Munoz, Andrea Long and Ronnie Salcido combined for three consecutive singles to load the bases for senior All-American Sara Mallett.

Mallett responded with a two-run single to put the Rebels on top, 2-1.

An Amy Alves ground-out scored Salcido from third, and the Rebels were up two runs at the end of two innings.

After blanking the Gauchos in the top half of the third inning, the Rebels' bats struck for two more runs in the bottom of the third.

These runs were generated from back-to-back singles from Heather Siegal and Heather Markowitz to lead off the inning, followed by a Munoz walk.

Then, Long singled to score Siegal, and give the Rebels a 4-1 lead. The Rebels went up



Sara Mallett slides hard into second, trying to break up a double play against UCSB.

PHOTO BY MIKE LACY

5-1 with a Salcido RBI ground-out to second.

In this victory, UNLV received huge offensive help from the bottom half of the order.

Munoz, a freshmen first baseman, went 1-for-1 with two walks, an RBI, and one run scored.

"She is becoming more comfortable at this level (at the plate)," associate head coach Carol Spanks said.

Long, another freshmen, went 2-for-2 with two singles, one run scored and one RBI.

Salcido, the starting right fielder, had one single, one RBI, and one run scored.

The second win against UCSB saw the Rebels hurler Teresa Branch pitch a complete game, striking out five en route to picking up the 5-3 victory.

Junior All-American Kim Rondina went 2-for-4 to pace the Rebels on offense. She also contributed two runs scored and two RBIs to cap off a fine offensive performance.

Munoz continued her solid batting, going 2-for-3 with two singles. Siegal had a big day as well, going 1-for-3 with three RBIs that helped propel the Rebels past the Gauchos.

They traveled to Stockton, Calif., on April 2 to play a doubleheader against the University of Pacific.

The Rebels took two from the Tigers, winning both games in come-from-behind fashion.

On this particular afternoon, designated hitter Siegal went on a hitting tear, guiding UNLV to victory.

"She did a good job of get-

ting hits for us all day," Spanks said.

In the first contest, she went 3-for-4 with one RBI, helping the Rebels escape with a 4-3 victory.

In the second game of the doubleheader, Siegal came up to the plate, facing a situation that kids rehearse endlessly in their backyards.

She was up at the plate with two out in the Rebels last at-bat with runners in scoring position.

Siegal responded with a hard hit single that scored two, erasing the Rebels one-run deficit, and giving them a 5-4 victory.

After these thrilling victories, the Rebels packed their bags, and headed to San Jose to face Big West Conference opponent, the San Jose State

Spartans.

The Rebels were shut-out 2-0 in the first game, only getting three hits as a team. Rondina had two of those hits, and Alves had the other.

Branch got the loss, despite only yielding three hits and striking out five. She did give a two-run homer to Victoria Ruelas that pushed the Spartans ahead for good.

The second game against San Jose State ended in a 5-5 tie due to time restraint. Branch was back on the hill, pitching nine innings and striking out eight hitters.

For the day, Branch pitched 16 innings and struck out 13, but still could not get the win.

The Rebels had 12 hits including a double from Rondina. Alves had two singles and Salcido had two singles on the afternoon.

Infielders Edwards, Long, and Rondina committed errors for the Rebels in the tie.

Friday the Rebels met the Gauchos of UCSB for another doubleheader, changing location from Las Vegas to Santa Barbara.

The Rebels were dealt two losses, giving them a 0-3-1 record for the past four games they played.

"They just outplayed us as a team," Spanks said. "They were ready to play and we were not."

The first game, which they lost 7-3, saw Rebel pitcher Branch give up 11 hits and seven earned runs in 3 1/3-innings. The loss made Branch 15-7 for the season.

In the top half of the fourth,

See Improves, pg. 10

## Rebels back in conference race

After dropping three to Fullerton, Rebels sweep Long Beach State

BY MICHAEL MELISSA

SPORTS EDITOR

With opportunities knocking, the Rebels quickly opened the door.

After dropping three straight to top-ranked Cal State Fullerton (10-5, 4-2 and 20-11), the No. 25 UNLV baseball team swept first place Long Beach State this weekend, 2-1, 5-4 and 10-6.

When Fullerton was upset 6-5 by New Mexico State Thursday, the Rebels (30-11, 6-3 in the Big West Conference) saw their opportunity to climb back into the conference race.

"These games here are real crucial for us to stay in the race," head coach Fred Dallimore said. "We've just got to worry about ourselves and not worry about what everybody else does. If you get help from somebody else then you got the world by both ends, the tail and the head."

The Rebels also got back the services of Nate Yeskie, the pitching ace of last season's team. After sitting out the first half of this season, Yeskie pitched for the first time against the Las Vegas Stars on Tuesday and went 3 2/3 innings. He gave up two runs on five hits, struck out three and walked one in a 6-1 exhibition loss at Cashman Field.

"(Yeskie) pitched well," Dallimore said. "I had him set for a 40-pitch workout but the doctors said to let him go 50 and he pitched well."

Yeskie saw his first real action on Saturday when he faced LBSU. In his first official game of the 1996 season, Yeskie went 3 1/3 innings, giving up one run on four hits.

A junior, Yeskie went through arthroscopic surgery in late February to repair his right shoulder.

The Rebels held a slim lead in Saturday's game through five innings, then broke it open in the sixth. With one on, Ted Wilkes knocked a base hit then scored on Stacy Kleiner's hit. Then with two down in the inning, freshman Kevin Eberwein smacked a double to score Kleiner for the third run of the inning.

Eberwein, who had a big series against the 49ers, was 3-for-4 with three RBIs. For the series, Eberwein was 5-for-12, but had the big game-winning hit in Thursday's game and many key defensive stops in Friday's matchup.

Wilkes also had a big game Saturday, going 3-for-4 with two RBIs.

The Rebels had to hold off a late-inning charge by the 49ers in Friday's game to preserve their second win of the series.

Tista Perri went 6 2/3, allowing three



Scott Vincent retreats to first after a base hit.

PHOTO BY MIKE LACY

runs on five hits. He struck out two and walked one. Chad Barry, who came in and got the final out of the seventh, received the win. He gave up a run on three hits.

With LBSU leading 3-2 in the seventh, the Rebels used some much-

See Race, pg 2

## UNLV drops three to top-ranked Titans

BY MICHAEL MELISSA

SPORTS EDITOR

Oh, home sweet home.

The Rebels, after playing 32 straight baseball games at home, took only their second road trip of the year to face No. 1 Cal State Fullerton March 28-31.

It could have been a chance for UNLV to get a head start on the rest of the conference before Fullerton began to make their run.

It did not work out that way for the Hustlin' Rebs, though, as they dropped all three (10-5, 4-2 and 20-11).

UNLV is currently a game-back of the Titans and tied with Long Beach State for second in the Big West Conference with a 6-3 record (30-11 overall). The Titans are 8-1 in the BWC and 33-3 overall.

In the opener, the Titans struck for six in the second inning and took a commanding 7-0 lead over the Rebels. The six-run outburst was helped along by two Rebel errors and three walks by starter Tom LaRosa.

The Rebels regained some of their composure in the fourth inning when Brian Anthony

See Titans, pg. 11