

Women's Soccer looks to break onto scene

By Adam Hill
Staff News Writer

For the first time this year UNLV will have a women's soccer team.

Staci Hendershott has been given the responsibility of coaching this team through its inaugural year.

"We strive to be better each day," Hendershott said. "We have a lot to learn, but we really do seem to get better every day."

Improving isn't the only thing important to this team.

"We intend to be in the Western Athletic Conference Tournament this year," Hendershott said.

In order to do that, the Lady Rebels will have to finish in the top four of the Pacific Division. Members in the division include: San Diego State, Fresno State, San Jose State, Utah, BYU and Hawaii.

Although the team has never played a game, that doesn't mean that there's no experience.

Goalkeeper Shannon Wilson got a year of Division-I experience when she played with Washington State. She will be

looked to for leadership by the young team.

Freshman Anita Pedford should be the main offensive threat. She not only possesses tremendous speed, but can handle the ball exceptionally well.

The defense will be anchored by junior college transfer sweeper Felicia Madrigal.

The main theme around this team seems to be the excitement of being a first year program.

"It's just one of those things you can't describe," Hendershott said. "There's an incredible amount of excitement surrounding everything we do. Every event, it's the first time ever. It's so exciting."

The team has been showing positive signs. The intensity and enthusiasm has been positive at every practice.

Hendershott has also been pleased with the talent level that she has seen in the team's initial development stages.

The Lady Rebels first game ever will be Tuesday when they visit Southern California to take on Pepperdine.

UNLV only has six home games this season.

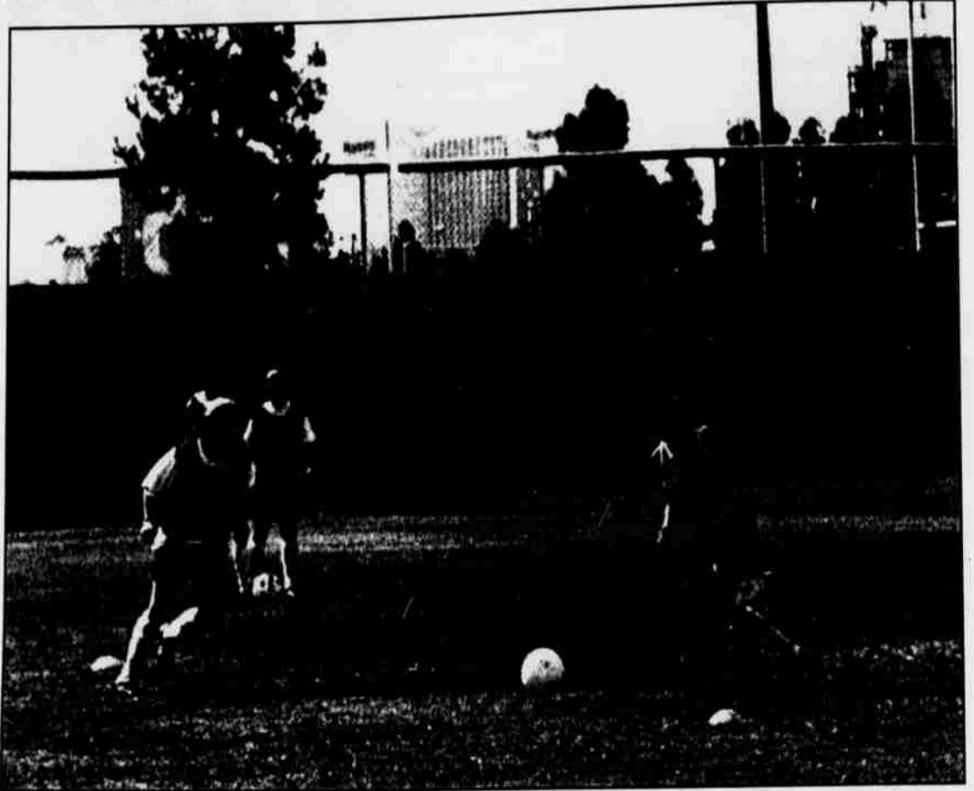


Photo Provided by Heather Grady

INAUGURAL SEASON- The UNLV women's soccer team prepares to embark on their inaugural season.

Jump, Set, Spike: '98 Women's volleyball team looks for big year

By Adam Hill
Staff Sports Writer

The Rebels volleyball team will open their season at the Nanook Classic in Fairbanks, Alaska, Sept. 3-5.

The tournament will provide the Rebels an excellent opportunity to prepare for the season, according to third year coach Deitre Collins.

Last year the team started 7-1, then the Rebels suffered a string of injuries that led to a 2-17 streak, including a 2-12 mark in Western Athletic Conference play.

Among the injured was Angie Sylvas, an outside hitter, who went down with a knee injury in a match against New Mexico State. She had been selected WAC player of the week, the first Rebel ever to receive the award before being lost for the season. She did receive a medical redshirt, so no eligibility was lost.

The Rebels will also look for Meri-de Boyer, the team's only senior to be a top performer. She led the team in both assists and digs last year. She was also named MVP of the Taco Bell Invitational in Reno, and was an All-Tournament selection at the Arizona DoubleTree Invitational. The setter, who set a Rebel record with 80 assists against UTEP last year, will be an important factor in helping the Rebels achieve their goals.

Coach Collins' goals are simple.

"We want to improve our standings in the WAC," said Collins. "We have improved all the way around so we should improve in the standings."

Justine Kamelamela is another returning starter at the outside hitter position. Last year, as a



by Heather Grady / The Rebel Yell

freshman, she competed in all 27 matches. She finished third on the team in both kills and digs, and was fourth in both blocks and service aces.

Other returning starters will be Christel Eves and Ana Ramos. Eves is a junior outside hitter/middle blocker, while Ramos enters her sophomore year, after starting as a freshman.

"We have several returning starters, and I think they understand what it takes now," Collins said. "Their maturity will be important for us."

Junior outside hitter Elizabeth Goyet also returns. She recorded 33 kills against UTEP to set a new mark for kills in a match.

Erica Enfield, Danielle Gerlach, Michele Peoples, Cobey Shoji, and Kendra Wilkinson round out the multitude of returning letterwinners on this team.

The Rebels also welcome several newcomers to the team. Jeanette Graves (Salt Lake City CC) and Michelle Shepherd (Cen. Carolina) arrive as transfers and begin their UNLV careers' as juniors. Nora Bernson

and Amber Graham come straight from high school.

"We should do well," Collins said of the tournament in Alaska. "There are some good teams, like Iowa State and Duke to provide us good competition." The other team competing will be the host school, Alaska-Fairbanks.

After that trip, the Rebels will host the Official All Star Cafe/UNLV Classic. New Mexico State, SW Texas State and Youngstown State will compete in that event Sept. 11-12.

After traveling east to compete in the North Carolina Tournament, the Rebels will return home to host five home games, which will include a match against rival UNR on Sept. 28, and the first WAC match of the year against Air Force on Oct. 3.

The other matches will be played against Utah State, San Diego State and Fresno State.

The outlook for this season seems to be bright, as long as the Rebels can stay healthy, something that haunted them last year.

UNLV officially leaves the WAC

By Zach Mossman
Staff Sports Writer

UNLV and seven other Western Athletic Conference schools officially announced last week that the schools will leave the WAC to form the newest major athletic conference.

The eight schools that broke away from the WAC are UNLV, Air Force, BYU, Colorado State, New Mexico, San Diego State, Utah, and Wyoming.

Albert C. Yates, President of Colorado State University and President of the Board of Directors of the new conference, also announced other major steps in the formation of the new conference which are: the start of searches for both a new commissioner and a conference headquarters and a final list of possible names for the conference.

"With today's series of announcements, the universities that compromise the newest conference have set forth the solid foundation upon which we expect to build one of the finest athletic conferences in the country," Yates said in a press release.

Yates also added his appreciation for the support the NCAA and bowl game officials have given the schools.

The list of possible names for the new conference has been narrowed to three final candidates. They are the American

West Conference, Great West Conference, and Mountain West Conference.

UNLV President Carol Harter, BYU president Merrill Bateman, and Yates will head the subcommittee that will select the final name of the conference.

UNLV left the Big West conference three years ago to join the Western Athletic Conference, which was the largest Division I-A conference in the country.

UNLV has made significant strides in recent years to boost the schools athletic reputation.

In joining the new conference, the Rebels will see more and better opportunities to play major Division I opponents and participate in major bowl games.

Even with the formal withdrawal of the eight schools, the 1998-1999 WAC schedule will remain the same for all 16 conference members.

According to the WAC by-laws, any school that wishes to leave the conference must submit a letter to the commissioner before September first. The school then remains a member of the conference until June 30th of the following year.

UNLV and its new conference members will have a year to formulate season schedules within the new conference and outside of it.