

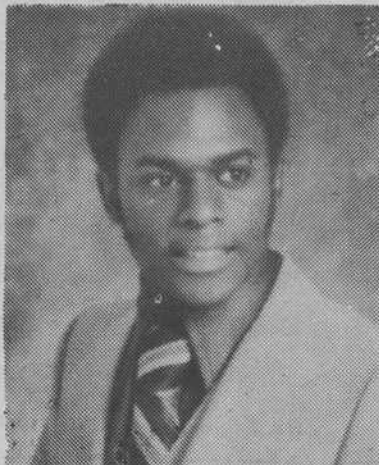
SPORTS BOARD

SPORTS, GAMING, HORSERACING

SEPTEMBER 27, 1984



KEN'S COMMENTS



By Ken Wilson

A rough road marked the early transition from the Tony Knapp era, but now the transfer appears to be coming to a climax after a slow, yet steady changing of the guard that seems to have Las Vegas interested in college football once again.

Entering his third season at the helm, UNLV Head Football Coach Harvey Hyde has found that rebuilding a program can be a challenging task. Still the Rebel mentor has developed a team that features an explosive offense and an always improving defense.

After Hyde's initial 3-8 campaign, plus a second season in which the team's success increased some, UNLV's perfect start in 1984 has surprised a few while making several pre-season predictions come true.

Fueled by the offense

that features senior quarterback Randall Cunningham and a big play defense, the Rebels have constructed a 3-0 start, the best beginning of Hyde's tenure.

Success has engulfed UNLV as the Rebels are off to their best start in eight years, while the undefeated beginning has given the Red and Scarlet a head of steam going into the Pacific Coast Athletic Association conference play.

Along with the talented Cunningham, the Rebels have found other weapons in the form of running backs Tony Lewis and Kirk Jones who have combined to take the pressure off the passing game.

Two relatively easy home victories in addition to a road win have placed UNLV in the lime-light on the West Coast as one of the

Tommy Cordova Gets Test With Rocky Garcia Thursday

Tommy Cordova will get a chance to find out Thursday night when he takes on former contender Rocky Garcia in a scheduled 10-round junior lightweight bout at the Showboat Hotel Sports Pavilion.

Cordova's manager, Jack Luce, severed connections with his fighter's previous trainer

better teams around.

Though the young season has seen much success, the Rebels have been tough in the opening half of each contest, a lack of intensity has marked the UNLV effort in the second half, including the 38-21 win over Wichita State.

The lack of consistent play on the part of the Rebels could come back to haunt the team later as UNLV now faces its stiffest competition thus far in Hawaii which is next on the schedule this Saturday.

The Rainbow Warriors, members of the Western Athletic Conference, have the personnel to match up with the Rebels who must make the long trip to the islands.

Bob Foster, the former undisputed world light heavyweight champion.

Luce said he made the change from Foster because of "differences in defensive training" and "rather than have that..."

Cordova, of Albuquerque, N.M., is now being trained by his father, Joe Cordova, and was working out for the past 2½ weeks at the Azteca Gym in Bell, Calif., with the Jimmy Montoya stable.

However, Luce emphasized that the relentless-attacking Cordova would still fight in his "run-and-gun style," but adapt "somewhat of a (Hector) Camacho-type style — fighting at angles."

The 22-year-old Cordova brings a 13-1 record into Thursday's bout, including four straight victories.

Cordova established a reputation as an exciting, non-stop slugger in pounding out a 10-round decision over Jimmy Jackson in April at the Riviera Hotel and a 12-round decision over Freddie Roach in June at the Showboat.

Holmes to fight here

Undefeated Larry Holmes will make the first defense of his International Boxing Federation heavyweight championship against James "Bonecrusher" Smith at the Riviera Hotel on Nov. 9.

The scheduled 15-round fight will be nationally televised by the Home Box Office cable network.

It will be Holmes' first fight in nearly one year since he knocked out Marvis Frazier in the first round in November at the Caesars Palace Sports Pavilion.

Holmes, of Easton, Pa., relinquished his World Boxing Council heavyweight title in December rather than defend that crown against then No. 1-ranked Greg Page for King.

Riviera Hotel officials are reportedly considering erecting an outdoor stadium for the Nov. 9 fight or hold it in the convention area at the rear of the hotel.

The 29-year-old Smith, born in Magnolia, N.C., has a 14-1 record and has done most of his fighting in Atlantic City.

Muhammad Ali Treks To Sudan

Just days after being released from a hospital, former boxing champ Muhammad Ali was in the Sudan on Tuesday to show support for the controversial implementation of Islamic law.

Ali, who was hospitalized in New York last week for tests because he showed symptoms of a Parkinson's-like disease, joined Sudan President Gaafar Nimeiri and other dignitaries in cheering a mass march through the streets of Khartoum in support of the decree.



The demonstration by an officially estimated "hundreds of thousands" appeared aimed at showing popular support for Nimeiri's imposition of Islamic law last year.

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