

THE NEW ERA BEGINS

By W.G. Ramirez

"An individual that is serious about his work, but knows when to have fun.

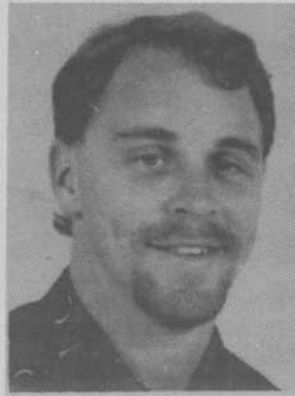
"He is a caring individual - a family man.

"He is a winner," said Chris Johnson, UNLV's Assistant Information Director, when asked to describe UNLV's Head Basketball Coach, Rollie Massimino.

As the 1992-93 collegiate basketball season begins, the Rollie Massimino Era commences at the campus of UNLV.

After spending 19 years at Big East school Villanova, Massimino has headed West to take over a basketball team that has been traditionally known as a "winning family."

When Massimino first arrived in Vegas, it was difficult to observe the community's reaction, as mixed emotions floated around. Maybe the absence of



Chris Johnson

those old sad Armenian eyes was a factor. Whatever the case, it was apparent that an adjustment was taking place and some people were going to take longer to except it than others.

Since April though, Massimino seems to have gained the respect of many more people. He has followed through with everything he has said he was going to do and continues to make progress in molding this

season's squad into a national contender.

The loss of Danny Griffin, the tallest player on the team, has forced Coach Mass to design his team with Evric Gray in the middle.

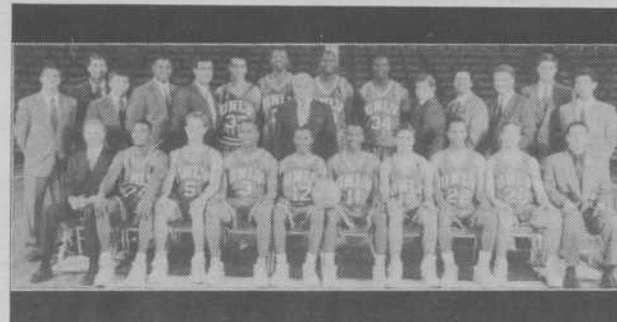
"Evric is good," said Massimino. "He is doing a good job and adjusting well."

Although Gray seems to be situated, he concedes, "(I) am still adjusting."

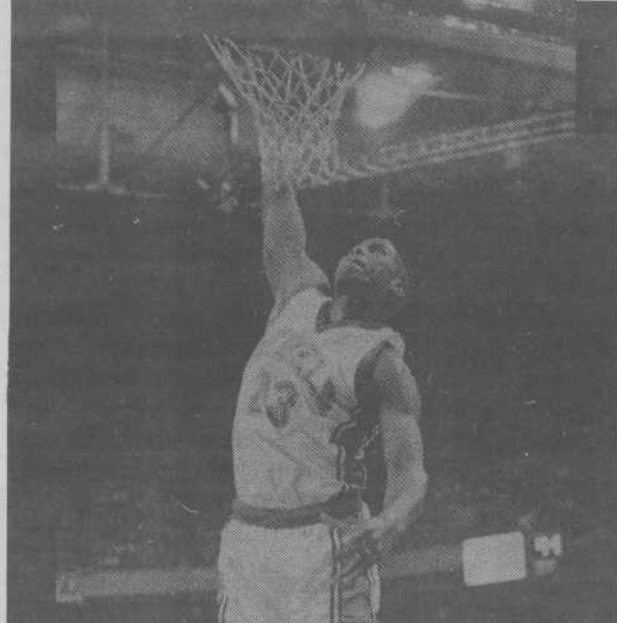
Senior Dexter Boney feels the team is coming along just fine, and also agreed that Gray is "getting his position down and is doing real good."

As for Boney, Massimino has been impressed with his ambition and drive heading into the season.

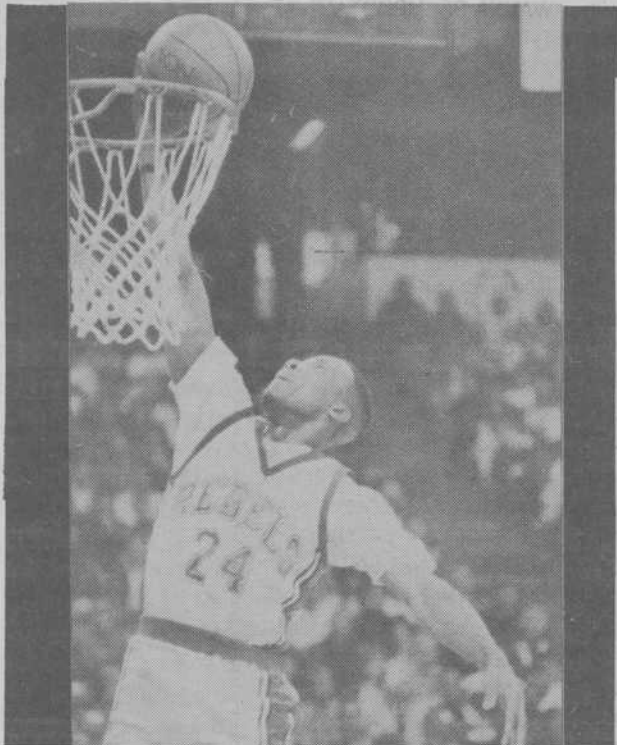
"Dexter is a terrific young man. He has a lot of ability. He is a perfectionist and works very hard at trying to do the right thing."



1992-93 UNLV RUNNIN' REBELS



All Big West First Team Candidate - Evric Gray



Dexter Boney drives for a lay-up, last season.

Johnson, who has been working very close with the team, sees the Rebels improving all the time under Massimino.

"Having to adjust to a new coach's philosophy takes time," stated Johnson. "We have a bulk of our starters back and they are all quick learners. What helps this team, is that they know how to win; Rollie Massimino too, is a proven winner."

When asked to describe some players with brief words or adjectives, Johnson responded:

Dedan Thomas - Light and Quick; Out of a defensive mold that great UNLV guards have always had.

Dexter Boney - Slasher; Quickness and Graceful

Reggie Manuel - Young buck; dripping with talent; would have been a household name if UNLV played on national TV last season.

Danny Griffin - Untapped talent; If he lives up to his billing, UNLV will be a Top 10 program.

Evric Gray - A leader coming to the forefront; Great individual.

J. R. Rider - Mr. Excitement; NBA draft pick with ease; A lot of talent and ability; Gained a lot of respect by returning to school for his senior year, not just to play, but to receive his degree.

Johnson admits that "the fellas" are still loyal to Tark, but they know Massimino is coach and it is now time to be a part of the Mass Family.

"The players are (Massimino's) family," concluded Johnson.

A lot of critics are counting the Rebels out a little bit too early. They must remember, eight players return from last season's 26-2 team.

These same eight players fought until they lost in a battle on a different type of court. Last season's squad tried to appeal their ineligibility for post-season play.

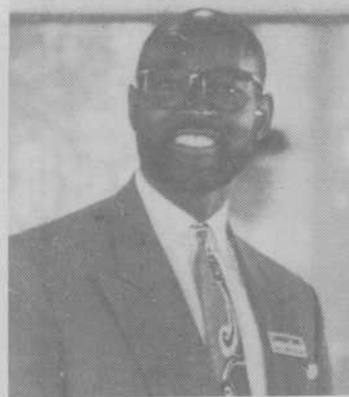
They were denied a chance to continue playing in the Big West and NCAA Tournaments.

Restating Johnson, a healthy Griffin will definitely bring this team to Top 10 caliber. Gray, and Rider, will be free to bomb from the 3-point line and devour opponents in Rebel fashion.

Their first exhibition game will be Friday November 20, when they face Russia at the Thomas and Mack Center. Tip-off is scheduled for 8:05 p.m.

The regular season for UNLV opens at Loyola Marymount on Saturday, December 5
And when the ball goes up- The New Era begins!!!

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