



SPORTS



UNLV RECORD NOW 11-1 AND RANKED IN THE TOP 10

ITS RIDER BABY! ITS RIDER BABY!

By W.G. Ramirez

"We can talk about Terrence Rencher at Texas or the kids at Michigan - but we're gonna go to Vegas baby. J.R. Rider - two weeks in a row. J.R. scored 78 points in two games against Texas A&M and Georgetown. He's averaging 39.0 points in the last two games. Slow down and take time for a slice of pizza J.R. - you're the Pizza Hut Player of the Week baby. For the second time in a row baby!!!

With all the babies in that passage, it wouldn't be hard to recognize the voice behind it. Just picture that lovable character on ESPN, gets very excited, "PT baby," Yeah you guessed it, Dick Vitale.

Vitale got the adrenaline pumping once again Wednesday night during the Florida State-North Carolina matchup on ESPN, as he announced that the UNLV senior had been named his player of the week for the second week in a row. The honor just added on to the list of accolades Rider has received in the past two weeks.

Last week, besides Vitale's award, Rider was named Big West Player of the Week. This week he duplicated the two, and



TENACIOUS DEFENSE!!!-Evric Gray (23) and Dexter Boney combine to stifle Georgetown's Robert Churchwell, in last Saturday's nationally televised game. Photo By Savoy/LVS-Voice

also was named Sports Illustrated's Player of the Week and UPI's Player of the Week. Obviously, Rider's success is quickly being recognized across the nation.

The forward/center is currently third in the nation in scor-

ing, averaging 28.1 ppg., which tops the Big West Conference. In the two games against A&M and the Hoyas he posted successive career-highs by tossing in 38 and 40 points respectively. It marked the third time in the past four games that Rider has registered a new career-high. In the past five games, Rider is averaging 35.5 ppg.

Benefiting from Rider's success, UNLV has impressed many across the country, as they have bolted up the rankings to #9 in the USA Today/CNN poll and #10 in the AP poll.

Another player for the Rebels that has been playing quite impressively is slashing guard Dexter Boney. The 6'4" senior scored 18 points against Texas A&M, hitting 3-of-8 from treyland, and then poured in 21 against Georgetown.

"I think of Dexter as our '3rd

cog," explained Head Coach Rollie Massimino. "I think he has been our unsung hero the last five games. When he is on we win."

Coach Mass seemed to be in his glory following UNLV's 96-80 whipping of Georgetown. Although the 16-point margin might seem big, UNLV was actually up by 27 before Massimino emptied the bench near the end of the game. Coach Mass had no regrets putting his reserves in the final 2 minutes of the game, when the Hoyas popped 11 unanswered points to shrink UNLV's lead from 96-69 to the eventual final.

"My philosophy is everyone who practices should have the opportunity to play," Coach Mass said. "I think that's very important."

The man responsible for much of the hard labor under the basket though, has been Evric Gray. Now that 6'9" junior Danny Griffin has transferred to Rhode Island, Gray is the tallest Rebel on the roster, standing 6'7"

"His whole demeanor is outstanding," said Massimino about his 6'7" center. "I think (Evric) played his best game today (against G'Town). He defended Othella Harrington great. The little things he did all add up. It was the little things that won this game for us."

Gray certainly enjoyed himself, mixing it up with Harrington underneath the basket.

"I feel great to be back on TV," expressed Gray, after returning to CBS last Saturday after UNLV's two-year TV ban. "(Othella) is very strong. He is going to be a great player. It was a challenge, but I love challenges."

Gray also stated that if there was any one player in the nation he'd like to face, "it would have



THE TIP AND THE FOUL- J.R. Rider tips-in two of his forty points against Georgetown, while challenging Duane Spencer underneath. Photo-By Savoy/LVS-Voice



Georgetown Head Coach John Thompson called J.R. Rider the best offensive player he has ever coached against

to be Webber, from Michigan," he says. "I can't wait to go to the NCAA's. We're gonna make some noise. We're gonna surprise some teams."

Gray went on to say that he liked playing with this year's squad better than any other. But there was that other team he was on as a freshman. Same school, different players though. Larry Johnson, Stacey Augmon, Greg Anthony - you know, those guys. Evric just smiled, and thought to himself.

"That was a great team I played on," he added.

UNLV is now embarking on their longest stint from home this year, 3 games in 8 days. They begin their journey in Northern Nevada. The Rebels will face Nevada in a Big West game tonight.

The Wolfpack are currently 7-7 overall, 2-5 in BWC. UNLV is 11-1 and 4-1 in BWC. UNLV leads the series 39-10 but are playing Nevada for the first time ever in conference play. The Rebels have won eight straight over the 'Pack and 13 of the past 14. Since topping Kansas State on December 28, highlighting a 3-game winning streak, Nevada has lost 5 of its last 7 games. UNLV's only defeat of the season came at the hands of Long Beach State, who has been opening eyes all season. LBSU beat #1 Kansas this past Monday 64-49.

The Rebels will continue their road trip in Utah, where they'll face Utah State for the first time this season. The Rebels hold a 21-0 advantage in the series, but always seem to struggle en route to victory against the

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