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SPORTS

GONE ARE THE DAYS...



While Sidney Green spoke during a ceremony at halftime of Monday night's UNLV-Virginia game, fans booed loudly when he thanked UNLV President Robert Maxson and athletic director Jim Weaver. Photo by Savoy/LVSV

W.G. Ramirez

The UNLV Runnin' Rebels reached new lows Monday night when they fell to the Virginia Cavaliers 59-39, eclipsing their 34 year-old record of only 41 points scored in a game against Southern Utah State on December 6, 1958.

Yes, 1958. Dwight D. Eisenhower was President of the United States, Floyd Patterson was the Heavyweight Champion of the World and in College Basketball, Kentucky University, guided by Head Coach Adolph Rupp, was the defending national champion

The 1958-59 season would see California defeat West Virginia 71-70 to capture the NCAA tourney while a young player named Jerry West would be

named MVP for the runner-up Mountaineers.

Imagine all these things were going on the last time UNLV scored as low as 41 points. The Rebels duplicated the record on December 28, 1963 losing to Cal Western.

Back to the present. UNLV is now in jeopardy of losing their "Runnin'" status, they can't seem to put the numbers up on the scoreboard, and quite frankly, may even be on their way to their first season under 20-wins in thirteen years. It was 1980-81 when UNLV last fell below the 20-win mark, managing a 16-12 season.

Something that was extremely amazing to see Monday evening, which was part of a Big Monday package on ESPN, was

the boos that echoed throughout the Thomas and Mack Center; First, when former Runnin' Rebel Sidney Green gave his thanks to UNLV president Robert Maxson and athletic director Jim Weaver during a halftime ceremony for the NBA retiree. Second, was with five minutes remaining in the contest and many of the people were filing out of the T&M. The third was during the final minute of the game, as the remaining natives became restless.

It got ugly behind the team bench when three fans ignited head coach Rollie Massimino and a shouting match ensued. Massimino was said to have threatened to after the fans after they displayed thumbs-down signals, then supposedly chal-

lenged a booster to a fight after a shouting match started in that direction.

The Rebels shot a dismal .224% Monday evening, nailing only 13-of-58 shots from the field. UNLV could only manage three 3-pt. goals, (18 attempts, .167%), and had an assist-to-turnover ratio of 4-to-14, dropping their season ratio below .500 - 102-to-106 (-4).

Many say it is Coach Massimino. One member of the media Monday night wondered if he should refer to UNLV as Villanova in his morning headline.

The Rebels non-effective transition game has turned believers into doubters, and these same folk have their fingers (See *Gone*, Page 24)

CAPTAIN OF "U.S.S. - 'VEGAS REBELS," THOMAS SAYS HIS CREW WILL SURVIVE

W.G. Ramirez

Following this past Monday's loss to Virginia, senior point guard Dedan Thomas quietly retired to the locker room at the Thomas and Mack, showered,

collected his thoughts, and proceeded out of the building, leaving with no expression towards the two-hour spectacle that had just taken place.

The Runnin' Rebels' captain

was obviously disturbed about the pounding that the Cavaliers unleashed on UNLV, 59-39, but couldn't let on, knowing that the majority of his teammates look up to him.

"I have to show them its not the end of the season, or the end of the world," explained Thomas, before boarding the team bus on Tuesday morning. The team, which had just broke UNLV's all-time low record with their 39-point scoring performance 11 hours earlier, was now on their way to face Big West nemesis Cal-St. Fullerton, which took place last night.

Thomas relieves his frustrations by tuning into the sounds of Rap artists Snoop Doggy Dog and Dr. Dre or several different R&B artists.

"I like to just kickback with my friends or my teammates," admits Thomas. Thomas' direct attention is focused on girlfriend Tarsha Carmichael, who he says he spend much of his time with.

The 22 year-old senior from Woodland Hills, California also admits that he is a homebody, and doesn't exactly get caught up in the Las Vegas lifestyle.

One Las Vegas trend that Thomas seems bound to end up getting tangled in, is that he'll

certainly be taking his place among fine point guards in UNLV history at the conclusion of his career. He is currently climbing the school's all-time assist chart, presently in eighth place. After the Virginia game, Thomas had 393 career assists, just eight behind former Rebel great Reggie Theus. It is highly probable that Thomas could climb as high as fourth, where Freddie Banks now sits with 497.

At press time, statistics from the Cal-St. Fullerton game were not available as Thomas may have surpassed Theus.

Thomas knows how tough it is to make the pros, but hopes that he will be the target for an NBA scout later this season.

"Hopefully," he says. "I'm hoping. If not the NBA, overseas. Most definitely I'm going to pursue a career in basketball." Thomas is majoring in social work at UNLV.

If he does not succeed as a basketball player, Thomas says coaching will be an option for him. "I think I'd enjoy coaching basketball on a college level."

A lot of the speculation at the beginning of the season about who would play the role of team leader was focused on Thomas. Following two season-opening



Dedan Thomas' ballhandling skills have given one of the best assist-to-turnover ratios among the nation's top point guards. Photo by Savoy/LVSV

losses, there were questions of whether teammate Reggie Manuel was the one that was needed to step to the forefront.

Thomas disagrees, sort of, with both philosophies. "There is a lot of leadership on this team. I feel I have to step up, as well as Reggie. Fred Haygood and Kenny Gibson have been here a while too. They play big roles also."

The backcourt of duo of

Thomas and Manuel has been regarded as "one of the best" on the West Coast, and had *The Sporting News* saying that (Head Coach Rollie) Massimino has a set of guards rivaling any school in the nation.

Monday night the pair combined for 18 points and 4 assists, 7-for-21 (.333%) shooting from the field, 2-for-7 (.284%) shooting from treyland.

Even on a night when the Rebels couldn't find the glue to stick it together, Thomas and Manuel proved their worth to the team with extreme dedication and that leadership the young rebs need.

Before Thomas boarded the bus Tuesday morning, he did promise that the Runnin' Rebels this city has grown to love over the past two decades would be back.

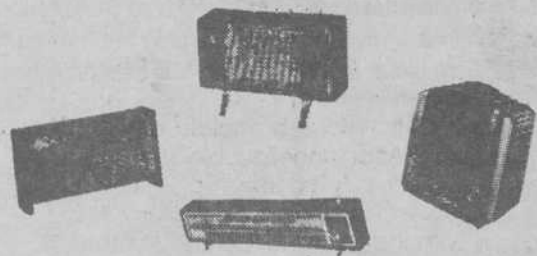
He admits that there is a lot of hard work ahead of the young squad, but thinks with the bond the Rebels maintain among each other, it is potentially a good solid team.

If and when this season it happens, you can be sure that Thomas will be standing at the bow, with his crew at starboard, pointing and directing the line of attack on the enemies.

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