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# CHICAGO NATIVE HENRY BAILEY BRINGS NOTHING LESS THAN EXCELLENCE TO THE GRIDIRON FOR UNLV

**W.G. Ramirez**

It all started with a group of 12- and 13-year-olds in the South side of Chicago in 1985 and '86. A forlorn field occupied by youngsters that were doing exactly what they saw their NFL idols do on TV.

On offense, there is the quarterback that describes the upcoming play on his chest with his index finger. Or he would simply scrawl the play in the ground with that same finger or a broken limb from a tree. The defense would be sending the blitz, once every four downs, otherwise they'd be counting "five-mississippi's" in order to rush.

Just as basketball dreams are created in city playgrounds and baseball dreams are originated on deserted sandlots, UNLV receiver Henry Bailey's dream started on that desolate field in South Chicago.

"We would always play out in the park," says Bailey. "There was like 15 or 20 of us, (that) put together sort of a league our-

selves. It wasn't real organized, but it was something that we did to the best of our ability. We had uniforms that we all went out and bought ourselves.

"We did everything the pros did. We emulated what they did on TV. It helped me going into high school, because I really wanted to play."

Bailey attended John F. Kennedy High School and pursued his football dream immediately. In his freshman year, Bailey would only see action on the special teams, but that wouldn't stop him from returning the next year to make a crack for a backfield position.

"I got my big chance in my sophomore year at running back," says Bailey. "The rest was pretty good, for the following three years."

Pretty good?

Bailey was an All-Public League football player as a junior and a senior and was eventually selected to play in the league's all-star game. Bailey

transferred to Collins High in his senior year, where he placed third in the state in the 100 meters with a time of 10.2.

Growing up in the section of Chicago that Bailey lived wasn't as bad as most of the South side, but it was close enough to where many youngsters were subjected to the street life. Bailey's parents trusted his instincts and pretty much kept loose reins on him.

"My parents gave me freedom to do what I wanted to do," admits UNLV's all-time purpose yardage leader. "They always stressed doing the right thing, and I never wanted to do anything that was going to disgrace them. My mother always told me that my reputation goes a long way and that's something that I'm carrying with me to this very day."

In order to keep that positive image in tact, Bailey associated himself with kids that were into athletics and things he enjoyed doing.

"The people I hung around with, all they wanted to do was play basketball, baseball and football. I think my peers were positive."

Henry Bailey, Sr., admits that there were a few times that he and his wife had to put their foot down, but there were never any serious problems in raising Henry, Jr.

"Once or twice, there would be boys that would try and steer Henry the wrong way, but my wife and I stepped in," says Bailey, Sr. "He was always a good student, and he never missed a day of school. If he was sick, he'd still want to go."

"Knock on wood, I've never had a problem with him, he's always been a good kid."

Bailey, Sr., related back to when a younger Henry spent a summer working with him in his truck. He says his son was always enthused about working and was able to maintain a good sense of responsibility.

"He had to be up at 7:00 a.m.

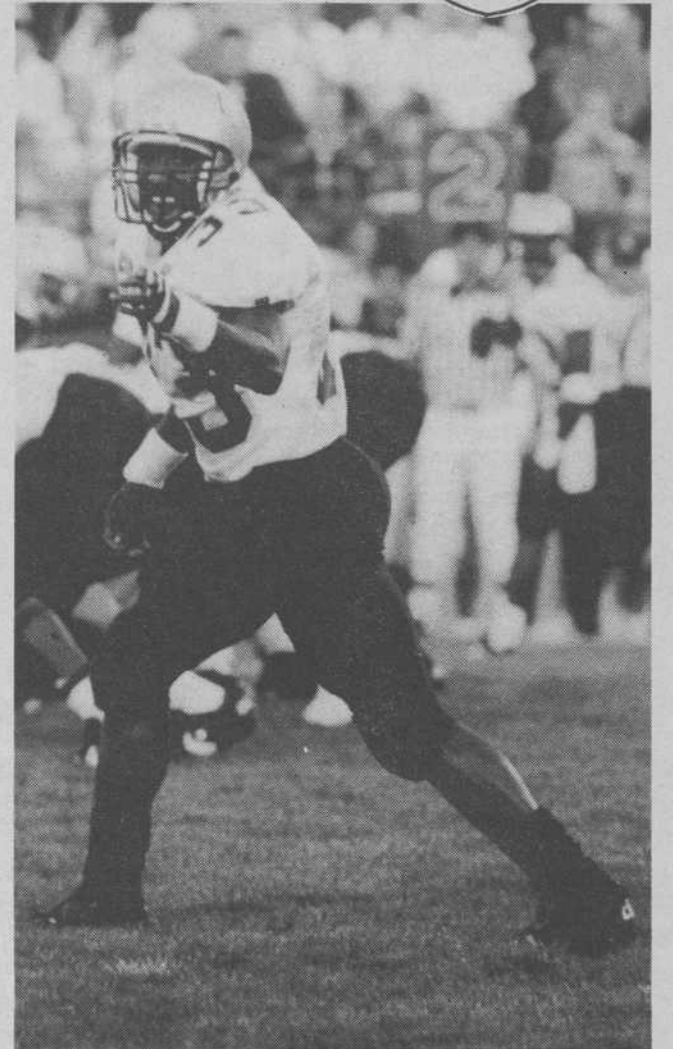


Photo courtesy of: UNLV Sports Information

**RECORD BREAKER** -- UNLV's Henry Bailey has already broken the school's 16 year-old all-time all-purpose yardage mark, and is now ready to become the school's reception king.

and go 'til 5:00 p.m., and he never had a problem with it."

As the recruiting calls came pouring in from colleges, Bailey knew it was time for him to get away from Chicago. He was ready to get away from that area,

number one, and be on his own, number two.

"I really wanted to get away from home to stress my independence," says Bailey, "and go somewhere that I could play. (See Bailey, Page 24)

## UNLV Has Tough Week Of Practice While Preparing For San Jose State

**W.G. Ramirez**

It's been a long season for the UNLV football program. It has included broken records, a couple of key road conference wins, a last-minute homecoming victory and some tough road trips. It actually sounds as if enough has been done to complete an entire season. But in reality, it's just beginning.

After a much needed bye week, the Rebels continue their quest towards the Big West Conference title this Saturday evening at the Sam Boyd Silver Bowl, when they'll play host to San Jose State.

The Spartans are reeling from a 42-10 thrashing at the hands of Nevada-Reno, a game that UNLV Head Coach Jeff Horton predicted would go the other way.

"I've been quiet for a long time and I think that now is the time to start shooting rounds off now-and-then," says Horton. UNLV and Nevada-Reno will meet on November 19 for what could be the deciding game for the BWC title.

Coming off a week's rest, Horton and his staff have been putting the Rebels through some tough practices this past week, not to mention some volatile meetings, in hopes of sparking the intensity level.

"They've never been in a conference race and by this point in the season they've always been out of it," says Horton. "It's kind of exciting for the kids and the staff."

The main thing that Horton and company have been telling the

team, is that if vying for a championship isn't worth getting motivated for, all the off-season hard work is being wasted.

According to Sports Information Coordinator Mark Wallington, the players have been responding well. Wallington said that on Tuesday, Defensive Line coach O'Neill Gilbert "really had the players hitting hard."

Horton says his main concerns are surrounding the third-down conversions, both offensively and defensively. UNLV is converting 33% of the time, while their opponents are getting the job done very close to 40% of the time.

"On offense, our third-down conversions were very bad against Tulsa and on defense, we let them get too many third-down conversions," admits Horton. "That's really a key I think to our success is to keep the ball and keep the drives going, 'cause the last three or four games we've let our defense be on the field way too much. If we keep doing that then we won't win the championship."

SJSU seems to have the same problem, except they're worse off. The Spartans are only converting 25% of the time and their opponents are converting 48% of the time.

"They're 1-6, but five of their losses are against some pretty good (teams)," says Horton. Besides Nevada-Reno, SJSU's losses include: Fresno State, Baylor, Stanford, California and Washington. The average score of SJSU's games is 44-16, in favor of their

(See UNLV, Page 24)

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