

POINT OF VIEW

Our View

Rebels face brains, brawn in Princeton

It's the classic brains vs. brawn matchup, with a twist.

That's how today's UNLV-Princeton NCAA tournament contest could be described. But in this case its the Ivy Leaguers that are packing the mental might and the muscle.

Princeton is known the world over for its top notch academic programs. UNLV, which news reports say is an up-and-coming academic institution, is known the world over for its bouts with the NCAA. While Princeton players work hard on the G.P.A (grade point average), it seemed many Rebels throughout the years were concerned only with the PPG (points per game), as evidenced by numerous suspensions and players being declared academically ineligible.

UNLV is a young institution, having just celebrated its 40th birthday... Given this, it's going to take a while to develop world-class curriculum in every department — and UNLV has nationally respected programs — but so much of the school's allure comes from Las Vegas' glitz and the notoriety of the Runnin' Rebels. When the Runnin' Rebels do bad — off the court — the town hurts.

Conversely, Princeton's image isn't tied to the success of its basketball team. Win or lose, the Ivy League school will always be mentioned in glowing terms.

And now for the muscle.

Princeton sports one of the nation's best records, 26-1. They've backdoored their way to a nearly flawless record, powered by a predictable slow-the-action-to-a-turtlespace-and-execute-the-pinpoint-backdoor-pass-gameplan.

Their deliberate halfcourt games run counter to UNLV's frenetic, track meet style. And it's that molasses-paced style that could give the giddy Rebels — who are just happy to make the tournament after capping an uneven season with an improbable WAC conference title — the fits all game long.

Will the Runnin' Rebels be patient enough on defense where Princeton will have them thinking the entire 35 seconds on each possession? Will they let an athletically inferior team beat them at a thinking man's game? Will the Princeton train, moving at tortoise's pace, steamroll the streak Rebels?

Or will the Rebels sock it to the Ivy Leaguers? Let the madness begin.



Annan top player in dicey war games

UN Secretary General should be lauded for his shrewdness

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Less than two weeks ago the American government was about to go to war against Iraq again. Newspaper headlines blared that the American round-the-clock bombing of Iraqi military targets — intended to force dictator Saddam Hussein to allow United Nations weapons inspectors unimpeded access to the country's weapons sites — was imminent.

The American military high command projected that the planned four-day bombing assault would kill more than 1,500 Iraqis.

Those projections helped provoke vigorous objections to renewing military action from several of America's allies in Europe and among the Arab states, and, surprisingly, it provoked a sudden, strong grass roots reaction within the United States, too.


Now, there has been no bombing, no deaths, and no possibility of a wider conflict because Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary General, persuaded Hussein to permit the weapons inspections on the terms the Clinton Administration wanted.

Yet, to hear and read some commentators, you'd think that Annan was, on the one hand, just easy pickings for the shrewd, duplicitous Iraqi strongman, or, on the other, just an errand boy for President Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

In the immediate wake of the accord, some newspapers reported that Albright was in effect Annan's ghostwriter in crafting its terms, and in a crack bordering on racist, radio talk

To Be Equal

By Hugh B. Price
President
National Urban League



show host Don Imus even called Annan "a waiter" who carried America's orders to Baghdad.

Don't be fooled by the detractors. Annan's eleventh-hour and successful negotiations were a dramatic example of high-stakes diplomacy carried out by a skilled diplomat.

Of course, no one takes Saddam Hussein at his word. No one thinks the utmost vigilance — and more tough talk on the President part — won't be required to compel Hussein to live up to the agreement. It may even be that America will have to take military action in the future.

But Annan's success in averting the bombing campaign was notable for one specific reason: As *Newsweek* magazine put it in its story this week, it bought the Clinton Administration time.

"Now, the White House is puzzling over a slew of options," the magazine stated, "[such as] training insurgents, boosting opponents in exile — that might help get rid of Saddam or at least contain him. If nothing else, the deal gives Clinton's term breathing room to figure out the next move."

These words define what is

most often the *stuff* of diplomacy: figuring out the next move short of war. Diplomacy is the pursuit of the practical — in this instance, preventing the outbreak of military conflict, convincing the opposing sides to try for *this week* to peaceably work out their difference in the hopes that a long-term solution can be hammered out across the negotiating table.

That is what has been occurring for decades in the three-cornered conflict in Northern Ireland, and the one between Israelis and Palestinians in the Middle East, and in the still-murderous conflict in the Balkans and in

other hot spots around the globe.

In that regard, the U.S.-Iraq conflict — for all of Saddam Hussein's brutality — is no different.

Was Kofi Annan acting alone? Of course not. That's not the function of a United Nations Secretary General. His function is to be a mediator, to work in concert with leaders and diplomats of the world's nations to preserve the peace and advance the interests of peace. That is what Annan did here.

And why should his ability to do so so skillfully surprise anyone? After all, no one rises to the top of any nation's diplomatic corps, and then campaigns for and is voted Secretary General of the United Nations without possessing superb political instincts.

So, the notion that Annan was the equivalent of a country bumpkin pushed this way and that by either Hussein or the United States reveals more about those who push that line than about Annan himself. It

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