

UNLV players may sue to defend title

LAS VEGAS (AP) — UNLV basketball players may sue the NCAA over its decision to ban the Runnin' Rebels from defending their national title, a lawyer for the players said Monday.

Stephen Stein said he has been asked by several players to represent them in an effort to block or overturn the NCAA decision.

"The ones I've spoken to are quite hurt and they want action," Stein said. "They feel they should not be penalized for something that occurred when they were 6 or 7 years old."

Stein, who has represented UNLV players in interviews with NCAA investigators probing recruiting violations at the university, told KVBC-TV that the "probability is quite high" that he will sue the NCAA on behalf of the players.

Any suit, he said, would be separate from any university action in appealing the ban on post-season play for the upcoming season. Stein was paid by UNLV to represent players during questioning by the NCAA, but said the university has no

part in a possible players' suit.

Stein declined to discuss any grounds for the suit, which he said would be the first of its kind by players against the NCAA. He said he was contacted by several players, but declined to identify them.

UNLV president Robert Maxson met for 1½ hours with Coach Jerry Tarkanian and Athletic Director Brad Rothermel on Monday to plan an appeal of the NCAA's decision to ban the Rebels from defending their national championship.

Maxson said earlier, however, that the university would not instigate any legal action and would work within the NCAA guidelines in its appeal to the organization.

The NCAA announced Friday that the Rebels could not defend the title they won in April since the university had not suspended Tarkanian, as it was ordered to do in 1977. Tarkanian sued the NCAA over his suspension and won a court order preventing the suspension.

Magnetic field satellite launch delayed

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — An electrical problem delayed Monday's launch of an Atlas rocket with a government satellite that's supposed to illuminate Earth's invisible magnetic field lines by releasing chemicals in space.

Two launch attempts Monday were called after computers failed to indicate whether the Atlas had switched over to internal power.

"They're just going to troubleshoot it and see what the problem was," said Jack Isabel, spokesman for rocket builder General Dynamics. "Obviously, it's always disappointing when you can't launch, but one of these days everything will go right and we'll have a success."

Isabel said a new liftoff date would be announced after crews determined the cause of the problem.

Throughout the morning, there had been concern about thunderstorms, but the weather improved and would have been fine for the scheduled 3:26 p.m. liftoff. Sunday's launch attempt was postponed by threatening thunderstorms.

The first launch attempt, on Friday, was called off because of a helium leak caused by a

loose vent duct. The entire set of four liquid helium vent ducts was replaced Saturday.

The commercial Atlas 1 rocket was to boost the Combined Release and Radiation Effects Satellite into an elliptical orbit 217 miles by 22,236 miles high. The \$189 million satellite is a joint program of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Defense Department.

Starting this fall, the 2-ton satellite is to eject 24 canisters filled with barium, lithium and other chemicals. The released chemicals will be ionized by the sun's ultraviolet rays, creating large, glowing clouds.

The clouds will spread along Earth's magnetic field lines, illuminating them in an array of colors visible to the naked eye. Some of the releases will resemble the aurora borealis, or the northern lights.

The first canisters will be released in September via ground signals over American Samoa in the South Pacific. People in North America will get their first glimpse of the releases in January 1991.

Additional releases are planned next summer over the Caribbean, Florida and the southern portions of Alabama

and Georgia are expected to be within sight range.

The satellite originally was to have been deployed by astronauts aboard space shuttle Challenger in 1987. But the 1986 Challenger disaster resulted in a lengthy delay, and NASA and the Air Force had the satellite redesigned to fit into the commercial Atlas 1 rocket.

The launch will mark the first of a commercial Atlas and the eighth commercial rocket launch by an American company. The San Diego-based General Dynamics Space Systems Division provided the \$65 million rocket and launch services under a barter agreement with NASA, which gave the company spare Atlas parts and ground support equipment.

NASA used earlier versions of the Atlas to boost planetary probes and other midsize payloads.

General Dynamics will join McDonnell Douglas and Martin Marietta Corp. as America's only commercial launch providers. McDonnell Douglas launched the nation's first commercial rocket, a Delta, last August. Martin Marietta followed four months later with its Titan.

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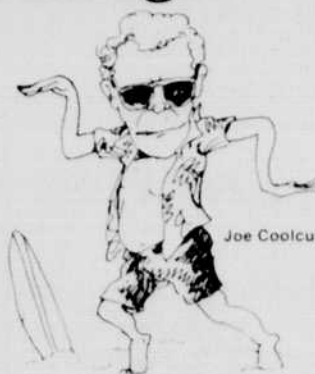
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