

HB Arnett's



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BARREN AND BARON: BYU BEATS AZTECS 23-6

According to the dictionary, barren refers to land too poor to produce much or any vegetation.

Barren also refers to BYU's offense against San Diego State in the Poinsettia Bowl last Thursday evening. It was too poor to produce much or any points.

Synonyms for land that is barren include worthless, void of production and infertile. That also applies to the BYU offense this season in general and in particular against the Aztecs.

Quite frankly, the BYU offense reeked royally this season. Against San Diego State, it was no different. You might say that the Cougar offense this year, for a variety of reasons, was a "royal pain in the patootie".

In a positive way that term also defines Kyle Van Noy with his play against the Aztecs last Thursday night. He was a "royal pain in the patootie" for San Diego State.

All Baron Van Noy did against the Aztecs was block a punt and score two touchdowns defensively for the Cougars. He played royally and regally.

Coronation

Let's be real. The BYU defense carried this team all season long. Van Noy's spectacular play against SDSU, was simply a coronation of just how royally Bronco Mendenhall's defense played in the past 13 games.

In football and feudal terms, the BYU defense was lord of the land. In futile terms, the BYU offense was, well...just futile.

That also defines the continuing relationship between BYU and San Diego State. The Cougars are still the landowners of the football field and the Aztecs are still the serfs seeking to find a way to beat BYU.

The difference in this game was the five turnovers created by the BYU defense. Cody Hoffman carted off the Offensive MVP of the game award, simply because they had to give the trophy to somebody on the offensive side of the ball on the winning team.

His Excellency, Baron Van Noy, was given the Defensive MVP award, but in reality, the excellent play of Van Noy could have also taken home the Offensive MVP award if the bowl bylaws would have allowed it.

Field Goal

BYU did manage a field goal late in the first half to trail SDSU 6-3 at the intermission.

That was as good as it got for the Aztecs. They could only muster 70 yards of offense in the second half against the Cougar defense. For the game, the Aztecs had just 263 yards of offense.

James Lark, who started the game at quarterback for the Cougars, and the rest the offensive, put up decent numbers, but couldn't put up points. Lark threw for 244 yards on a 23-42 passing night. He also threw two interceptions.

Riley Nelson got one series in the game. He was 0-2 with an interception.

But give the BYU defense their due. They won this game. They dominated this game and deserve the coronation, credit and crown as the best defense in BYU football history.

SOMETHING HAS TO GIVE OR GO OFFENSIVELY FOR BYU

Remember the good old days?

Remember when BYU used to be in the upper echelon of the elite offensive college football teams?

Somewhere down memory lane, the BYU offense has taken the wrong fork in the road.

They just aren't a good offensive football team anymore.

This is not meant to be a dog-pile on Doman (Brandon, the Cougar offensive coordinator), but despite how you try to spin it, the buck stops at the Doman door.

He's in charge and if he can't get it done, then Bronco Mendenhall has to look at other options.

Yes, I am well aware of the football facts of this season that could be blamed for poor offensive production. I know that injuries riddled the offensive line and I know that BYU went through three quarterbacks this season because of other injuries.

The bottom line, however, is that regardless of reasons, BYU finished 56th in the nation in total offense this season. That is a far cry from the days that BYU was a fixture in the top five offensive schools in the nation.

Reputation

BYU made its reputation and sold tickets with passing in the good old days. They were always at the top or near the top of the leader board in that category. This season, BYU finished 51st among all FBS teams throwing the ball.

Just an observation, but jobs at the former BYU quarterback factory appear to have been outsourced to some foreign read option offense.

Hey, a one or two year aberration or bump in the road offensively for BYU can be tolerated, but the bump in the road seems to be at the top.

The days of Dewey Warren, Doug Scovil, Mike Holmgren, Ted Tollner and Norm Chow are gone. So is the BYU passing game.

The guys running the show now for the Cougars were born, bred and raised on option football. Doman and Dupaix, that would be Joe, the running back coach, cut their teeth on option football at Skyline HS in Salt Lake.

Doman's most productive year at BYU was as an option oriented quarterback under Gary Crowton. Dupaix came from Navy, the freaking frigate of the option game.

Nobody wants to demote Doman or fire him, including me, but Bronco has to see what has happened offensively the last two years.

BYU needs to bring in somebody with a resume that screams offensive production at all levels of football.

LaVell's Living

LaVell made a living hiring guys that knew offensive football and had resumes outside of BYU to prove it.

Maybe Mendenhall needs to hire outside the current circle of graduate assistants and life long Cougars to find a guy, LDS or not, that can rejuvenate the stagnant BYU offense.

With long-time offensive coach, Lance Reynolds, announcing his retirement, there is an opening. Based on rumblings, there could be at least one more opening on the offensive staff.

Forget verbal commitments from players to BYU, Bronco Mendenhall needs to make a commitment to upgrade his offensive staff and the sooner the better.

BYU Still A Prime Target

In a recent (Dec 18) ESPN Insider article written by Steve Conner, the author detailed how more conference realignment is going to take place.

He listed his Top Five Realignment "Free Agents" that should be in demand when everything shakes out.

He had BYU as No. 1 in the conference realignment free agency market.

Here is what he said about BYU:

1. Brigham Young University

Current affiliation: Independent

10-year record: 82-43, eight bowls, two conference titles (Mountain West)

TV market: Salt Lake City (33rd)

The Cougars wisely broke off their chats with the Big East not too long before the conference started its 2012 implosion. Its two-year run as a Notre Dame-ish independent has been a success, but without the TV and BCS safety nets that the Irish enjoy, BYU officials know that they must continue shopping for a conference football home.

The Big 12 has quietly poked around Provo. People within BYU tell me that the Pac-12 has also made stealthy inquiries, though the folks at archrival Utah don't want to hear of it. There is also talk of a new "remnants conference" that would essentially reunite the Mountain West and add in Big East refugees. But is a cobbled-together league really a better option than independence, or waiting on one of these inquiring conferences to make a move?

"We talk a lot about media markets driving all of this," said a West Coast AD. "Salt Lake is a solid market. But really, BYU transcends that. They are one of the few schools with a national following. Really, it's global. BYU TV is already in 50 million households on its own. It's a giant brand with a passionate fan base. Otherwise, they couldn't have gone independent in the first place. There's a lot to like there. We may try to downplay it, but we all know that."

Conner's Top Ten list of realignment free agents included the following schools:

1. BYU
2. Houston
3. Cincinnati
4. Boise State
5. Temple
6. UConn
7. South Florida
8. Navy
9. San Diego State
10. SMU

Jabari and Job Loss

The current Washington administration can't be happy that Jabari Parker chose to play his college basketball at Duke instead of BYU.

It's bad for the employment statistics.

Because of being on the wrong side of the Jabari Jackpot deal, I am being forced to layoff at Christmas all the staff at Cougar Sportsline. While not quite a Hostess Twinkie moment, because I will still be in business, gone are the staff.

I had to say adios to the entire accounting and bookkeeping department. Gone are the secretarial staff and receptionists. So long to lawn care and the research and development departments.

Sayonara to the social media and IT staffs. It wasn't easy doing a hatchet job on the Human Resource department. Marketing was also a victim of the machete.

I did retain my wife. She is head of the reality and get a grip department.

Since I was the only employee in all of the eliminated departments, I should have much more free time on my hands. I am considering immersing myself in either square dancing or diesel engine repair.

Meanwhile, here is another issue. I hope you and Jabari Parker enjoy it.

Basketball Briefs

Mark Pope's resume as a BYU recruiter skyrocketed last week. That is because Jabari Parker said that the only reason he even considered BYU as one of his final five schools was because of Pope, the BYU assistant coach.

Tim LaComb, another BYU assistant basketball coach, is listed as the recruiting coordinator on Dave Rose's staff, but it was Pope making most of the stops at Parker's home. It was Pope that accompanied Rose to see Parker play in Texas along with Tom Izzo and Mike Krzyzewski.

It was Pope who was the BYU coach in Florida this week watching the Lone Peak commits play their way into the championship game of the City of Palms Classic tournament.

Speaking of Lone Peak and their outstanding performance at the COP tourney, they have turned heads and made national recruiting gurus take notice.

They have also given BYU basketball fans something to look forward to with the addition of Eric Mika next season and Nick Emery and TJ Haws a few years down the road after serving their LDS missions. Mika reportedly will play next season for the Cougars and then depart for his mission.

We mentioned last week that the City of Palms Classic, is the premier holiday high school tournament in the nation. It always has been because they always attract the top ranked teams in the country.

The Knights of Lone Peak were being called the BYU jayvee by some writers and tweeters covering the tourney.

Tonight they face Montverde Academy of Florida for the championship trophy. If LPHS wins, it will complete the trifecta for the team.

Emery won the tourney's three point shooting contest and Mika won the slam dunk competition.

Beating Montverde won't be easy.

Here is the tournament bio on the team.

- **Montverde Academy (Fla.)** ... 23-4 ... *Florida-bound point guard 6-0 SR Kasey Hill and 6-10 SR Dakari Johnson are both national top-15 talents, joining forces with 6-8 SR Devin Williams (West Virginia) to make Kevin Boyle's team, the No. 1 seed at the City of Palms, a national championship contender.*

Of course Lone Peak beating Callaway HS of Mississippi, Chester HS of Pennsylvania and Memphis Southwind wasn't supposed to happen either.

The Knights beat Callaway 60-42, defeated Chester 73-50 and bested Southwind 67-52 to advance to the title game tonight.

- **Jackson Callaway (Miss.)** ... 24-6 ... *The Chargers won Mississippi's Class 5A state title behind 6-7 SR TreShawn Bolden and No. 1-ranked (HoopScoop) 6-4 SOPH Malik Newman, whose 22.9 ppg broke Monte Ellis' freshman state record and earned him first-team All-State honors.*

- **Chester (Pa.)** ... 32-0 ... *Guards 6-7 SR Rondae Jefferson (Arizona) and 6-1 SR Darius Robinson lead senior-driven Clippers (58-game win streak), who have won back-to-back state championships and were ranked No. 4 nationally in ESPN.com rankings.*

- **Memphis Southwind (Tenn.)** ... 28-5 ... *The Jaguars have won back-to-back titles at the prestigious Rumble on the Ridge and are still hungry for a state title, led by dunk-contest favorite 6-5 SR Jajuan Johnson (Marquette), 6-8 SR Johnathan Williams III (Missouri) and 6-4 SR Payton Hulsey (Lipscomb).*

We are still hearing that Bronson Kaufusi, the BYU freshman defensive lineman, will join the BYU basketball team next week. His bulk and post presence will be a nice addition to the front court of BYU.

Baylor Blasts BYU

Despite 26 points and 17 rebounds by Brandon Davies, it wasn't good enough to keep BYU from getting blasted in Waco by the Baylor Bears.

The Cougars are now 8-4 on the season. The Cougars only road win this year was against Weber State in Ogden last week.

Next up for BYU is a game at home against Northern Arizona on Dec 27. That is a game that in which the Cougars can compete.

Virginia Tech then comes to Salt Lake City to face the BYU on Saturday, Dec 29 at the Energy Solutions Arena.

League play begins Thursday, Jan 3 in Provo in a matchup against Loyola Marymount.

Football Fluff and Stuff

BYU nabbed an early signing in football last week.

Trent Trammell, a 5-11, 185 pound cornerback from San Francisco City College in California, inked with the Cougars and will be enrolling in school in January.

Trammell had also considered UTEP and New Mexico. [Click here](#) for a story on Trammell's signing.

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Northern Arizona

Thursday, Dec 27 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

BYUtv

BYU vs. Virginia Tech

Saturday, Dec 29 at Salt Lake City

Tipoff: Noon Mountain Time

TV: ESPNU

BYU vs. Loyola Marymount

Thursday, Jan 3 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv



Time running out for those last minute Christmas gifts for family and friends. We can help you out with our Cougar Sportsline Christmas Gifts Special.

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