

HB Arnett's



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BYU's Current Basketball Situation Explained by BBC in North and South Mini Series

I'm a die hard fan of the BBC and most of their dramas and mini series.

My wife and five daughters got me hooked.

One of my favorites is *North and South*. I recommend it as good drama and a good explanation for what is currently happening to BYU basketball.

I extrapolate the explanation from dialogue between John Thornton, the owner and Master of Marlborough Mills, and Nicholas Higgins, a union organizer, who is working for Thornton due to some dicey and interesting situations in the plot.

The short synopsis of the dialogue is that Thornton says something to the effect that men work better when they eat well.

Higgins replies as follows: ***“Well, some days there's good meat, other days nothing fit for a dog even if you got money in your pocket. There's your market forces in action.”***

That in a nutshell describes what is happening to BYU basketball this season. It has nothing to do with coaching, preparation or anything else.

Bad Years

It is all about a couple of bad years on the Mormon Meat Market, on which BYU has to rely to be good.

What we are seeing this season on the court is meat from a few years back that while palatable, just isn't prime cut or productive enough to make BYU very good this year. There is also some high quality meat that was very good, but has gone bad through career ending injuries.

For BYU to be good on the national scene, there have to be great cuts and recruits in the Mormon meat market in basketball.

The fact that there are two walk-ons and a player that wasn't deemed good enough for BYU to recruit as a scholarship player out of high school currently starting for BYU this season indicates to me that there was a year or two of slim and lean pickings for BYU in that market.

There is nothing that can be done now about past meat market years that were questionable. The story of BYU basketball is meat that is currently in cold storage. It doesn't get any colder than the eastern edge of Russia where Kyle Collinsworth is currently serving an LDS mission.

In the Ol' Refrigerator

As former Utah Jazz announcer Hot Rod Hundley used to say, when it comes to storing some prime cuts for next year and beyond with recent signees and commits, "it's in the ol' refrigerator. That more than coaching, preparation, scouting and all else, indicates to me that better BYU basketball days are just around the corner.

And on the days and years when there is prime cut meat at the Mormon market, BYU isn't the only school shopping at the counter.

Other big name schools have found the secret of the Mormon meat market. You can get high quality, high grade cuts and be assured that you aren't going to get any excess fat, gristle or grief by signing from the Mormon market.

For those who are thinking that Dave Rose should diversify his shopping for recruits and look at non-LDS shops, that idea won't fly. It was tried and didn't work.

Steve Cleveland came to BYU and thought he would infuse the program with juco players from the Central California community college scene. None of them lasted or worked out, except for Terrell Lyday.

There was even a try for some other non-LDS players in the last 15 years. Do the names of Luis Lemes, Rashaun Broadus, Kevin Woodbury, Fernando Malaman and Lamont Morgan Jr. ring any bells?

Not Great Percentage

Granted, Rafael Araujo was not LDS, but his wife was and without that connection, he wouldn't have signed with BYU. The only non LDS recruits that have been players over the last 15 years that I can think of were Keena Young, Mike Hall and Terrell Lyday. That's not a great recruiting percentage.

There was the Walter Roess connection with Brazilian recruits. Remember Luiz de Toledo?

Steve Cleveland and Dave Rose went through all their juco connections. They used the Green Brothers at Arizona Western and South Plains.

They used the LDS connection at Western Nebraska. With Dave Rice on staff, they had a nice flirtation with Las Vegas recruits such as Michael Lloyd, Jr. and Jonathan Tavernari. Tavernari played for Rice's brother at Bishop Gorman, but he was a Roess recruit.

BYU has zero chance at landing any premier non LDS recruits. That is just the way it is. The bottom line is that the Cougar basketball program, is, has been and always will be tied to the meat counter of the Mormon market.

Here are the t-bones and talent BYU has had when they were competitive. They are all LDS. Trent Plaisted, Lee Cumard, Jimmer Fredette, Jackson Emery, Noah Hartsock, Mekeli Wesley, Travis Hansen, Mark Bigelow, Tyler Haws, Brandon Davies and Kyle Collinsworth.

It appears to me that one prime cut from this year's Mormon market is probably no longer in BYU's reach.

No Mission Now

Last week Jabari Parker told Chicago media that he will play college basketball next season and then decide later on a Mormon mission plans. It is my opinion that the only hope BYU had in landing Parker just went out the window with that announcement. We will see.

While Parker is the prime cut everyone was hoping for, there are still plenty of fillets and fine Mormon players on the market to restock the Cougar cupboard beginning next season.

To keep the prime cut pump primed for BYU basketball fans, see below for the show put on by BYU signees and commits from Lone Peak HS last Saturday in Chicago.

TWITTERPATED IN CHICAGO

Based on tweets and twitters from Chicago last Saturday, Lone Peak High School's 84-46 win over Proviso East HS was anything but tiddlywinks.

Check it all out for yourself. Thanks to the Lone Peak High School official twitter site for most of these.

[Isiah Thomas@iamisiahthomas](#) lone peak high school West highland Utah Great display of basketball today !

[Danny Hazan@DeeHaze24](#) Haws scored 24, Emery 19, Mika 18 and 15 boards and Toolson had 10 pts to go with 5 assists for Lone Peak

[Kyle Goon@kylegoon](#) Blog on Lone Peak's big win over nationally ranked Proviso East, an 84-46 win that shows how good they are: <http://bit.ly/So7cSn> [#tribpreps](#)

[NY2LASPORTS@ny2lasports](#) BYU commit Eric Mika scores 18 and grabs 15 reb lead Lone Peak (UT) to an 84-46 victory. BYU bound T.J. Haws with 24.

[Joe Henricksen@joehoopsreport](#) Lone Peak putting on an absolute clinic; unselfish, pass-first, great spacing, tough, dunks, 3s from 24 feet, impossible to trap

[DR. Basketball@bballphamway](#) I've been telling people for the longest that thiis Lone peak team will put on the best Show at the Chicago elite classic

[Michael O'Brien@michaelsobrien](#) I'm gonna say that this Lone Peak, Utah squad is the best team I've seen in a few years. Why don't any Chicago area schools play like this?

[Eric Bossi@ebosshoops](#) Lone Peak is figuring it out. 12-2 run in just a little over a minute. [#BYU](#) bound big Eric Mika pleasing the UIC Pavillion crowd w/dunks

And check out the quote from Donnie Boyce, the head coach at Proviso East. He said, "This is a great event, and there are a lot of great teams here, but hands down, we played the best team here."

The complete story is here from the Chicago Sun Times: [Lone Peak throttles Proviso East](#)

And here are some highlights from Saturday's play.

[Click Here.](#)

THEY ALL CAN'T PLAY QUARTERBACK AT BYU!

The quarterback controversy that swirled around BYU football this season is well documented. It continues to churn as the Cougars get ready for an appearance in the Poinsettia Bowl set for Dec 20.

Will it be James Lark or Riley Nelson?

As quirky and questionable the choice of BYU's starting quarterback has been this season with Nelson, Lark and Hill, it could have been even more convoluted.

What would have happened if Brad Sorensen was still in the program? Sorensen is the 6-4, 235 pound quarterback who will graduate from Southern Utah University.

He is the older brother of current Cougar safety Daniel Sorensen.

Sorensen is currently a candidate for the Payton Award, which goes to the premier offensive player in the FCS, Div 1-AA.

This past season he completed 273-of-439 pass attempts for 3,139 yards and 23 touchdowns.

He is listed by almost every NFL draft service as one of the top ten quarterback prospects in the nation, regardless of classification. Having prototypical size and a strong arm will get you noticed by the NFL scouts.

It didn't draw any looks from BYU coaches.

After an LDS mission, Sorensen played one year at San Bernardino College and then walked on at BYU. He redshirted as one of the scout team quarterbacks.

BYU coaches reportedly told him that he wouldn't have any chance at being a BYU quarterback and if he wanted to play, he should look to do so at a lower division school.

Apparently, evaluating quarterback skills is not a real strong suite with the BYU coaching staff.

Of all the quarterbacks that have come and gone or soon will go, Sorensen is the most likely of the bunch to be cashing an NFL paycheck for years to come.

Just another little bit of irony to throw into the crucible of Cougar quarterback play.

Sweet Sixteen for BYU Women

Here's the bad news, good news.

The BYU women's basketball team is going to continue to struggle. That's because they will be without their best player in Jennifer Hamson.

The good news is that BYU's women volleyball is doing just fine with Hamson.

She has been instrumental in carrying the Cougars to a sweet sixteen appearance beginning this Friday in Omaha.

The Lady Cougars defeated New Mexico State last Thursday. Actually it was more of a good old fashioned thrashing. It was the opening round hosted by BYU.

They followed that up with a harder, but just as productive second round with a three-set sweep of Oklahoma.

BYU will now face Oregon on Friday and if they can find a win against the Ducks, they are more than likely to face Nebraska. The Huskers will have an advantage in playing before a home crowd in Omaha.

BYU is now currently 27-3 on the year. All three losses came in league play in the West Coast Conference.

This is BYU's first NCAA appearance in the tournament since 2007. They are making up for lost time quite well with this team.

[Click here](#) for remarks by Coach Shawn Olmstead on what's ahead for the Cougars.

Cougars Go Clang, Clang in Loss to ISU

Using the word Clang to describe a basketball game is not a good thing.

That's because Clang is the sound made when the basketball hits the rim and bounces off instead of going through the net for a score.

BYU clanged their way to an 83-62 loss to Iowa State last Saturday in Ames, IA.

The loss moved the Cougars season record to 5-3 on the year.

The Cougars shot a very disappointing .369 from the field and an even more disappointing .200 from beyond the arc,

BYU's go to guy went south with his shooting against ISU. Tyler Haws was just 4-13 for 9 points. Brandon Davies led all scorers for the Cougars with 20 points.

BYU now two games at home in the Marriott Center against in-state schools Utah State and Utah.

The Aggies show up on Wednesday with the Utes in the house on Saturday. Both games tip at 7:00 pm Mountain Time and can be seen live on BYUtv.

Bye Bye Bronco?

Will they be caroling in Colorado and cussing in Provo if rumors of Bronco Mendenhall being courted as the new football coach in Boulder are true?

Who knows? What I do know is that at the reported \$2.5 million pop per year salary, Bronco would be foolish to not take the job.

Three years under contract and then regardless of whether he can win in Boulder or will continue the losing legacy, he will have enough bank to pursue his higher aspirations.

If football is fifth on his list, three years at Boulder and he will be able to fund any and other of his reported higher priorities.

One part of me thinks Bronco's style and shtick at BYU won't fly in Colorado or anywhere else. The other part of me thinks that Mendenhall has been around the college football circuit at Oregon State, Northern Arizona, Louisiana Tech and New Mexico and knows what is expected and what will work for schools not sponsored by the LDS Church.

When relieved of all the other expectations of being a BYU head football coach, Mendenhall actually might thrive at another institution.

It will be interesting to see if this rumor has legs enough to carry past the Poinsettia Bowl.

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Utah State (women)

Tuesday, Dec 4 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Utah State

Wednesday, Dec 5 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Utah

Saturday, Dec 8 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Weber State

Saturday, Dec 15 at Ogden

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Eastern New Mexico

Tuesday, Dec 18 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Baylor

Friday, Dec 21 at Waco

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: ESPN2