

*HB Arnett's*



801 372 - 0819

[hbarnett@fiber.net](mailto:hbarnett@fiber.net)

1391 West 800 South – Orem, Utah 84058

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***New Model, Same Mantra***

**If he isn't the Best Passer on the Team, Then why is Taysom Hill still BYU's Starting Quarterback?**

It's starting again. BYU is making a huge mistake by letting Taysom Hill be the starting quarterback for the Cougars.

You would think the coaches would have learned something last year when Ammon Olsen was clearly head and shoulders better than Hill heaving the football. The empirical evidence was overwhelming.

Just ask the five guys who accumulated the evidence by personally watching Olsen in the spring game and in limited public practices out throw and out perform Hill in tossing the football. They backed up their evaluations with nice two page write-ups on internet chat forums and it became obvious that BYU offensive coaches were making a huge mistake in letting Hill continue to lead the Cougar offense.

It gets worse. As clear as it was that Olsen was a better passer than Hill last year, it is absolutely crystal clear this season that Christian Stewart is even far more superior throwing the ball than Hill will ever hope to be.

Hill should hang it up. He will never be the passer that Olsen and Stewart are. It has been written in stone. Even more emphatically it has been written in HTML and posted world wide.

Forget the evaluation of Jim Harbaugh, the current NFL head coach and former coach at Stanford who recruited Hill. Discount what BYU coaches see in him. You can even throw away the scouting reports that NFL guys are already submitting to their teams about Hill.

### **Five Guys (Not the Hamburger type)**

Hill will never make it as a passer because five guys in their basements proclaimed it, posted it on the internet and 2000 other guys read and believed everything they said.

Wait, I just described me and this newsletter. Except I actually have some real football credentials. For example, had I been 5 inches taller, 36 pounds lighter and 2.8 seconds faster in the 40, I too would have been a much better passer than Taysom Hill.

So who is he?

If Hill is not a better quarterback than his backups of the past two seasons; Olsen and Stewart, with whom does he compare?

Here's my writing in my basement barometer of Hill compared to other BYU quarterbacks.

He has the arm strength of *John Walsh*.

He has more speed than *Steve Young*.

He is a better runner than *Young* and *Brandon Doman*.

He has the guts of *Max Hall*.

He doesn't read defenses like *Ty Detmer*...yet, but he does read all the keys on the spread option run game.

Like *Jim McMahon*, Hill is the team leader. There are no factions or favorites on this team. Hill is the man, regardless of how many deep throws Stewart completes in 7-on-7 drills

He is as good, if not better, in the public relations and face of the program department than any past Cougar quarterbacks.

Statistically, in Hill's first full year as a sophomore starter he racked up a top five historical season total offense number. Hill put up 4,282 yards as a sophomore last season

in total offense. Only four other BYU quarterbacks have done better. They include Ty Detmer, 5022 in 1990; Jim McMahon, 4627 in 1980; Ty Detmer, 4443 in 1989 and Steve Young, 4346 in 1983.

For a guy that some BYU fans still think shouldn't be the starting quarterback, Hill has produced the most total offense yardage in a season of any BYU quarterback in the last 23 years.

But can he throw the ball with touch? Can he hit the guy in the flat consistently? And can he throw the ball over the top and deep?

And most of all, how does he stack up against the BYU backups? It's apples and oranges. As for me, I'm putting all my fruit and faith in the guy that will lead BYU to one of its all time best seasons in history.

### **Eye Contact**

For me it's like Andrea Bocelli and Michael Bolton competing for singer of the year. There will always be some music aficionados who will vote for Bolton, despite Bocelli's unmistakable talents simply because Bocelli has a problem making eye contact with his audience and Bolton doesn't. Make your own choice by [clicking here](#) for Bocelli and [clicking here](#) for Bolton.

The question for BYU fans is do we want a quarterback that can beat his backup in a Punt, Pass and Kick contest or do we want a quarterback that can beat Texas, UCF, Houston, Utah State and Boise State. If we do, then Hill is our guy.

If not, then Bolton is your backup dreamboat.

### **Backup Rebuttals**

For those who continue to insist that BYU backups are better, here is some fodder to fling around. Olson should perform well this year at SUU. Christian Stewart is a very capable backup. He can throw the ball well and his strength is over the top with the deep ball. He just isn't BYU's best quarterback by any stretch of the imagination

He will do quite nicely however if needed, and if needed, Cougar fans, including me, will be glad he is on our team.

The best story of a BYU backup quarterback success story is that of Brad Sorensen, the current backup qb for the San Diego Chargers by way of Southern Utah University, by way of BYU as a walkon and by way of San Bernardino JC as a frosh and ultimately by way of Colton HS in California.

I qualify Sorensen's backup success story because while he was at BYU as the older brother of former BYU safety Daniel Sorensen, also on the verge of making the NFL

roster of the Kansas City Chiefs, Sorenson never officially was a backup quarterback for the Cougars.

That's because he never rose above 4<sup>th</sup> on the depth chart before transferring to SUU and eventually the San Diego Chargers. He left for playing time at SUU and there proved that he was the best passer and thrower BYU had while he was in Provo. The problem for Sorensen was that he wasn't recognized for his throwing skills because at the time the BYU offensive mindset was in a constant state of Heaps hypnosis.

## **For some real sad backup stories this fall try these on for size**

Talent is good, but timing is better.

That's the story this fall for three pretty darn good wide receivers on the BYU roster. Just last year, wide outs like Colby Pearson, Kurt Henderson and Mitchell Juergens would have fans frothing at the mouth.

Under the old BYU receiver model of guys that could run routes, catch anything in their area code and come up with clutch third down catches, these three receivers would be written up as stars and studs.

Unfortunately for this trio, their timing is horrendous even if their talent isn't. They happen to be on the same depth chart of BYU's best crew of receivers ever.

Even if one of them somehow comes up with a three-touchdown game somewhere along the lines of this season, they are destined to be back-up legends, at least for this season. That is what happens when the guys ahead of you are faster, bigger and game breaking type players.

The good news is that all three of the aforementioned guys still have more seasons to go from back up to block buster status. Pearson is 6-1, 185 and a sophomore out of Blackfoot, Idaho. Henderson is 6-1, 190 and a junior from St. George. Juergens is part of a twin tandem of brothers from Houston. He is 5-10, 180 and a sophomore.

How good are the guys in front of this trio? Jordan Leslie is good enough that after just 7 days of practice coming from UTEP to Provo, he was held out of the first real scrimmage to avoid a potential injury. Same with Ross Apo and it would also have been the case for Nick Kurtz.

Kurtz self excused himself from the scrimmage when he was diagnosed with a stress fracture in his foot last Friday. The early prognosis is that he will be out 6-8 weeks. Nobody can be happy about this event, except for maybe the three back up legends mentioned above. Yes, Kurtz does have a redshirt season available.

Devon Blackmon continues to make plays and exhibit speed. Keanu Nelson will be the only 5-9 tight end in BYU history. The fact that BYU will play Nelson there should dispel the annual stories in the media about how the tight ends are ready to restore their rightful place in Cougar offensive legend and lore.

Ain't goin' happen this season. There are just too many wide receiver weapons to worry about times gone by.

I grew up on the music of James Brown and really enjoyed watching the movie "*Get On Up*" this past weekend. I highly recommend it. It reminded me of BYU's backup situation in football. I know James Brown, but can't to this day name any of his Flames, the backup singers on stage with him.

I can name BYU starters, but by the middle of this season, I doubt that many of us can also name the BYU backup offensive players. That said, these backup players are competent enough to make me feel about the BYU offense the way James Brown sang about it. [Click here](#) for James Brown's and my thoughts on the Cougar offense.

## ***Football Fluff***

You do the math. Out of 22 starters, 9 were held out of the latest and first full contact scrimmage of fall camp last Saturday morning.

Injuries or prevention of injury was the predominant reason for the Saturday sabbatical, but academics and disciplinary reasons were also involved.

For you math majors that is 41 percent of the starters that didn't get out of the gate. For those keeping score they included Bronson Kaufusi, Manoa Pikula, Zac Stout, Craig Bills, Robertson Daniel, Jordan Leslie, Ross Apo, Nick Kurtz and Jamaal Williams.

A BYU game ticket doesn't get you validation for parking, but Saturday's scrimmage did get me some sort of validation, even if it was 5 years in coming.

It was 5 seasons ago that I was touting Adam Timo as a sure fire superstar for BYU. Since signing with BYU, the running back out of Snow Canyon HS in St. George, has changed his name from Timo to Hine, gone on an LDS mission, married, endured injury and never lived up to what I thought was his potential.

His potential may get me free parking this season. He actually looked like a Division I running back in Saturday's scrimmage. Now whether he will be good enough to warrant enough carries after the return of Jamaal Williams remains to be seen. But for me, what I "seen" last Saturday restored my long awaited hype and hope.

On the other hand, I don't expect any parking privileges provided by place kickers from BYU. Like me without reserved parking, the Cougar place kicking game looks to be

pretty pedestrian again for the 5<sup>th</sup> time in six years. Just my observation and I'm sticking with it until proven otherwise or parking at BYU becomes more plentiful.

Here are some other early fall camp observations. The BYU defense won't be as good as it has been in years past. At least it won't be as good until Bronco backs away from his current self appointed job description of overseeing the entire program and returns to doing what he does best: coach and create good defenses.

The over and under established by me is at 6 games before Mendenhall does a remake of the Jaime Hill story and takes back the full reigns of the defense. Trust me; this is one time that I don't want my parking or prognosis to be validated

Harvey was an invisible rabbit in the Jimmy Stewart movie of the same name. Harvey is anything but invisible during this fall camp. That is a reference to the play of two Harvey's during the first days of camp. Harvey Jackson is a player. He will play this season in the BYU defensive backfield. The transfer from Nebraska will make his one year at BYU very productive and Bronco Mendenhall smile.

Harvey Langi is also another very visible player who has transferred to BYU from Utah after serving an LDS mission. He looks athletic, but more importantly, he plays athletically. Just how much he plays will be determined not by his body and physical conditioning, but by how quickly he grasps the schemes and systems of Bronco's defense.

I don't expect any academy awards for best actors or players, but both of these Harvey's will certainly be up for supporting roles on this team's defense.

BYU is a 17-point favorite for its opener on the road at Connecticut. That's because the Huskies aren't very good. But neither is BYU in games east of the Mississippi River. In the 9 previous seasons since Bronco Mendenhall has been in charge, the Cougars are just 2-6 in games played in stadiums east of the Mississippi. They almost made it to 3-6 with a 54-3 drubbing of Tulane in New Orleans, but alas the Superdome is still a few miles west of the river.

Here's the geographical history of BYU playing back east under Mendenhall: 2013: Virginia-lost, 16-19; Notre Dame-lost, 13-23; Wisconsin-lost, 17-27. 2012: Notre Dame-lost, 14-17; Georgia Tech-won, 41-17. 2011: Ole Miss-won, 14-13. 2010: Florida State-lost, 10-34. 2006: Boston College- lost 23-30.

BYU football fans can get one last look at this team, this coming Friday night, August 15 at LaVell Edwards Stadium. A public scrimmage is set for 6 pm. A complete fall camp roster will be available at the scrimmage, but if you can't wait, you can get a peek at the roster with the PDF file attached to this letter.

Speaking of early peeks and practice, when the regular season and school starts, Bronco will be holding daily practice sessions at 6 am instead of the usual 3 pm time that has been used for the last 3 decades.

Sounds like early morning seminary to me, where I first learned the art of sleeping in church. But winning solves all issues, even early morning wake up calls. Let's hope BYU's win total will be significantly higher than their practice start time.

In the college football poker game, the allowance of P5 schools to have more autonomy has called BYU and the Cougar athletic program now will have to match the current bet or go home.

My money is on BYU to keep playing at the highest level. Tom Holmoe has already said that BYU will do what it takes to continue to play with the big boys.

There might be some concern about the amount of money for player stipends, insurance and such that this will cost the Cougars, but if continuing to play the game at the highest level is the intent of BYU that is what they will do.

There are some that think the LDS Church won't allow BYU to spend the money to play this game. I am not among those that think this way. The LDS Church, when it chooses to act, only goes first class in all it does.

The most recent example of this would be the City Creek Mall in Salt Lake City. The Church saw a need and met that need in a big time way. If BYU football in particular or athletics at BYU in general is considered a part of a plan, then expect BYU to step to the plate and continue to play.

Quite frankly, according to my way of thinking, BYU athletics is part of a bigger plan. For no other reason than programming for the huge investment the Church has in the BYU broadcasting center and its goals to meet programming needs world wide.

I may be myopic or just plain uninformed or dumb, but in my opinion, BYU sports is still a part of the overall program of the Church to spread its message. Again just like checking City Creek, check out BYU's broadcast center and the programming it provides world wide.

BYU and the Church already have an investment and they aren't going to fold in this proselyting and public relations game just because the P5 conferences have raised the bet.

If this was just an athletic or football deal, then all bets are off. BYU athletics, combined with other Church resources and goals, is much, much more than a game of wins and losses to the LDS Church

That's my opinion and I'm sticking to it.

## 2014 BYU Football Schedule

**Connecticut...**Friday, August 29 at East Hartford...ESPN, 5:00 pm MDT

**Texas...**Saturday, September 6 at Austin...Fox Sports 1, 5:30 pm MDT

**Houston...**Thursday, September 11 at Provo...ESPN, 7:00 pm MDT

**Virginia...**Saturday, September 20 at Provo...TV TBA

**Utah State...**Friday, October 3 at Provo...ESPN, 8:15 pm MDT

**Central Florida...**Thursday, October 9 at Orlando...ESPN, 5:30 MDT

**Nevada...**Saturday, October 18 at Provo...TV TBA

**Boise State...**Friday, October 24, at Boise...ESPN or ESPN2, 7:00 pm MDT

**Middle Tennessee...**Saturday, November 1 at Murfreesboro...CBS Sports Network,  
1:30 pm MDT

**BYE...**Saturday, November 8

**UNLV...**Saturday, November 15 at Provo...TV TBA

**Savannah State...**Saturday, November 22 at Provo...BYUtv, 1:00 pm MST

**California...**Saturday, November 29 at Berkeley...TV TBA (most likely Pac 12  
Network