

HB Arnett's

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BYU FOOTBALL RECRUITING LIKE A LUXURY CAR WITH A SUB-STANDARD AUDIO SYSTEM

If you received a new \$50,000 plus luxury car as a gift and then found out that it only had an AM radio, would you still be excited about the new car or whine about the less than perfect sound system?

Most rational thinkers would say that they would be excited about the new car despite the less than spectacular quality of audio that accompanied the gift.

Rational thinking and BYU football recruiting usually don't mix when it comes to some BYU fans.

There are some who will focus on the lack of FM stations and forget that they are driving a great automobile.

The problem with college football recruiting in general and with BYU football recruiting specifically, is that it is too visible, too long and too much like Hollywood.

We like our stars in the movies and recruiting, but some actors and some recruits have learned that the longer you can milk it, the more the fans will be frothing and egos will be fed.

In our opinion, too much emphasis in this BYU recruiting class has been placed on the last few Cougar prospects that said no to Bronco Mendenhall. That may give a tinny tone to the radio, but it doesn't diminish the quality of the overall recruiting car.

Because most fan bases like their recruiting drama fresh and updated hourly, it takes away from the overall effort.

Recruiting is like a telethon fund raising effort that goes on for days.

Big pledges that come in early are lauded and then forgotten. The bulk of the money needed can already be in the bank, but it is the last few dollars that are pleaded for that seem to bring the drama.

BYU had some disappointing drama in the late going of this recruiting class when Manti Te'o signed with Notre Dame and Xavier Su'a Filo signed with UCLA. That shouldn't diminish the the funds and foundation of this class that was already in the bank and drawing interest.

Recruits who commit late makes for drama and good internet and media chatter, but it doesn't make those recruits better than prospects who committed to the Cougars early and often.

If Craig Bills and Adam Hine (Timo) had opted to string out their recruitment until last week instead of deciding on BYU two years ago, those two would have been internet recruiting stars.

Timing should never be confused with talent.

Bills, Timo and a handful of other signees are the car and class of this recruiting season. The loss of other LDS prospects was disappointing and provided some late drama, but it is radio static that shouldn't diminish the overall great recruiting year of BYU.

Here is the final signing list for BYU along with some accolades compiled by the Cougar PR staff and a few of our own comments.

Lee Aguirre, DB, 5-9, 200, El Monte, Calif., Fullerton College... **What BYU Says:** Had 10 interceptions this past season and 36 tackles, 3.5 tackles for loss, 11 pass breakups and one blocked kick in 2008. Had seven pass interceptions the previous season. Played quarterback in high school... **What We Say:** Could be the Keena Young of this class. In case you forgot, Young was an inside scoring machine for BYU basketball. His problem was that he didn't have any size. Had he been 3 inches taller, he wouldn't have been at BYU but playing for a major school. That is how we see Aguirre. If he was three inches taller, he would be in the Pac-10. He will be here in May and should compete for playing time in the fall. Made a choice between Hawaii and BYU.

Terry Alletto, OL, 6-4, 280, Parker, Colo., Ponderosa HS... **What BYU Says:** Rated the No. 8 offensive center prospect and No. 5 Colorado prep prospect by Rivals.com. Has family ties to BYU with brothers Nick and Dan currently on the BYU roster... **What We Say:** Just because it was a given that he would be at BYU, this kid's talent has not been given enough hype. He refused to play the recruiting game, but he can play on the field. A terrific but underpublicized prize recruit and talent. Took other schools out of the recruiting picture early, but is a definite Big 12 and Pac 10 caliber player.

Jordan Atkinson, LB, 6-3, 235, Martinez, Calif., Diablo Valley JC... **What BYU Says:** Led Diablo Valley with 70 tackles in 10 games in 2008. Ranked second on team with six sacks. Has BYU ties with his father, Dave, playing for the Cougars and his grandfather, Chick, a former BYU head coach.... **What We Say:** Academics in high school were not a problem, so the fact that he started in the juco scene hopefully means he was a late bloomer. We expect solid, but not spectacular play from him. Colorado State also wanted to sign him.

Trevor Bateman, DB, 5-11, 185, Palm Desert, Calif., Palm Desert HS... **What BYU Says:** He has good athleticism and coveted foot-quickness at the corner position. Has good speed and runs a reported 4.45 40. Also played running back and receiver in high school and was recruited by Arizona and UNLV... **What We Say:** Another Forrest Gump cornerback recruit. When your cornerbacks are usually white and LDS, just like Gump's box of chocolates, you never know what you are going to get. On paper and on film this looks like a good one, but we won't know for three years until he is back from a mission and BYU gets their first bite of Bateman.

Craig Bills, DB, 6-2, 202, Provo, Utah, Timpview HS... **What BYU Says:** Deseret News 2008 Mr. Football recipient as Utah's top player in 4A. Three-time All-State selection and rated by Rivals.com as the No. 10 safety prospect in the nation. Had 43 solo tackles and four interceptions as a senior and as a junior returned two of his three interceptions for touchdowns. Older brothers K.C. and Kelly are both former Cougar players and another brother, Kevan, will return and play for BYU following an LDS mission... **What We Say:** Like his brothers, he will serve an LDS mission, but could be an outside linebacker before he is done at BYU. He is the poster child for our comment about not confusing timing with talent. Had he not committed to the Cougars two years ago, his recruiting hype would have matched that of Manti Te'o and his Timpview teammate, Xavier Su'a Filo.

Thomas Bryson, DL, 6-5, 230, Layton, Utah, Layton HS... **What BYU Says:** Was first-team All-State as a tight end and defensive end in 2008. Had 36 receptions for 544 yards and four touchdowns and notched 13.5 sacks on the defensive side of the ball. Recruited by Idaho, Washington State and Stanford... **What We Say:** BYU came late to this recruiting party and really didn't get involved until a few weeks remained until signing date. He has some significant athletic ability. How that ability mesh-

es with his motor will determine how successful he is at the next level.

Tui Crichton, OL, 6-4, 290, Provo, Utah, Timpview HS...**What BYU Says:** Three-year starter for Timpview who missed his senior season due to torn labrum (shoulder). Was first-team All-State as a junior. Also had recruiting attention from Utah, Colorado, LSU, Arizona State and Hawaii...**What We Say:** He was more highly touted and considered a better offensive line prospect than Su'a Filo, a Timpview teammate, until he sat on the sidelines this season with the injury.

Jray Galea'i, DB, 6-0, 185, Laie, Hawaii, Kahuku HS...**What BYU Says:** Rated as the No. 4 overall prospect from state of Hawaii and No. 23 safety prospect in the nation by two internet services. Started his high school career at Timpview HS in Provo...**What We Say:** A good solid recruit and get for BYU. On the scale of Kahuku safeties, we put him somewhere between Shiloah Te'o and Aaron Francisco.

Anthony Heimuli, RB, 5-11, 225, Orem, Utah, Mountain View HS...**What BYU Says:** He rushed for 1,224 yards and 12 touchdowns to average 8.9 yards per carry. **What We Say:** He earned his scholarship by a great summer performance at BYU's camp. He is a bruising back who punishes defenders. Had nice numbers despite missing some action due to injury. Opposing defenses keyed on him, but still couldn't stop him. We think he could be a pleasant surprise at the next level.

Adam Hine (Timo), RB, 6-1, 195, Santa Clara, Utah Snow Canyon HS...**What BYU Says:** He earned first-team All-State honors in 2008 while rushing for 1314 yards on 224 carries. He also saw quarterback duties as a senior and passed for 486 yards...**What We Say:** We can't say enough. In our opinion, he is the best player BYU has signed in several years. We wouldn't trade two Manti Te'o's and one Xavier Su'a Filo for him. After a super sophomore year, he was saddled with a less-than-mediocre team. This kid will be much, much better in college when he gets to run behind a real offensive line and a scheme that targets his skills. We have heard some say that he could be another Curtis Brown for the Cougars. We disagree and think he will be more like BYU's first Marcus Allen. Just get him lined up seven yards deep in the backfield and keep giving him the ball. We are high, high, high on this kid. He will go on an LDS mission out of high school. He committed to the Cougars after his sophomore year, but that didn't keep Stanford and Utah from knocking on the door.

Cody Hoffman, WR, 6-4, 200, Crescent City, Calif., Del Norte HS...**What BYU Says:** Caught 50 passes for more than 1,000 yards as a senior. Had seven 100-yard receiving games last season...**What We Say:** He was off the big recruiting radar as evidenced by his only other offer, which was from Sacramento State. He is an outstanding athlete who was a very big fish in a small pond. He will be swimming upstream at BYU, but definitely has the athletic skills to make a splash.

Brian Logan, DB, 5-9, 195, Fremont, Calif., Foothill College...**What BYU Says:** A two-year starter for Foothill College who is an excellent cover corner. He runs the 40 in 4.4 seconds and has a 36-inch vertical leap. Recorded 39 tackles, three for a loss, had one interception and six pass breakups in 2008. **What We Say:** Again, we think his lack of size hurt his recruitment. He had an early offer from San Diego State but had that offer pulled when a new coach came in and said thanks, but no thanks. Logan will be the test case for the evaluation skills of the coaching staffs of BYU and SDSU.

Peni Maka'afi, RB, 5-10, 215, Layton, Utah, Northridge HS...**What BYU Says:** Rushed for 890 yards and 13 touchdowns as a junior and averaged 8.6 yards per carry. Recruited by Utah, Utah State, Oregon State, UCLA and Boise State, according to BYU...**What We Say:** His senior season was not nearly as productive as his junior year. His scholarship was earned during the summer with work at BYU's camp.

Mitch Mathews, WR, 6-5, 195, Beaverton, Ore., Southridge HS...**What BYU Says:** Recorded 26 catches for 475 yards and seven touchdowns in only five games after returning from a broken leg early in his senior season. Was an All-Metro wide receiver with 42 receptions for 586 yards and 6 touchdowns as a junior. His older brother, Marcus will be returning from an LDS mission and eventually be on the Cougar roster...**What We Say:** Another of the new model receivers for BYU. The Cougars now are looking for taller wide outs. He was also recruited heavily by UNLV.

Ryan Mulitalo, OL, 6-4, 290, West Valley City, Utah, Hunter HS...**What BYU Says:** Has experience playing on both sides of the ball. Played primarily on defense early in his prep career before concentrating more on playing offensive line this past season. Was a first-team all region selection and was recruited by Washington, Arizona State and Boise State...**What We Say:** BYU obviously saw something they liked and offered. Will need some more work to qualify academically, but is on track to accomplish that task.

Remington Peck, TE, 6-5, 225, South Jordan, Utah, Bingham HS...**What BYU Says:** Made 27 receptions for 389 yards with 6 touchdown in 2008. Had 14 sacks as a defensive end during the same season. Totaled 65 tackles overall on defense...**What We Say:** A very good football player that should be a contributor to the program once he and coaches decide which side of ball he will play on at the next level.

Brett Thompson, WR, 6-3, 210, El Dorado Hills, Calif., Oak Ridge HS...**What BYU Says:** He was recruited by Cal, Nebraska, Air Force and UNLV. Was moved to running back this past season and rushed for 694 yards and 12 touchdowns...**What We Say:** Had a huge sophomore season as a receiver and then saw those numbers go down as a junior and senior. It wasn't a lack of talent that made that happen. This guy can get open and catch the ball and that is what we expect him to do at BYU.

Fono Vakalahi, OL, 6-4, 320, Bryan, Texas, Bryan HS...**What BYU Says:** A physically dominating presence who has played multiple positions on the offensive line as a prep. Moved from left tackle to center for his senior season. Rated as the No. 20 center prospect in the nation by Rivals.com. Was recruited by Baylor, Arizona State, Virginia Tech, Hawaii and Texas A&M...**What We Say:** He has great size and good feet. Another case of committing too early and too soon to accrue the accolades he deserves.

Kyle Van Noy, LB, 6-4, 210, Reno, Nev., McQueen HS...**What BYU Says:** When it comes to football, BYU has plenty to say. He was rated the No. 11 weak side linebacker prospect nationally by scout.com and one of the top four prospects from Nevada by rivals.com. A very versatile player who caught 35 passes for 731 yards and 18 touchdowns and defensively had 79 tackles (55 solo), 10 tackles for loss, six forced fumbles and four fumble recoveries. He also had 14 sacks during his senior season. He was recruited by ASU, UCLA, Boise State, Cal and Colorado. BYU also had more to say after Van Noy's signing. Bronco Mendenhall said that he gave Van Noy a choice of delaying his entrance into BYU until January 2010 or releasing him from his scholarship to go elsewhere to play football after it was disclosed that Van Noy had been charged with a DUI the weekend before signing day. Van Noy says he will still be a Cougar...**What We Say:** You don't normally mention alcoholic beverages and BYU in the same breathalyzer, but this certainly has been an unusual recruiting year when it comes to BYU and beer. Once we get behind the booze, which it appears all parties will do, Van Noy is a special player with great talent. He could have been an immediate impact player. He still will be, but will just have to wait another season before making that impact.

Brad Wilcox, OL, 6-7, 265, Edmond, Okla., North HS...**What BYU Says:** Was team offensive player of the year and all-state honorable mention. Was recruited by Oregon State, Iowa State, Oklahoma

State, Texas Tech, Tulsa and New Mexico...**What We Say:** He will serve an LDS mission before enrolling in school. That will give him some leeway to make sure that he is academically qualified for admittance to BYU.

Richard Wilson, TE, 6-3, 225, Spanish Fork, Utah, Spanish Fork HS...**What BYU Says:** Rated the No. 4 tight end prospect in the nation by ESON.com. Had 43 grabs for 845 yards and 11 touchdowns as a senior. Had 46 catches for 700 yards and nine touchdowns as a junior. Was recruited heavily by Miami, Tennessee, UCLA, LSU and Utah...**What We Say:** If he was looking for recruiting headlines and hype, all he had to do was prolong his announcement and commitment. Is definitely one of the top talents signed by the Cougars this year. A real play maker.

What Bronco Mendenhall Says: "This class is a fantastic fit for both the young men and our institution," Mendenhall said. "I appreciate the trust these young men and their parents have put in me as the head coach and in our common vision for the program. I'm extremely excited about this particular class, not only because of their talent but also their character, intellect and academics standards."

What We Say: This is one of the better classes BYU has signed in several years. It has plenty of talent, a little more speed than usual and better size than normal at the skill positions. If there is a downside, it was that they seemed to come up short in filling specific needs. They needed at least another linebacker or two and didn't sign any defensive linemen.

TELEVISION TIMETABLE

BYU vs. Colorado State

Wed, Feb 11 at Provo

Tipoff: 6:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: Mtn

BYU vs. TCU

Sat, Feb 14 at Fort Worth

Tipoff: 5:30 pm Mountain Time

TV: Mtn

BYU vs. New Mexico

Tue, Feb 17 at Provo

Tipoff: 8:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: Mtn

BYU vs. UNLV

Sat, Feb 21 at Las Vegas

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: CBS C