

HB Arnett's ***COUGAR SPORTSLINE***

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Frosh QB Looks Great

HERE'S SOME HISTORY AS IT RELATES TO HEAPS

Jake Heaps, the true freshman quarterback, looks as good as advertised.

We had a hard time believing that a true freshman could come in and win the starting quarterback job at BYU. We still don't know if it will happen or not, but Heaps has made a believer out of us.

If Heaps is the guy and starts for BYU as a true freshman, here is what history shows about new-comer quarterbacks at the BCS level. Based on history, a true frosh quarterback can be good, decent or over matched. If it is Heaps, we would expect him to be good to decent, but not great. None of the true freshmen quarterbacks listed below were great during their first collegiate campaign.

Tim Tebow and Colt McCoy, never started as true freshmen. Tebow shared time with senior Chris Leak and McCoy redshirted his first year in Austin.

The following is a list of true freshman quarterbacks that started for BCS conference teams since 2003. They are listed from high to low on their passing efficiency ratings. Also included are their completion percentages, Yards/per attempt, TD percentage, INT percentage and Won-Loss record.

Terrelle Pryor, Ohio State, 2008...Comp% 60.2; Yds/Att 7.9; TD% 7.2; INT% 2.4; Eff Rating 145.6; Record 10-3

Robert Griffin, Baylor, 2008...Comp% 59.9; Yds/Att 7.8; TD% 65.6; INT% 1.1; Eff Rating 142.0; Record 4-8

Willie Tuitama, Arizona, 2005...Comp% 57.7; Yds/Att 7.8; TD% 7.5; INT% 0.9; Eff Rating 137.0; Record 3-8

Erik Ainge, Tennessee, 2005...Comp% 55.1; Yds/Att 7.3; TD% 8.6; INT% 4.5; Eff Rating 135.9; Record 10-3

Chris Leak, Florida, 2003...Comp% 59.4; Yds/Att 7.6; TD% 5.0; INT% 3.4; Eff Rating 132.9; Record 8-5

Chad Henne, Michigan, 2004...Comp% 60.2; Yds/Att 6.9; TD% 6.3; INT% 3.01; Eff Rating 132.6; Record 9-3

Matt Barkley, USC, 2009...Comp% 59.9; Yds/Att 7.7; TD% 4.2; INT% 4.0; Eff Rating 131.3; Record 9-4

Tate Forcier, Michigan, 2009...Comp% 58.7; Yds/Att 7.2; TD% 4.6; INT% 3.5; Eff Rating 128.15; Record 5-7

Mitch Mustain, Arkansas, 2006...Comp% 52.3; Yds/Att 6.8; TD% 7.6; INT% 6.8; Eff Rating 120.5; Record 10-4

Matt Stafford, Georgia, 2006...Comp% 52.7; Yds/Att 6.8; TD% 2.7; INT% 5.1; Eff Rating 108.99; Record 9-4

Thaddeus Lewis, Duke, 2006...Comp% 52.9; Yds/Att 6.3; TD% 3.2; INT% 4.7; Eff Rating 106.9; Record 0-12

Jimmy Clausen, Notre Dame, 2007...Comp% 56.3; Yds/Att 5.1; TD% 2.9; INT% 2.5; Eff Rating 103.9; Record 3-9

Josh Freeman, Kansas State, 2006...Comp% 51.9; Yds/Att 6.6; TD% 2.2; INT% 5.6; Eff Rating 103.5; Record 7-6

Reggie Ball, Georgia Tech, 2003...Comp% 51.7; Yds/Att 5.7; TD% 2.9; INT% 3.1; Eff Rating 102.8; Record 7-6

Chris Heavner, Arizona, 2003...Comp% 51.1; Yds/Att 6.3; TD% 3.4; INT% 6.3; Eff Rating 102.7; Record 2-10

Brady Quinn, Notre Dame, 2003...Comp% 47.2; Yds/Att 5.5; TD% 2.7; INT% 4.5; Eff Rating 93.5; Record 5-7

Juice Williams, Illinois, 2006...Comp% 39.5; Yds/Att 5.7; TD% 3.5; INT% 3.5; Eff Rating 91-8; Record 2-10

BYU has had only one true freshman quarterback, who came directly out of high school like Heaps, start any games. That was Drew Miller, who also came out of the state of Washington.

John Beck was also a true freshman and started some games, but he also had been on an LDS mission and was 22 years old when he started school. That means you can't compare him to the list above because all of those guys were fresh off their high school campuses, just like Heaps is.

Miller started and played against UTEP in El Paso in 1997. BYU lost 14-3. Miller saw action as a true frosh in 5 games that year. Here were his stats: Comp% 55.2; Yds/Att 6.4; TD% .4; INT% .5; Eff Rating 112.0

The Difference

In BYU's and Heaps' case, the situation is different than all of the above listed quarterbacks, with maybe the exception of Matt Barkley.

All of the above true freshmen quarterbacks started because their college coaches thought there were no other viable and talented options available.

BYU and Bronco Mendenhall actually do have other options available this year besides Heaps in Riley Nelson and James Lark. That is why if Heaps does win the job, it says he is very, very good.

IN RECRUITING, BIG MEN BATTLE FOR BYU IS A LOST CAUSE

For even the big-time and big-name basketball programs around the country, finding a good big man is hard.

For BYU it is almost impossible, unless the prospect is LDS or has some type of LDS connection.

Quick, name the last non-LDS post player that BYU has signed in the last twenty years. Technically, you can say Rafael Aruajo, but he had an LDS connection because he married an LDS girl in Yuma while attending Arizona Western College.

That LDS connection was the only hope that BYU had at landing the Brazilian. You can also mention Keena Young as a post player that was non LDS. While Young scored plenty of points on the low block, at 6-6, he can't be considered as a true post player.

When we say post player, we mean somebody who has a post presence. We are talking about somebody who can be a threat to score inside and somebody that defenses have to respect.

You can even take away the offensive game, but all teams would take somebody that can defend the post and rebound.

We have seen those type of post players the last two weeks in NCAA tournament action but none were on BYU's roster.

Most fans can identify the problem. The internet and chat rooms are full of suggestions for Dave Rose to go and get a juco post man.

Here are the BYU facts of juco post men and trying to recruit them.

If they aren't LDS or have some strong LDS tie, it isn't going to happen.

That doesn't stop BYU from continually trying.

The latest effort involves two post men from the Scenic West Athletic Conference in general and College of Southern Idaho and North Idaho College in particular.

Aziz N'Diaye is a 7-1 center for CSI. He didn't play a minute for the Eagles this past season because he tore his ACL last May and missed this past season. He is not a great scorer, but can defend, rebound and block shots.

That hasn't stopped teams from trying to sign him. Dave Rose made early trips to Twin Falls to get looks at the Senegal native.

BYU has tried and is still trying, but it doesn't look hopeful, N'Diaye has one official visit left to take before signing in April. He visited Kansas, Oklahoma, Washington, Oregon State and Loyola Marymount.

Even Duke is in the picture and has already offered a CSI teammate in Carrick Felix. That is a huge recruiting anomaly for the Blue Devils who almost always shun the jc recruiting route.

Even farther north in Idaho is Guy-Marc Michel, another 7-1 post player, who can defend but has no offensive game. That hasn't stopped Gonzaga and Colorado from offering. Michel is from Martinique.

The point is this. BYU would seem like a perfect place for a juco big man to see plenty of immediate playing time and opportunity. On paper, it seems like a good fit. Without an LDS connection, however, reality says it won't happen and hasn't happened without some sort of LDS connection.

The reality of BYU big men basketball recruiting has been, is, and will continue to be all about LDS prospects. BYU's post players will only be as good as the LDS market produces.

SCHEDULE SNIPPETS

BYU has yet to release its 2010-11 basketball schedule, but it looks like BYU will be playing Penn State in Albany, NY on Saturday, Dec 18.

BYU has tried to find a game to play close to Jimmer Fredette's home town of Glens Falls and Albany is it. The game will be played at the Times Union Center and also will feature two players from the same area that currently play for the Nittany Lions.

Nobody will officially acknowledge the game because the contest and signed contracts are contingent on the arena at Albany bumping a currently scheduled Disney on Ice engagement.

Other non-conference basketball games for the coming season will include Arizona and UTEP. The UofA game will be in Salt Lake and UTEP will make a return trip to Provo. Fresno State will also be in Provo this coming season.

In football, BYU has announced a home and home with Oregon State in 2011 and 2012. OSU will host the Cougars in Corvallis on Sept. 3, 2011 and the Beavers will visit Provo on Sept. 1, 2012.

BASKETBALL BRIEFS

Last week we mentioned that Justin Hamilton, a sophomore big man from Iowa State, was leaving the Cyclone program in order to play closer to his home. He said he wanted his family to be able to watch him play. Hamilton prepped at Lone Peak HS in Utah and his parents live in Alpine, Utah.

Evidently, Hamilton needs an updated atlas. He announced recently that he will choose between LSU, Virginia and California as to where he will continue his career.

FOOTBALL FLUFF AND STUFF

BYU might as well bring back their junior varsity football program.

It has been dropped for several years now because of a limitation of scholarships and lack of schools with which to compete.

No matter, if you were a fan of the junior varsity games as we were, you can get the next best thing by going to watch Bingham HS games this fall.

BYU has added another commitment from the Miner program. That brings the total number of verbal commits to 4.

The latest to say he will sign with BYU next February is Kesni Tausinga, a 6-0, 265 pound defensive tackle.

He joins other Bingham players such as Manoa Pikula, FB/LB, 6-0, 205; Baker Pritchard, DL, 6-2, 240 and Moses Kaumatule, DL, 6-2, 245 as early BYU commitments.

The one Bingham guy who hasn't said he will eventually be a Cougar is the best player on that particular team and the best player in the state of Utah.

We are talking about Harvey Langi, the 6-2, 215 pound running back.

Other early commitments already in the fold for BYU include Lui Lapuaho, OL, 6-7, 285, Hunter HS, UT; Alex Kuresa, QB, 6-0, 165, Mountain Crest HS, UT and Austin Heder, LB, 6-2, 215, Pleasant Grove HS, UT.

SPRING SPORTS

It actually is a winter sport and there were no trees falling in the Marriott Center a while back, but there has been a little noise generated by the BYU Women's basketball team.

Granted, the WNIT is a pretty small forest, but the Lady Cougars generated a little sound with a 62-58 win over Pepperdine in Provo to open the tourney. Official attendance was listed at 255.

BYU moved on to a bigger forest and fans bases and churned out two more wins on the road against Arizona State and Wyoming.

They lost in the quarterfinals of the WNIT to Cal. That game was played in Berkeley.

In Men's baseball, the Cougars are currently only 10-12 overall and 3-3 in MWC play.

The women's softball team is performing better. They have a current record of 18-7 and most recently downed No. 9 Stanford in a game played last week in Provo.