

HB Arnett's

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Florida State a Step Up

BYU DELIVERS A 54-3 MATURE MAULING OF TULANE

Tulane head coach Bob Toledo kept saying all week leading up to the BYU-Tulane game that BYU was mature, married and massive.

Thanks to the 54-3 mauling of Tulane delivered in New Orleans last Saturday, Toledo can now say that the Cougars are mature, married, massive and moving up in the national rankings.

The Cougars are now ranked No. 7 in the recently released AP poll and are listed at No. 9 in the USA Today/Coaches poll.

They leapfrogged Boise State in the process in the USA poll. The Broncos are No. 10. The USA ranking is one of the polls used in the BCS formula.

Speaking of formulas, BYU's was very simple against Tulane. Except for one turnover - a Max Hall interception - and a kneel-down final drive, the Cougars scored points on every possession they had against the Green Wave.

In the process they racked up 527 yards of total offense. The BYU defense held Tulane to just 162 yards of offense and one token field goal.

New Orleans, home of Tulane, is known for its cuisine, but if we had to describe the Green Wave gastronomically, they would be the ultimate cupcake. BYU savored every crumb and in the process was able to get their entire traveling roster on the field for some needed action and seasoning.

Goulash

When it comes to Florida State and gastronomy, we would describe the Seminoles as goulash.

You really never know what's in the Hungarian dish and with FSU we really don't know much about what kind of team the Seminoles really are.

They showed a lot of team speed and an explosive offense against Miami two weeks ago. They showed a defense that also allowed a lot of offense in their outing against the Hurricanes.

Without seeing Miami again this past week we still don't know if they are any good.

Florida State certainly looked sloppy in sloppy and wet conditions last Saturday against Jacksonville State.

They trailed the entire game and with 35 seconds remaining needed two scores to secure the 19-9 victory.

What we do know about FSU is that they are a passing team and have a good quarterback in Christian Ponder.

He can throw it and has a stable of speedy receivers who can go and get what he throws.

We will finally find out just how improved the BYU secondary really is when they match up with the Seminoles.

For a good showing, the Cougar secondary will need some help from the BYU front seven. They have to find a way to get pressure on Ponder.

With BYU also in a passing mode, the key to this game will be which team can balance its offense with a decent running game.

It should be interesting, but it also should be another BYU win. We call it BYU 38 Florida State 28.

KICKING, KARIYA AND KYLE BELL

The BCS euphoria for BYU is building after a 2-0 start and serious national exposure. Before Cougar fans get too amped about a BCS bowl invitation, however, they need to take a peek at reality.

The BYU kicking game is not BCS quality.

Unless there is a serious improvement and soon, the lack of a consistent kicking game will bite BYU sometime and somewhere before this season is over.

The most glaring weakness is the inability to get the ball even in the area code of the goal line on kickoffs. You don't have to watch much college football on television to see that the Cougars don't measure up in that department.

Brian Kariya has been a surprise. His coming out party against Oklahoma was nice. He followed it up with another good outing against Tulane. The former walkon running back has produced.

He will never look flashy, but he gets the job done.

We have tried to think of somebody he reminds us of and the closest we can come is Kyle Bell, the former Colorado State tailback, of a few years ago.

Before Bell hurt his knee and saw his game and playing time diminish for the Rams, he was a very good and productive North and South runner.

In other BYU football notes, we reported last week that former Cougar Aaron Francisco was cut by the Arizona Cardinals before the start of the NFL season. He immediately was picked up and signed by the Indianapolis Colts.

Pedestrian Production

In our preseason evaluations of positions, we didn't expect much but pedestrian production from the defensive front seven of BYU. It is still a little early and a long season, but it appears we may be the pedestrian that was run over in the Cougar crosswalk when it comes to our early evaluation of the BYU defense.

They are much better than anticipated. The outside linebackers, especially Jordan Pendleton, have been good. The defensive front is producing. Okay, we will finally admit what most have known for some time. Jan Jorgensen is a player.

We have no word as yet on the condition of Braden Hansen, the starting left guard on the BYU offensive line. He suffered some sort of knee injury against Tulane. Hopefully he can return quickly back to action.

In case he can't, BYU played true freshman Fono Vakalahi last Saturday against Tulane. The Cougar coaches had hoped to redshirt him, but with the number of bodies dwindling on the offensive line, they have put him in the mix.

Here is a list of BYU bodies on the offensive line and their current status.

54 Ryan Freeman, 6-2, 280, So...in the two deep mix
60 Terence Brown, 6-3, 340, So...starter at right tackle
61 Tui Crichton, 6-3, 357, Fr...currently redshirting
62 Marco Thorson, 6-3, 321, So...replaced Hansen at Tulane
63 Jesse Taufi, 6-4, 302, Jr...BYU needs him to clear up his academic issues pronto. He is enrolled in school, but has yet to practice. There is a serious sense of urgency now.
64 RJ Willing, 6-5, 308, Sr...starting center
65 Houston Reynolds, 6-2, 303, Fr...gone for year with ACL surgery. We hear he had surgery and then had some infection issues.
66 Andrew Crawford, 6-5, 284, Fr...walkon who is redshirting
70 Matt Reynolds, 6-6, 329, So...BYU's best lineman
72 Nick Alletto, 6-6, 330, Jr...starting right tackle
73 Jason Speredon, 6-5, 313, Jr...gone for the year with injury
74 Ryan Mulitalo, 6-2, 277, Fr...redshirting
76 Braden Hansen, 6-6, 300, Redshirt Fr...hurt at Tulane, status pending.
77 Terrance Alletto, 6-3, 290, Fr...redshirting
78 Fono Vakalahi, 6-3, 330, Fr...because of Hansen's injury, no longer redshirting and is now in the mix.

With Vakalahi now active, and depending on the status of Hansen's injury and Taufi's academics, BYU will go into the Florida State game with just seven offensive linemen. Hopefully Hansen will return to action soon and Taufi can finally see the practice field soon.

SIGHTINGS AT SAN MATEO

We have been wondering who will replace Harvey Unga when he is gone either after this year or next?

Brian Kariya has been having a nice early season as a backup to Unga. He was especially impressive against Oklahoma, but in our opinion, he isn't the back of the future for the Cougars.

Here is our take on running backs when it comes to BYU. The Cougars are seldom going to get a big-time shake-and-bake game breaker who is a quick and fast running back like you see in the big-time programs. A Ronney Jenkins is a once every two decades kind of guy.

What the Cougars have to hang their hat on when it comes to a tailback is a big bruising back that can be physical and run north and south. Maybe Kariya is the guy after all.

Unga, when completely healthy, fits that description.

We originally thought that the heir apparent for Unga would be Seta Pohahau, the 5-11, 215 pound back that BYU signed in 2008 out of Aragon HS in Northern California.

There was always hope last year that he would qualify academically, but that never happened.

He is now at College of San Mateo and is a freshman running back for the Bulldogs. In the opening game of the season on Sept. 5, he rushed for 58 yards on 10 carries as CSM demolished DeAnza 55-23.

We don't expect to see Pohahau at BYU because the Cougars, under Bronco Mendenhall, are unlikely to be signing any juco backs anytime soon.

We are still sticking with our prediction that Adam Hine (formerly Timo) will be an outstanding back for the Cougars after he returns from an LDS mission and enrolls in school. He doesn't have break-away speed, but in our opinion, he will be an outstanding back for the Cougars.

Cougar Connections

There are two other players at San Mateo that have Cougar connections. One has a past connection

and the other could have a future connection.

The past player is Matangi Tonga, the talented defensive lineman who played at BYU as a freshman in 2006. After that season he ran into some off-the-field legal and law enforcement issues.

He has again resurfaced on the football field at San Mateo as a sophomore. In his first game back, he had 5 tackles and 2.5 sacks.

Because his eligibility clock started ticking in 2006 he will have just one more year of eligibility left after this season. It is likely that he will go Division II next season.

The other player at San Mateo that we will be watching is Joe Sampson. He is a 6-0, 195 pound safety.

He led the Bulldogs in their first win of the season with 8 tackles. He played last year at Foothill JC before moving over to San Mateo this year.

If Foothill rings a bell it is because that is the school where current Cougar starting cornerback Brian Logan played last season before signing with BYU.

He and Sampson were teammates. They are also cousins and the word we get is that Logan is encouraging him to take a look at BYU.

Sampson reportedly already has serious interest from Cal and ASU, but is going to send in transcripts and tape to the staff in Provo.

Again, Mendenhall's philosophy on signing jucos is that it is on a need basis. If you take a look at the safety spot for next year, there just might be a need.

Of the two current starters, Andrew Rich will return, but Scott Johnson will graduate. There are three young players behind them. That would be Craig Bills, Shiloah Te'o and Jray Galeai.

It is likely that Bills and Galeai could be leaving on LDS missions after this season.

That leaves just Te'o and Steve Thomas, along with Rich, as safeties for next year. It could be worth keeping an eye on Sampson.

VERSUS AND VIEWING

The BYU-Florida State football game this Saturday at LaVell Edwards Stadium in Provo is set to be televised nationally on Versus.

Kickoff is set for 5:00 pm Mountain Time.

If you have Direct TV you likely know that Versus and Direct TV are at odds in their current negotiations and that Versus is currently no longer available on that particular satellite provider.

If the stalemate isn't resolved between now and Saturday, you will need to find a friend or family member that has Dish Network or Comcast cable.

Versus is still being carried on those providers.

As a matter of fact, Dish is now offering Versus to all of their subscribers, regardless of programming tiers, and says they will continue to do so until the current football season concludes.

As with all programming disputes, we expect this one between Versus and Direct TV to eventually be resolved, but until it is, try and find a Dish Network neighbor or friend.

As of now, the only two BYU football games set for Versus are the FSU game on Saturday and the TCU game in Provo on October 24.

If it drags on beyond October, you will likely have to drag out your friendship with your neighbor. BYU basketball has two regular season basketball games set for Versus. They include the February 6 game against UNLV in Las Vegas and the February 27 game against New Mexico in Provo.

Some of the MWC tournament games are also set to be shown by Versus.

QUARTERBACK QUEUE

Max Hall...Completed 24-of-32 passes for 309 yards and two touchdowns in 54-3 win over Tulane last

week. Combined with his outing against Oklahoma, Hall is now headlining as a Heisman candidate. ESPN has him currently in fourth in their handicapping of the Heisman. He is behind Tim Tebow, Colt McCoy and Jahvid Best.

Riley Nelson...The Utah State transfer saw his first action as a Cougar against Tulane. He completed both passes he threw and ran the ball twice. One of those carries was a one-yard TD. That had to infuriate Aggie fans who saw it all unfold on national television.

James Lark...Will be a redshirt freshman when he returns from LDS mission in St. Petersburg, Russia. Due back in Jan of '10.

Jason Munns...Ditto for Munns. Will be a redshirt freshman when he returns in May '10 from Oaxaca, Mexico Mission.

Jake Heaps...He threw 2 touchdown passes in a 28-point first quarter blitz of Ballard HS. The final score was Skyline HS (Heaps) 42 Ballard 12. Heaps also ran for a score before taking an early exit from the game because of the lopsided score. Next week Heaps will matchup with Nick Montana, Joe's son, in a showdown between Skyline and Oaks Christian of Westlake, California. Oaks also features two current BYU commits in Zac Stout and Alani Fua. Both are linebackers. The game is set to be televised nationally on ESPNU. Kickoff is set for 7:00 pm Pacific Time.

Tanner Mangum...The LDS sophomore signal caller at Timberline HS in Boise completed 24-of-36 passes for 318 yards and 4 touchdowns in his team's second win of the season, a 46-27 thrashing of Skyview.

Alex Kuresa...Outlasted Pocatello HS in Idaho with a 28-21 win. Completed 13-of-19 passes.

Kevin Prince...BYU offered this LDS quarterback coming out of high school a couple of years back. He turned down BYU for UCLA. He is the current starter for the Bruins and last week in his first game at UCLA he completed 18-of-29 passes for 176 yards and one touchdown. He also threw two interceptions. He is a redshirt freshman. On Saturday he led the Bruins to a 19-13 win against Tennessee in Knoxville. He completed 11-of-23 passes for 101 yards and one touchdown. He also broke his jaw late in the game and will miss the next 3-4 weeks.

Nick Graziano...Here's another LDS college quarterback. Graziano, a 6-2, 227 pound qb is a senior at Arkansas Tech in Russellville. He was the starting qb at Nevada-Reno as a redshirt freshman but broke his foot after five games. He came back, but when he did, Colin Kaepernick was on the scene and he eventually transferred to the Division II school. He prepped at Campolindo HS in Moraga, California. If we remember correctly, there was some kind of BYU tennis connection with his mother. One reason for including this LDS qb in our list is that there are some scouting services that list Graziano as one of the top 25 NFL qb prospects for this coming season. The primary reason for mentioning Graziano, however, is because we have always wanted to mention the Arkansas Tech nickname in this letter. they are called ***The Wonder Boys***. After three games with The Wonder Boys, Graziano has completed 58-of-97 passes for 850 yards. He has thrown 7 touchdowns and had 2 interceptions.

TELEVISION TIMETABLE

BYU vs. Florida State

Saturday, Sept 19 at Provo
Kickoff: 5:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: Versus

BYU vs. Colorado State

Saturday, Sept 26 at Provo
Kickoff: 4:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: The Mtn

BYU vs. Utah State

Friday, Oct 2 at Provo
Kickoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: The Mtn

BYU vs. UNLV

Saturday, Oct 10 at Las Vegas
Kickoff: 8:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: The Mtn