

HB Arnett's



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COUGARS CONFIRM THEY ARE ORDINARY

A 74-68 loss to San Diego on the road last Thursday could be considered an upset and an aberration. After all, BYU is supposed to be one of the big boys of the West Coast Conference and with an 18-6 record heading into the game, Cougar fans thought likewise.

The Toreros are a confirmed middle of the pack WCC team...at best. Their 12-12 record before facing BYU, shouts ordinary.

Even good teams get upset on the road in conference play. That was the explanation that we all wanted to buy after the loss to USD.

It is much harder to explain away, however, the humbling loss to bottom feeder San Francisco two days later. The Dons didn't just squeak out a nail biting last second upset over BYU in Provo, they laid a bona fide 99-87 whipping on BYU.

In case you forgot, BYU lost at home to a team that entered the Marriott Center with an 11-13 record overall and a 4-7 league mark.

Two successive losses to two very ordinary teams, is not an aberration, but a confirmation that BYU also is a very ordinary team.

There are plenty of potential excuses on which to hang these two consecutive losses. It could have been just two poor shooting nights for the Cougars. It could have been two consecutive games of poor officiating. It could have been any number of things.

What we are all reluctant to admit, however, is that the BYU basketball roster is loaded with ordinary to poor players.

The good news is that despite having a team that is bottom heavy with very ordinary Division I type players, hope always springs eternal. Cougar fans will still continue to dream that this team can catch fire and make some noise during the rest of the season.

Noise

If by noise, you mean wins over Portland and Utah State in Provo and a regular season win over lowly Loyola Marymount, then go ahead and get excited.

If you are more realistic, if the Cougars perform like they did this past week, you have to see that there is no way BYU can beat St. Mary's in Moraga or Gonzaga in Provo.

Having good coaches is nice, but having good players is better. Dave Rose doesn't have enough players currently that fit that description.

We wrote several weeks back that it was not a good sign that BYU, at the time, was starting three former walkons in Craig Cusick, Brock Zylstra and Josh Sharp.

And does anyone really think that any coach in the WCC, with the exception of Portland's Eric Reveno and Pepperdine's Marty Blake, would trade their guards for BYU's guards?

Maybe its just me, but I can't see any current BYU guard being swapped straight up without a ton of cash and future draft picks involved in a deal involving USF's Cody Doolin, USD's Christopher Anderson, Gonzaga's Kevin Pangos, St. Mary's Matthew Dellavedova, LMU's Anthony Ireland and Santa Clara's Kevin Foster.

And let's be honest, does anyone besides the biggest BYU honks, homers and Dave Rose really think that any Cougar player besides Tyler Haws and Brandon Davies would log any significant minutes with any other team in the WCC other than Portland and maybe Pepperdine?

It is what it is. Now we need to focus and what will be in the future.

Next year, three or four new players will be counted on to make an impact and improvement with a better package to surround Tyler Haws.

That would be bigs like incoming freshmen Eric Mika and Luke Worthington. It remains to be seen if either of the big guys will be productive in the post, but we are sure that at least they will both be consistent.

Expectations

You will know what you can expect and what you will get inside with this duo. That is not the case currently with BYU's post play.

Quite frankly, barring some major upgrade in talent from the juco market or some highly touted high school senior signing with BYU this April, all of Dave Rose's eggs for improvement next season are in the Kyle Collinsworth basket.

I happen to think the Collinsworth basket will be a serious upgrade in the guard play for BYU during the next couple of seasons.

Coaching is overrated. There are no great coaches without great players. Even legendary coach Roy Williams discovered that to be true at North Carolina a few seasons back.

Dave Rose is no different. We all want to think he is a masterful bench coach and strategist. What he needs to be is a masterful recruiter and gatherer of good players.

Given the current market for LDS players, he is probably doing about as well as can be expected. Those expectations will go through the roof in two or three years when the current crop LDS prospects BYU has signed or hopes to sign will have all served missions and be playing together in a Cougar uniform.

Until then, no amount of coaching genius is going to make this current team anything more than ordinary. It is about players and having enough good ones to win games.

BYU OFFENSE GOING FROM SALAD BAR TO MEAT AND POTATOES

The Cougars have come full circle offensively.

Last season, the mantra and rallying cry for BYU's offense in the preseason was a leaner offensive line and an up tempo offense called "Nitro".

When the offense actually hit the field and started playing it was obvious that BYU's offensive line would have made Jenny Craig proud. The good news was that they were

leaner and weighed less. The bad news was that they couldn't block Jenny Craig, let alone the defensive lines of the opposition.

"Nitro" sounded like it would be a great up tempo offense, but Nitro went nowhere as the season progressed.

This brings us to this coming spring and next fall's preseason camp.

So long salad bar. Hello meaner, but definitely not leaner offensive lineman. That is the hope of BYU's football brass after relieving Brandon Doman of his offensive coordinator duties and replacing him with Robert Anae.

Whether bigger is better when it comes to the offensive line remains to be seen under Anae, but gone are the salad days of Doman. Now here comes the meat and potato offense of Robert Anae.

Hard and Fast

Anae has said that he will make the Cougar offense play "hard and fast". He also emphasized that BYU may only run 12 plays offensively, but they will run those few plays exceptionally well.

With BYU's new streamlined offense, you will only get your meat cooked one way: Well Done. If you are a quarterback, lineman, receiver or running back and you like it rare, or medium well, you won't see the field with Anae calling the plays.

There will be no exotic selections from the salad bar. Gone are the raspberry vinaigrette dressings and four types of lettuce from which to choose.

Just like Doman's declarations of a year ago about an up tempo offense and leaner linemen, it all sounded great. If nothing else, BYU football fans, including me, are eternally optimistic.

Now here comes the return of Anae and what he is saying is also exciting and promising.

He comes with a proven BYU offensive coordinator resume. The last time he was here and had John Beck and Max Hall calling plays, his 12-play offense put up a lot of wins.

It also caused him to leave Provo when it was assumed that the simplicity of his offense would be improved with more innovation and imagination if Brandon Doman was in charge.

Run Out and Up

What supposedly ran Anae out of town is now the same thing that athletic administrators are running up the flag pole for Cougar fans to rally around.

So fire up the grill and throw on the meat. Here's hoping Anae can deliver our meat and an offense on a productive platter and that both will be very well done.

While Anae's most recent gig was at Arizona under the offensive tutelage of Rich Rodriguez and the read option, I expect more of what we saw with Anae in his last go around at BYU.

More two back sets with the quarterback under center. More involvement with the tight ends and better offensive line play.

While option football will be the exception with BYU next season, Anae had plenty of coaching options for himself.

He had coaching offers from Utah to be their offensive coordinator and he also had a coaching job offered by Sonny Dykes, the new head coach at Cal.

Coaching is still all about contacts. Anae goes way back with Kyle Whittingham. He also was connected with Dykes at Texas Tech and both guys worked with Bob Stoops at Arizona.

We've Heard the Accolades...Now Time For The Eyeball Test

For the past week, we have been told just how good BYU's recent football recruiting class is.

Now we get to see for ourselves. Below are the official highlight video clips that Bronco Mendenhall and the Media Relations staff rolled out when introducing the newest signees.

Emphasis should be on the word "highlight".

You won't see any mistakes or bad plays on these videos, but it should give you a starting point to what kind of athletes the Cougars signed.

[Edward Fusi](#)

[Michael Davis](#)

[Kai Nacua](#)

[Johnny Tapusoa](#)
[Kalolo Utu](#)

[Nathan DeBeikes](#)

[Jonryheem Peoples](#)

[De'ondre Wesley](#)

[Tim Duran](#)

[Moroni Laulu Pututau](#)

[Dallin Leavitt](#)

[Jordan Preator](#)

[Trajan Pili](#)

[Josh Carter](#)

[Garrett England](#)

[Brayden Kearsley](#)

[Meti Taliauli](#)

[Sam Lee](#)

[Addison Pulshipher](#)

[Talon Shumway](#)

[Thomas Shoaf](#)

[Trent Trammel](#)

[Rylee Gautavai](#)

[Chasen Andersen](#)

[Keegan Hicks](#)

[Billy Green](#)

BYU was restricted by new NCAA regulations from signing more than 25 players in this class, but they also inked 5 more prospects to letters of acceptance. That will allow these players to serve LDS missions and then upon their return, sign the official letter of intent.

Here they are with video included. These videos are extremely long so you will have to pick and choose what you view.

[Francis Bernard](#)

Ma'ataua Brown – no video found

[Inoke Lotulelei](#)

[Patrick Palau](#)

[Pita Taumoepenu](#)

OTHER SPORTS

The BYU women's softball team didn't exactly bolt out of the gate to begin their season this past week.

Playing in a tournament in St. George, the Lady Cougars ended the week with a 2-3 record. The two wins were against Seattle and Idaho State. The losses were to Tennessee, Nevada and Colorado State.

Next up will be another tournament in Las Vegas this week with the opening game against Hawaii. Other teams BYU will face include Oregon State, Louisiana Monroe, Cal State Fullerton and Portland State.

In Men's volleyball, BYU swept No. 6 UCLA in three sets. The match was played in Provo. The Cougars are still currently ranked No. 1 in the nation. The next will face Pepperdine and USC on Friday and Saturday in California.

Women's basketball was picked to win the WCC regular season title. That doesn't look likely to happen. The Lady Cougars currently have a league record of 7-3 and overall mark of 16-7.

Gonzaga is currently all alone atop the league standings with a 10-1 record. St. Mary's is in second place with an 8-2 mark.

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Santa Clara (WBB)

Thursday, Feb 14 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

BYUtv

BYU vs. Portland (MBB)

Saturday, Feb 16 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Utah State (MBB)

Tuesday, Feb 19 at Provo
Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Portland (WBB)

Thursday, Feb 21 at Provo
Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. St. Mary's (MBB)

Thursday, Feb 21 at Moraga
Tipoff: 9:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: ESPN2

BYU vs. Pacific (MVB)

Friday, Feb 22 at Provo
Start: 7:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Gonzaga (WBB)

Saturday, Feb 23 at Provo
Tipoff: 2:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Stanford (MVB)

Saturday, Feb 23 at Provo
Start: 7:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Gonzaga (MBB)

Thursday, Feb 28 at Provo
Tipoff: 9:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: ESPN2

BYU vs. Creighton (Baseball)

Friday, Mar 1 at Provo
Start: 3:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Creighton (Baseball)

Saturday, Mar 2 at Provo (Doubleheader)
Start: 1:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: BYUtv (Both Games Televised)

BYU vs. Loyola Marymount (MBB)

Saturday, Mar 2 at Los Angeles
Tipoff: 9:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: ESPNU