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Eerily Familiar

Mendenhall's Departure Almost Similar to Releasing of a Bishop

Bronco Mendenhall deserves all the accolades he gets for putting in his 11 years of extremely hard work while serving as BYU's head football coach.

He was emotional in his farewell departing message. Tom Holmoe sounded like a Stake President while praising the good deeds, hard work and effort and love engendered by Mendenhall from his players and file leaders.

This was just like a Bishop being released except for one big missing ingredient; there was no new Bishop (coach) called and sustained.

So before that happens, which I expect to take place after the Army-Navy football game next Saturday, here are my sentiments on Mendenhall, which fall in line with what Virginia and their athletic director Craig Littlepage said in announcing the Cavalier's hire of Mendenhall.

[Hoos Hoot and Holler over Mendenhall](#)

To see and hear Bronco's sentiments on his change of direction and Tom Holmoe's sentiments on Bronco, [Click Here](#).

Mendenhall will be officially introduced to Virginia fans and press on Monday and then return to finish coaching the Cougars in preparation for their Las Vegas Bowl game on December 19. The Cougars will be facing Utah. Kickoff is set for 1:30 pm MST and the game will be televised live on ABC nationally. Speaking of the Utes, Bronco Mendenhall is on a 4-game losing streak to Utah, but regardless of the final on the scoreboard against the longtime rival, Bronco will go out beating Kyle Whittingham. See below for details.

Bronco will succeed at UVA. Here's why. He can institute all of his pillars of success; position mastery, execution and effort. Plus he can finally recruit athletes with speed, especially in the defensive backfield. That will let him for the first time since New Mexico unleash the defense he has always wanted to run.

He can win in the ACC with defense and depending on who he hires as offensive coordinator, things may uptick quickly. If you think Robert Anae wouldn't follow Bronco, you don't know finances. This past year Virginia paid Tom O'Brien as an assistant head coach a half a million dollars

It's a no brainer. If the Cavaliers can pay Tom O'Brien \$500,000 as an assistant head coach, Steve Fairchild \$450,000 as an offensive coordinator and Jon Tenuta \$500,000 as a defensive coordinator, you can bet Robert Anae would welcome the pay raise. So would Kelly Poppinga and Mendenhall's right hand man, Nick Howell.

Bronco Goes out by Finally Beating Whittingham

Forget the 4 straight losses to Utah and Kyle Whittingham. Bronco finally won the big one in a head-to-head showdown with Utah's head football coach and is probably laughing all the way to the bank with his windfall.

Utah and Whittingham may have had scoreboard, but BYU and Mendenhall finally has bankroll.

[BYU \\$17.5 million](#) vs. [Utah \\$11million](#)

Latest Line

Odds on Naming Bronco's Successor

Since *Jimmy the Greek* was retired by the networks years ago, it is up to me, *HB the Geek*, to establish the opening betting line for the naming of Bronco's successor by Tom Holmoe. Since technically, as an active LDS temple recommend holder, I am still a prime candidate for the job and meet the most important requirement for the opening, my gambling skills are a little rusty. Here then is a quick primer on odds and how they pay out.

Betting odds are usually expressed as fractions, 2/1, 7/2 and 6/4 as examples. With the aid of a simple calculator or spreadsheet we can calculate how much we can win from a

bet and also the percentage chance of our chosen selection. Let's start with the first odds mentioned, the 2 to 1 chance, written as 2/1. We can find the percentage chance of the 2/1 shot winning by adding the right hand side (1) to the left hand side (2) giving us 3, the right hand side (1) is then divided by 3 giving the answer 0.333 or 33.3%. Now we can calculate any odds that are expressed as fractions. Let's try the 7/2 chance, add the 2 to the 7 giving 9 and divide 2 by 9 which gives us 0.222 or 22.2%. The 6/4 shot has a 0.40 (40%) chance of winning, 4 added to the 6 (10) 4 divided by 10 = 0.4, it's that simple. Awkward odds like 13/8 can easily be calculated, $13 + 8 = 21$, 8 divided by 21 = 0.38 (38%).

If any of the potential candidates listed below are experienced in this gambling and odds stuff, they will automatically be dismissed from consideration for the job. Here then are my odds in simplified form for the naming of a new coach.

Ken Niumatalolo...6/5...45% chance of being hired. Current head coach at Navy. Can't accept job if offered until after Army/Navy game this coming Saturday. Check back a few issues of Cougar Sportsline (Issue 16) to see my assessment of him. Financially, his current salary would be more than Mendenhall's BYU rate of pay, so he would have to take a payout, but not a big one. See Niumatalolo's Navy salary by [clicking here](#). Returned LDS missionary.

Darrell Bevell...3/2...40% chance of being hired. Current offensive coordinator for the Seattle Seahawks. Married to daughter of former BYU professor. Extensive NFL experience. Returned LDS missionary.

Andy Reid...15/1...6% chance of being hired. Current head coach at Kansas City in the NFL. The only way he is coming to Provo is if he and his wife are called as a senior couple missionaries. Reid makes \$7.5 million per annum at KC.

Robert Anae...25/1...4% chance of being hired. Look for him to follow Mendenhall unless Niumatalolo is hired. The biggest factor in not hiring Anae is Norm Chow. How did his Hawaii head coach gig work out? Returned LDS missionary.

Kalani Sitake...40/1...2% chance of being hired. Tom Holmoe is looking for head coaching experience. Sitake doesn't have it. Returned LDS missionary. Current defensive coordinator at Oregon State.

Cary Whittingham...75/1...1% chance of being hired. The current head coach at Timpview HS, still is a better bet than his brother, Kyle Whittingham, being the next coach at BYU. Tom Holmoe and Kyle go way back and have a great relationship.

Tom Holmoe...100/1...Less than 1% chance of hiring himself. If everything blows up and no legitimate candidate comes out of the woodwork, Holmoe might take a year or two to wait out a candidate.

Ed Lamb...200/1...Less than 1/2% chance of being hired. Would have to get baptized first. Current head coach at SUU and former defensive lineman for BYU.

Max Hall/Jake Heaps/HB Arnett...5000/1...Less than 1/1000% chance of being hired, but if you put \$2 on this potential trifecta bet of Hall as head coach, Heaps as offensive coordinator and Arnett as defensive coordinator and the bet hits, you and Bronco Mendenhall would both make \$3.25 million this year.

Small Buckshot and Won't Hurt

Monson Says BYU Dirtiest Team(s) in Nation

The good news is that it was Salt Lake Tribune Columnist Gordon Monson and not President Thomas L. Monson that was doing the name calling. [Click here](#) to read the column from last week.

Right or wrong, justified or not, Nick Emery joined Kai Nacua as another punching poster boy for BYU athletics as a result of a flinging fist against Utah last week. It was obvious, at least to me, that the punch was in name only and didn't pack any punch and was exacerbated by a great acting performance from the recipient of the swing.

That said, it reminded me of the time my Dad was underneath a D9 Caterpillar working on its tracks on his ranch. That's when a load of buckshot from the shotgun of a dove hunter came rolling in on him.

He wasn't hurt, but got up and looked around for the source of the pellets. He saw the guy and yelled, "What are you doing?" The guy was apologetic, but left saying my dad shouldn't be so worried because the shot was so small that it couldn't have hurt him.

Technically, the guy was correct. But it was the principle of shooting in the direction of a non-dove target (in this case my dad). Same with Nacua and Emery. No harm no foul. Both punches didn't inflict as much pain as a hard screen or a good tackle.

It wasn't the punch, it was the principle. Especially when principles are what BYU athletics preach and encourage others to practice. There is no small print in practicing the principle, that says, "except if provoked."

It happened and both players were punished by missing the game, but both, in my opinion, also missed the point. Here's hoping the next time they get it.

Early Take on Utah vs. BYU in Las Vegas Bowl

Here's my early take on the rivalry game in two weeks in the Las Vegas Bowl.

BYU has the better quarterback, but Utah has the better offensive and defensive lines. The Utes have the better running game. Based on the last four results, Utah has a better coaching staff and game plans.

Look for the Utes to use press coverage and gets handsie and holdie with BYU receivers. Look for the Utes to also get after Tanner Mangum and try to pressure him.

Look for BYU to hold Ute running back Joe Williams in check, but also look for BYU to make Travis Wilson look like a first round NFL selection. BYU's history against Utah recently is to make ordinary quarterbacks look extraordinary.

That said, BYU has a reason to play their best football of the year in this game. They have proven that they will run through a brick wall for Bronco and that is what it will take for the Cougars to win.

BYU will have to be able to run the ball through Utah's brick wall on their front seven. How BYU goes with their ground game will be the key to this game.

The prospects don't seem promising, especially looking at recent rushing results against the Utes. BYU may have some help with Squally Canada being eligible to play against the Utes without losing any eligibility, but if he gets more than 3-5 carries, it would be a huge surprise.

As usual, if BYU can't run the ball, the offensive game for the Cougars will once again be on Tanner Mangum's shoulders. He has proven this season that he has big shoulders so we will see how he holds up against Utah's pressure. The Utes are better up front defensively than Missouri but not as good as Michigan.

The wildcard is Mendenhall. This is his swan song and you can bet he wants to go out a winner against the Utes. You can also bet that his players want to grant him that wish.

This could be Bronco's Gary Pinkel moment. In case you forgot, Pinkel's announced retirement before facing BYU generated an upset win for the Missouri Tigers. A win over Utah with their line of scrimmage superiority will definite rank as an upset for BYU.

We shall see.

Cougars Lose 83-75

Post and Punch Storyline of Utah Game

BYU had plenty of punch, thanks to Nick Emery's late game ejecting left-handed hook. Unfortunately, except for Kyle Davis, BYU was totally punch less in the post against Utah.

No post play and no play period by BYU in the opening 15 minutes of the game gave the Cougars their second loss of the season. This time it was an 83-75 shortfall to Utah in Salt Lake City last week.

BYU rebounded last Saturday with a 73-68 win over Weber State. Again it was Davis, who never looks spectacular, but just produces points in the paint and rebounds.

The Cougars were led by Chase Fischer and his 21 points against the Wildcats. He also had 26 against the Utes, all produced in the second half of the game.

BYU will wrap up in state play this week against Utah State in Provo on Wednesday. It will mark the return of Nick Emery from his one game suspension. The Cougars will put a wrap on the week with a game at Colorado on Saturday.

Women Go Huge in Hawaii

Meanwhile, the Lady Cougars came up big in the Tom Weston Classic in Laie, Hawaii in a three game performance. BYU routed BYU-Hawaii 85-40, bested Hawaii 67-56 and upset No. 11 Texas A&M 72-64.

Jeff Judkin's team is now 6-3 on the year with Weber State on deck for Thursday, Dec. 10 in Ogden.

Women Volleyballers Do What They Do

For the 4th consecutive season the BYU women's volleyball team advanced to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA tournament this past week.

The road to the quarterfinals included wins over Ohio and Western Kentucky. Next up this Friday will be Nebraska in a match hosted in Lexington, Kentucky.

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Utah State (M Basketball)

Wednesday, December 9 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm MST

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Colorado (M Basketball)

Saturday, December 12 at Boulder

Tipoff: 6:00 pm MST

TV: Pac 12 Network

BYU vs. Nebraska (W Volleyball) NCAA Sweet Sixteen

Friday, December 11 at Lexington, Ky

Match Start: 3:00 pm MST

TV: ESPN3

BYU vs. Utah (W Basketball)

Saturday, December 12 at Provo

Tipoff: 2:00 pm MST

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs Utah (Football) Las Vegas Bowl

Saturday, December 19 at Las Vegas

Kickoff: 1:30 pm MST

TV: ABC