

HB Arnett's



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Due to my recent shoulder surgery last week, this issue is sponsored by Lortab. All views, opinions and declarations are those of the pain killer and not necessarily those of HB Arnett. They are all pretty close however. As a disclaimer, if I am wrong in my offensive optimism for this team and BYU is trailing Virginia 24-7 at the half, I still have 4 Lortab left in reserve to help ease the pain and manage my stupidity.

Thanks,

hb

COUGARS HAVE CHIP IN BIG 12 GAME

There have been several stories printed in the local papers and those that follow Texas football about the Desmond Harrison situation. For those who haven't been keeping score, Harrison enrolled and took some BYU Independent Study courses while at Contra Costa JC in California. [Click here for a good synopsis of the story.](#)

He received credit from BYU for the work and credits were accepted by Contra Costa JC and then eventually Texas.

Now BYU has rescinded those credits from Harrison after he didn't declare that he was an athlete trying to maintain or gain eligibility with the BYU credits.

BYU has a policy that doesn't allow non BYU student athletes to use that venue for eligibility purposes. The policy was put in place a while back after several schools used BYU to keep some high profile athletes on the field and playing.

The discussion has been from both sides. BYU says Harrison wasn't truthful in enrolling. Texas says that they will pursue legal action to get those credits for Harrison base on their knowledge of other athletes that have used the same procedure. Did I mention that Harrison was penciled in as the starting left tackle for the Longhorns and actually participate in fall camp before the eligibility issue arose.

Did I mention that BYU wants to maintain its academic integrity, especially based on its past problems?

With BYU and Texas set to face each other in Provo on September 7, there is plenty here for bulletin board fodder.

I think this goes much deeper than a player being eligible, especially for BYU.

It is no secret that the Cougars don't want to be left on the sideline when the Big Five move on and segregate themselves from the have not's of college football.

BYU needs all the friends they can get from the Big 12, but if you are choosing friends, Texas would be a much better friend than Iowa State.

Ultimately, as Tom Holmoe has stated numerous times, it all boils down to economic power. You have to prove that you are an economic feasible school for the current members to let you in.

That said, I always remember the dialogue in the movie *"Clear and Present Danger"*

It reminds me of the current Desmond Harrison situation and how it plays out between BYU and UT.

The quote to which I am referring is between the President of the USA and Jack Ryan, the acting director of intelligence for the CIA.

President: "You're not gonna do that."

Ryan: "I'm not?"

President: "No, no. You've got yourself a chip in the big game, now. You're gonna tuck that away. You are gonna save that for a time when your own a-- is on the line, and then you're gonna pull it out, and I'm gonna cash it in for you. Right?"

Ryan: "I don't think I have anything more to say to you, sir."

I don't know how the chips will eventually fall in this Harrison and UT vs. BYU scenario, but I do believe that BYU now has in its hand a vital friendship chip with which to play and cash in with Texas in hopes for some future Big 12 relationship.

Just who has possession of that chip, BYU athletics or BYU academics and how they will play it will be an interesting scene to follow in the next few days.

BYU Knee Deep in Hyperventilation and Hysteria

A week ago I wrote this in evaluation of BYU's defensive backs.

Defensive Backs: Put Jordan Johnson in your prayers. If he goes down with injury, losing the redshirt junior field corner would be almost insurmountable for this defense.

Johnson, of course, is now gone for the year and headed for operating table with a torn ACL and hysteria and hyperventilation has fully set in...among fans.

Johnson, of course is a major loss, but not the total disaster that most assume. Corners have been hit with multiple injuries this summer and fall. It will be up to the defensive coaches, mainly Bronco Mendenhall, to find a suitable answer to this problem.

Here are some of his options. Change the offensive strategy from going hard and fast to going slow and deliberate. Controlling the ball with long time consuming drives on offense would lesson the exposure on defense to corners that are not going to be very good.

Here is another option. Make the offense go even harder and faster than what they are doing now. Assuming that BYU corner problems will cost the Cougars between 7 to 10 points per game, the offense will be required to make up those points with increased production and scoring.

This is not a new concept for BYU football. I don't want to bring up any specific names, but you don't have to be a long time Cougar fan to remember corners that were average at their best and downright horrific at their worst.

If you can't replace them, then you replace the points they will give up with a more productive offense.

Get used to the fact that this defense isn't going to be as good as it has been. That doesn't necessarily mean that the season record is going to be any worse than it would have been with good corners.

Right now it appears that BYU defensive coaches are over reacting by putting out a casting call for corners. They reportedly have moved freshman speedster Michael Davis from wide out to corner to see if he can be a stop gap measure.

There are also stories circulating that the coaches have approached rugby player Jonny Linehan about trying his luck in the defensive backfield.

The best course of action, in my opinion, is to let time heal all wounds. Johnson and Trent Trammell will both be back next season. Mike Hague, Dallin Leavitt and Sam Lee are all projected to be back in action anywhere from a week to two months out.

Deal with it. Put the burden on the offense and tell them to step it up. Until the injuries run their course on defense, it will be on the offense to cover the gap.

My assessment of the offense hasn't change. They will be prolific and more than capable of scoring what is needed to compensate for a lack of corners.

One of the beauties of being old is that you can still remember the shootouts of the old WAC.

Mendenhall would do well to forget his defensive woes and meet with LaVell Edwards about the BYU football philosophy of yesterday. "If you can't stop them, outscore them".

That philosophy certainly has my vote and my reaffirmation of at least a 10-2 season.

Killing Time for another Two Weeks

Football coaches are always pleading for more preparation time in order to get ready for their season openers.

Football fans are just the opposite. They can't wait for the opening kickoff to a new season.

Coach or fan, there are just two weeks left until BYU travels to Virginia to take on the Cavaliers of the ACC. In an effort to speed along the next 12 days here are some items to ponder and kick around. Let's start with kicking.

It now appears that BYU will go into the season with Justin Sorensen as their kicker. In most cases a returning starter at a position is a positive thing. I'm not quite ready to concede the positive to Sorensen just yet.

He has a lot to prove from last season to win me and most other football fans over. A good start would be getting the ball into the end zone on kickoffs and making some pressure packed 40-plus yard field goals.

This may be the year for Sorensen to do just that. He has battled injuries in the past and reportedly is healthy for this season. But he will have to show something for the positive meter to move.

He apparently has won the kicking battle in fall camp and will be the guy Mendenhall trots out for kickoffs and must have field goals.

Here's hoping that a new year and new season is what Sorensen has needed to show up during games.

Until then, I am reminded of the saying: "If you continue to do what you have always done, you will continue to get what you have always got". That pretty well sums up BYU's kicking game the last couple of seasons.

In the punting department, Scott Arellano will handle those chores. He is not a boomer and banger of the football, but he is consistent in putting the ball where the coaches want it and will be instrumental in the field position battles during contests.

Last week we highlighted three new football recruits for the 2014 recruiting class. Chief among them was juco wide out Nick Kurtz, a 6-3, 205 pounder from Grossmont JC in San Diego.

Kurtz had offers from Texas Tech, Kansas State, Oregon and Cal but choose the Cougars. The chances of Kurt living up to his billing as a player are good because of his pedigree. When BYU lands a player from Grossmont, they almost always turn out to be very good players.

In case you forgot, the last receiver BYU signed from the California juco was Todd Watkins. Before that they also signed a good running back from Grossmont in Reynaldo Braithwaite. He couldn't stay in school, but when on the field he was very productive.

Larry Moore, an offensive lineman, was also signed by the Cougars out of Grossmont. He left BYU and went on to play in the NFL. Two other BYU receivers were Grossmont products. Rich Zayas and K.O. Kealalui.

The lone miss I can remember was receiver Joe Griffith. He signed with Braithwaite, but never materialized into a player.

Check the Pressure on Tires and Taysom

Before embarking on any trip it's a good idea to check the pressure of your tires.

Before embarking on any new football season, it's also a good idea to check the pressure on your quarterback.

In case you forgot, your favorite team in the end is only as good as the quarterback. Hill has yet to prove anything significant on the field, but he already is under the pressure and scrutiny of being a successful Cougar quarterback.

He is the guy that all media wants to talk to. He is the guy BYU trots out as the face of the program. Fortunately, he is well spoken and articulate and well versed in avoiding any controversial remarks or sound bites.

Now all he has to do is produce on the field and watch BYU put an all out national publicity blitz out touting. Hill. You don't get a clean cut, articulate, polite and polished quarterback as your pitch man for the program very often. And if he can also make plays and produce, you have died and gone to heaven.

We will know after two quarters of the Virginia game if Taysom is a player or a poser. My money is on player.

Hill's abilities will get ample opportunities to shine and show case themselves because he will be going up some very talented and in some cases, proven quarterbacks in head to head matches.

In the proven category, Hill will face returning qb starters Joe Southwick of Boise State, Chuckie Keeton of Utah State, Cody Fajardo of Nevada, David Ash from Texas, Travis Wilson from Utah and David Piland of Houston and Tommy Rees is a former starter for Notre Dame.

Also on the list of opposing quarterbacks will be David Watford of Virginia, Logan Gilgore from Middle Tennessee and David Piland of Houston.

Georgia Tech will trot out Vad Lee a new starting qb, Wisconsin is still in a qb battle between Curt Phillips and Joel Stave.

I like to love Taysom Hill's chances in all of these quarterback matchups.

BYU Basketball Non Conference Schedule Released

Oct. 26 » Colorado College (exhibition)

Nov. 2 » Alaska-Anchorage (exhibition)

Nov. 8 » Weber State

Nov. 11 » at Stanford

Nov. 14 » vs. TBA, CBE Hall of Fame Classic, Provo

Nov. 16 » vs. TBA, CBE Hall of Fame Classic, Provo

Nov. 20 » Iowa State

Nov. 25 » vs. Texas at Kansas City, Missouri

Nov. 26 » vs. DePaul or Wichita State at Kansas City, Missouri

Nov. 30 » vs. Utah State at Salt Lake City

Dec. 3 » North Texas

Dec. 7 » vs. UMass at Springfield, Mass.

Dec. 11 » Prairie View A&M

Dec. 14 » at Utah

Dec. 21 » at Oregon

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Virginia

Saturday, Aug 31 at Charlottesville at Provo

Kickoff: 1:30 pm Mountain Time

TV: ESPNU

BYU vs. Texas

Saturday, Sept 7 at Provo

Kickoff: 5:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: ESPN2

BYU vs. Utah

Saturday, Sept 21 at Provo

Kickoff: TBA

TV: TBA

BYU vs. Middle Tennessee

Friday, Sept 27 at Provo

Kickoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: ESPNU

BYU vs. Utah State

Friday, Oct 4 at Logan

Kickoff: 6:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: CBS Sports Network