

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

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JIMMER GOES SS AND SSU IN 71-69 WIN OVER SDSU

We've seen Jimmer Fredette in sleeves and we have seen him sans sleeves. We like him much better in the Sans Sleeves (SS) mode.

In the junior guard's last two games this season without sleeves, he punked and posted 49 points on Arizona in late December. Last Saturday night against San Diego State, he hung 33 points on the Aztecs to give BYU a 71-69 win and total control of the current Mountain West Conference basketball race.

To bad this BYU-SDSU game wasn't a shirts and skins game. We would love to see what Fredette would have done with his shirt off.

As good as Fredette was in his SS (sans sleeves) mode, he was even better in the SSU phase of his game. That stands for Shut the Students Up. The Aztecs' student section was vociferous and very supportive of their team until the final few seconds. Fredette's last basket and two game- clinching free throws sent them home sans sound.

The SDSU students were great, except in their getups. The first year they came to the BYU games dressed in Mormon Missionary garb, it was cute and creative.

Several years later, it is just religious bigotry and intolerance. If it is so cute and creative to make fun of and pick on a religion, why don't those same students dress as Catholic Priests and Nuns when the Aztecs play St. Mary's or Notre Dame? Against BYU it is cute. Against another religious sponsored university, it would be all over CNN.

On the court, it was the BYU basketball team that was the picker, not the pickee. Fredette had plenty of help in the big road win. Tyler Haws continued to make a solid statement that he is a legitimate candidate for MWC Freshman of the Year. He was on fire to start the game and ended the contest with 17 points.

When BYU was being pounded on the board in the first half, it was Charles Abouo who came off the bench during the last twenty minutes of play to give the Cougars a tougher physical presence on the

court.

Even with some nice contributions from others on the Cougar roster, this game belonged to Fredette and SDSU coach Steve Fisher knew it.

“He truly is one of the best,” Fisher said post game in describing Fredette. “He knows how to create opportunities for himself. He wiggles, he twists, he finds gaps, he can step back and make shots and he can shoot it on you when you are guarding him. He’s very, very good.”

We don’t expect Fredette to have a 30-plus scoring game this Wednesday against New Mexico. We also don’t expect Jackson Emery, Fredette’s backcourt mate, to have the same kind of game he had against SDSU. Emery went 1-7 from the field. He didn’t shoot well, but he was a contributor with his perimeter defense and propensity for stealing the ball.

The Lobos are very good, especially at home in the Pit. This game will be decided at the free throw line and we expect New Mexico to be there much more than the Cougars. If there is a big disparity in free throws attempted, this could be a game the Cougars lose.

If BYU can find a way to win what should be a hard-fought and competitive encounter, you can close the book on the conference race. The Cougars are currently 5-0.

THE FUTURES MARKET

Listed below are how BYU’s most recent signees and future prospects fared during the last week. All except recent signee Anson Winder, are LDS.

Kyle Collinsworth, 6-6 guard/wing, Provo HS...Collinsworth continued his torrid scoring pace this past week in two more wins for Provo. Against Orem, a 44-39 win, he had 17. In the 64-44 win over Westlake, he poured in 27. This week he will face Timpview and Timpanogas high schools. Both games are on the road.

When you look at the leading scorers in the state and take away all the players from the 1A and 2A schools, Collinsworth is currently second in the state in scoring with 21.25 points per game. Third in the state in scoring currently is freshman Nick Emery. He is averaging 20.71 points per game. The leading scorer in the 4A and 5A ranks is West High’s Tyrell Corbin. He scores at a 21.71 clip. He is the son of current Jazz assistant coach Tryrone Corbin.

Nick Emery, 6-0 freshman guard, Lone Peak HS...He scored 22 last week in a 63-45 win over Hillcrest. This week Lone Peak has two games. They face Jordan HS on Wednesday and then get Brighton on Friday night. Both games are at Lone peak.

Anson Winder, 6-3, guard, Bishop Gorman HS...Two weeks ago, Winder didn’t show up in his team’s box scores because he had a sprained ankle. This past week he was back. He scored 14 points while coming off the bench last Friday in a 90-47 win over Desert Oasis.

Jabari Parker, 6-5, wing, Simeon HS, Chicago...For the first time in years, Simeon lost back-to-back conference games last week. They were defeated by Bogan HS and Vocational HS. Parker had just single digit scoring in the 45-43 loss to Vocational, but led his team with 16 points in the 52-48 loss to Bogan. The super frosh scored 14 of those 16 points in the first half.

DeMarcus Harrison, 6-4, guard, Christ School, Arden, NC...With his team cruising with a 23-1 mark, Harrison, a junior, had a nice week in three wins. He had 14 points in a 90-56 win over Mountain Heritage, scored 14 more, along with 4 steals and 2 blocks in the 84-51 victory over Wesleyan Christian and then had 13 points in a 98-61 win over Rabun Gap.

Jordan Chatman, 6-3, guard, Skyview HS, Ridgefield, WA...Chatman had 11 points in Skyview's 56-47 win over Kelso last Thursday. He also had 6 assists in the game.

Jordan Smoot, 6-10, center, Crown Point HS, Crown Point, IN...Smoot was shut out of the scoring column last week in a 61-56 road loss to East Chicago Central. He fouled out of the game, but had 7 rebounds. The previous night in a 49-39 win over Michigan City, Smoot had 10 points and 13 rebounds.

BASKETBALL BRIEFS

We mentioned last week that Joe Lunardi, the ESPN Bracketologist, had BYU headed to Spokane for the first round of the upcoming NCAA tournament in March. It turns out that Spokane is not an option for the Cougars.

Spokane was originally set for a Thursday-Saturday scenario, but it has been changed to a Friday-Sunday setup. That means BYU can't and won't play there.

The only four opening round venues where BYU could be placed are at New Orleans, Providence, R.I., Oklahoma city and San Jose. If the Cougars advance to the next round of Sweet Sixteen teams, there are only two places where they could play. That would be at the Carrier Dome in Syracuse and at the Energy Solutions Arena in Salt Lake City.

After a look at the good young bigs of other MWC teams, BYU may be a body short next season after the graduation of Chris Miles. We mentioned last week that the only post players BYU currently has scheduled to come back are Brandon Davies and James Anderson.

Calories could account for another potential post player. Last week Dave Rose told the Salt Lake Cougar Club that Chris Collinsworth, who currently is still serving an LDS mission in Australia, is now at around 235 pounds. Rose says that he is still expecting the 6-9 Collinsworth to play the four spot, but that if he gets even heavier, he may be a post possibility.

We expect Collinsworth to shed some of those mission pounds and play his natural four spot. That would still leave some issues off the bench behind Davies next season. In our opinion, BYU needs another big body to sign in April.

Quality big men seem to be hard to come by for BYU historically. There seem to be plenty of guards and wings in the LDS prep basketball pool, but bigs are not as prevalent. Of course, finding bigs is the top priority of all other programs in the country.

It's early and this kid is very raw and young, but you can bet that BYU knows about Isaac Neilson. He is a 6-9, 210 pound junior at Mission Viejo HS in California. He is LDS. He is currently averaging 10 points and 7 rebounds per outing. There are some who say he may still have a little growth yet to come. We have some video on this kid and will post it on the blog sometime later this week.

FOOTBALL FLUFF AND STUFF

Surgeries may limit some BYU football player's participation in spring drills which begin in March. Ross Apo, the newly enrolled freshman, will miss drills because of recent shoulder surgery for an injury suffered in high school. Marco Thorson, a backup offensive lineman, also had shoulder surgery and is out for the spring.

Two defensive backs will have limited spring action, if any at all, because of surgery. Andrew Rich, the starting safety and backup corner, Robbie Buckner are recovering from ankle and shoulder surgeries respectively. Braden Hansen, a starting offensive lineman, also had thumb surgery, but should see limited duty this spring.

The buzz for this spring will be the quarterback competition between Riley Nelson, Jake Heaps and James Lark. Most of the excitement is about Heaps because of his outstanding high school credentials and the ubiquitous You Tube videos available of his prep accomplishments.

In an effort to compare apples to apples, we will post prep footage of the 2005 Utah State 4A championship game that matched up Lark and Nelson. High school video is fun to watch, but the only video that really matters is what BYU coaches will be watching each day after spring drills. What they see will tell them who the new BYU quarterback starter will be.

RECRUITING RE-RUNS

When it comes to BYU football recruiting, it has become like old television re-runs of M.A.S.H. You already knew the plot and how it would turn out, but you still enjoyed watching the show.

That is the nature of BYU football recruiting these days. With Bronco Mendenhall's emphasis on early offers and commitments, the class has been constructed for months.

There are no surprises. We know how it is going to turn out, but still will enjoy seeing it again on Wednesday, Feb. 3, on nation letter of intent signing day.

Barring any major rewrites or reworks, the recruiting script for the BYU 2010 football class is a done deal. The only twist could be a reconsideration of defensive tackle Ricky Heimuli of Brighton HS.

BYU had an offer on the table for this talented defensive lineman for the last year. He was still making trips and was undecided until last week. Reportedly, he called BYU to say he wanted on board, but was told that all scholarships had been allocated. That didn't set well and it appears that he will either sign with Washington or Utah.

Here is the latest class that will sign on Wednesday.

Jordan Afo, DL, 6-4, 300, Cottonwood HS, UT
Jordan Black, OL 6-7, 235, Alta HS, UT
Algernon Brown, RB, 6-1, 205, Skyline HS, UT
Tayo Fabuluje, OT, 6-5, 255, The Oakridge School, TX
Alani Fua, LB 6-5, 210, Oaks Christian HS, CA
Kori Gaines, DB, 5-9, 170, Grayson HS, GA
Toloa'i Ho Ching, LB, 6-0, 225, Alta HS, UT

Jacob Hanneman, DB, 6-1, 190, Lone Peak HS, UT
Jordan Johnson, DB, 5-10, 175, Brooks School, MA
Tuni Kanuch...DL, 6-1, 285, Bingham HS, UT
Bronson Kaufusi, DL, 6-6, 225, Timpview HS, UT
Teu Kautai, LB, 6-1, 200, The Oakridge School, TX
Collin Keoshian, LB, 6-2, 225, Santa Clarita Christian, CA
A.J. Moore...RB, 5-10, 190, Murrieta Valley HS, CA
Manu Mulitalo, OL, 6-3, 305, Granger HS, UT
Joey Owens, LB, 6-2, 215, Pleasant Grove HS, UT
Drew Phillips, RB, 6-0, 185, Boaz HS, AL
Graham Rowley, OL, 6-4, 270, Waialua HS, HI
Bryan Sampson, TE, 6-4, 210, Pleasant Grove HS, UT
Kona Schwenke, DL, 6-5, 210, Kahuku HS, HI
Zac Stout...LB, 6-2, 220, Oaks Christian HS, CA
Sae Tautu, LB, 6-3, 215, Lone Peak HS, UT
Travis Tuiloma, DL, 6-3, 290, Washburn Rural HS, KS
Blair Tushaus, OL, 6-2, 270, Notre Dame Prep, AZ

Jake Heaps, Ross Apo and Josh Quezada already have signed and are currently enrolled in school. Heaps is the highly touted quarterback, Apo is the wide receiver from Texas and Quezada, a running back from California. Also in school is talented linebacker Kyle Van Noy. He actually signed a year ago, but for some off the field issues, delayed his entry into school until earlier this month.

TELEVISION TIMETABLE

BYU vs. New Mexico

Wednesday, Jan 27 at Albuquerque

Tipoff: 8:00 pm Mtn Time

TV: The Mtn

BYU vs. Utah

Saturday, Jan 30 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: The Mtn

BYU vs. TCU

Tuesday, Feb 2 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: The Mtn

BYU vs. UNLV

Saturday, Feb 6 at Las Vegas

Tipoff: 2:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: Versus

BYU vs. Air Force

Saturday, Feb 13 at Provo

Tipoff: 4:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: The Mtn