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COUGARS PROVIDE PLENTY OF CONSTERNATION

It only took one day of fall camp for the sky to fall in on BYU football. According to media reports and especially internet message boards, the Cougars are in big trouble.

Here's why. Taysom Hill's first pass was incomplete. To make matters worse, he is wearing a knee brace. Kyle Van Noy sat out BYU's first practice. Jamaal Williams' lips turned white. (Williams had the quote of the first day of fall camp when he said, "I'm tired, like you want to pass out. My lips were white. You know when your lips get white you are tired. You need water. Not water. Wah-ter.")

BYU is still looking for a nose guard. All field corners are injured. Michael Alisa is still nursing his broken arm. All new incoming players are in shock over the go hard, go fast culture. The offensive line still stinks, but not as bad as last year.

Ladies and Gentlemen, to borrow the infamous phrase from Dan Hawkins, the former head coach at Colorado, ["It's Division I football."](#) (Click to hear Hawkins)

There is nothing new in fall camps. They are the same year after year. Players are hurt. Players recover. Positions need filled, talent is either lacking or loaded. Players tweak hamstrings. Players are protected with braces. Some have great fall camps and others fall flat on their face. It's Division I football "brotha".

Augustana to Alabama

Every team, from Augustana to Alabama experiences the same things in their fall camps. We are just so focused on BYU that we don't notice that every other team at all NCAA divisions is also having their normal fall camp issues.

It has been that way for the 30 plus years I have covered BYU football. The difference these days is that most fans have become soap opera junkies when it comes to following their teams.

Blame it on the internet. Now fans literally hang on every hang nail of players. It is because web sites and regular media have to produce or perish. You need to post a story not every day, but almost every hour to be competitive in the sports news business.

Non stories like those that happen at every fall football camp are suddenly blown up into breaking and heartbreaking news.

Trust me, Bronco Mendenhall and his coaches will get it all figured out. They will say all the right things, but more importantly, they will actually field a team August 31 against Virginia.

There will be a quarterback that will be good. There will be a cover corner placed on the field. A nose guard will be trotted out and somebody will actually attempt to kick a field goal. The offensive line will have pads on and actually try and knock somebody on their butt.

Go hard, go fast, will either describe the new BYU offense against UVA, but could also describe BYU's fans attempt at finding the exits late in the third quarter.

Honestly, nobody knows how this football team will play. I am betting on them being very good, but always remember, that it is August and the Cougars are undefeated and potential national champs. Wake me when fall camp concludes and real football starts and reality either bursts BYU's bubble or sets them sailing towards a BCS berth.

Meanwhile, even BYU sports information department has to post daily or perish. Here is their first post about newcomers.

PROVO, Utah – The BYU football team will conduct the first practice of fall camp Saturday afternoon in preparation for the 2013 season opener on Aug. 31 at Virginia.

Players reported on Friday in anticipation of Saturday's opening practice session of fall camp. Some of the events taking place in advance of the first practice include a welcome from head coach Bronco Mendenhall, orientation, individual physicals and equipment issue.

Newcomers reporting for camp on Friday included Michael Davis (Fr. WR), Rylee Gautavai (Fr. LB), Brayden Kearsley (Fr. OL), Tomasi Laulile (Fr. DL), Dallin Leavitt (Fr. DB), Kai Nacua (Fr. DB), John Ryheem Peoples (Fr. DL), Trajan Pili (Fr. LB), Jordan Preator (Fr. DB), Addison Pulsipher (Fr. OL), Colby Pearson (Fr. WR), Thomas Shoaf (Fr. OL), Merrill Taliauli (Fr. DL) and Vance Bingham (Fr. P/K).

The Cougars also welcomed transfers Josh Carter (OL, Jr., Eastern Arizona College), Robertson Daniel (DB, Jr., De Anza JC), Tim Duran (OL, Jr., Cabrillo College), Edward Fusi (OL, Jr. Mt. San Antonio CC), Sam Lee (DB, Jr. College of the Canyons), Trevor Samson (P/K, Jr., Fresno City JC), Kalolo Utu (DL, Jr. Compton CC) and De'Ondre Wesley (OL, Jr., Diablo Valley CC). Also reporting for fall camp were returned missionaries Bryan Sampson (R-Fr. TE), Algernon Brown (R-Fr. RB), Sae Tautu (R-Fr. LB) and Scott Lefrandt (Sr. DB).

Seniors Houston Reynolds (OL) and Jordan Smith (WR) have not been cleared medically to play and will not return for their final seasons. Sophomore Kevan Bills (LB) will also miss this season to recover from off-season ACL surgery.

BYU is entering its third season as a football independent in 2013 and gears up for a tough schedule that includes four opponents ranked in the preseason USA TODAY Top 25 coaches' poll.

Football Fluff and Stuff

Tayo Fabuluge...It is no secret that the talented former BYU player, who transferred to TCU after his freshman season in Provo, told Gary Patterson last week that he was quitting the Horned Frog team.

It is also no secret that Fabuluge is a very good friend of Ross Apo, a former high school teammate. He also still has football friends on the Cougar squad from his one year as a redshirt freshman.

Fabuluge, has been in Utah quite a bit lately, including attending the wedding of Apo. He reportedly is now in Provo again and consequently there are lots of stories about him playing again for BYU.

He may indeed re-enroll at BYU, but the earliest he could set foot on the football practice field would be Sept. 3. That is the day the fall semester starts and teams can go from a 105 player roster to 125.

What is to be determined will be his eligibility status. He will either need a waiver from TCU to be eligible to play this season and or will have to sit out a year as required by NCAA mandates concerning transfers. Meanwhile, no official word can be given by BYU or Bronco Mendenhall on the situation to avoid any possible NCAA violations.

The story is interesting and we have sources tell us that they fully expect him to finish his college football career at BYU. Exactly when that career will be restarted remains up in the air.

Toughest Schedule Ever?...Let's get this one out of the way early before games start to be played and we find out who really is tough and not so tough.

On paper and with preseason prognostications The Cougars appear to have a tough schedule in front of them with Texas, Utah, Utah State, Notre Dame, Georgia Tech, Boise State and Wisconsin. That is all on paper.

Empirically and historically speaking, however, BYU's toughest football schedule ever was in 2004 under Gary Crowton when the Cougars went 5-6. That schedule had three teams that finished the regular season undefeated in USC, Utah and Boise State.

There will be no undefeated teams on BYU's schedule this year and no team on the schedule will also be able to claim they played an undefeated Cougar team.

Another Myth that doesn't hold water...BYU will go to an up tempo, go hard, go fast offense. One of the rationales of this new offensive scheme is that it will catch opposing defenses off guard.

It certainly may wear down defenses physically, but nobody will be caught off guard. That is because there are a plethora of teams playing hard and fast football now.

At least 8 of the 12 Pac 12 teams use an up tempo offense. At least 6 of the teams on BYU's schedule will also use an up tempo, read option offense. That would be Texas, Utah, Utah State, Middle Tennessee State, Notre Dame and Nevada. And Georgia Tech, Boise State and Wisconsin, under new coach and former USU coach Gary Anderson will also be using some form of a read option attack.

Legacy of Labrum...Call it the triumvirate of tears. Kyle Van Noy has suffered a torn shoulder labrum. So has Cody Hoffman. Both are healed and ready to go for this season. Now I get to join the club. I will undergo surgery later this month to repair a torn labrum and rotator cuff.

Van Noy bypassed the BYU medical teams and reportedly had his tear fixed in Park City by Dr. Vern Cooley of the Rosenberg, Cooley, Metcalf Clinic in Park City. If that sounds familiar it should. Dr. Cooley is the guy who repaired Tiger Woods knee.

I too am bypassing the BYU medical people. Originally my surgery was going to be done in my kitchen by my home teacher. When I found out that he was also counting it as a monthly visit, I instead opted for a very good orthopedic guy in American Fork.

While I am recovering, I am going to do a little anecdotal research on labrum tears by BYU football players. It may just be my imagination, but am I the only one that thinks BYU seems to have had an abnormal amount of shoulder injuries, i.e. tears over the past few years?

Is BYU headed back to the MWC?... No, but the schedule sure looks like it. Tom Holmoe announced this past week that BYU has signed a home and home deal in football with Fresno State. The Cougars will host the Bulldogs in Provo in 2015 and play in Fresno in 2017.

BYU has now come full circle with the addition of FSU on the schedule. The Cougars already have games set with Nevada. In case you forgot, there was much talk in Provo from BYU how the Cougars would never play the Wolfpack and Bulldogs after the two schools were instrumental in killing the WAC deal involving BYU and all sports other than football. The WAC was going to be the landing spot for the Cougars until FSU and UNR both bolted to the MWC in a move some thought was orchestrated to stick it to BYU.

Speaking of the MWC, we don't see the Cougars ever heading back to that league, but they will play four games in 2015 against teams from Craig Thompson's conference, including an all MWC schedule in the month of November.

Here's the current schedule with 9 games set for 2015: Nebraska at Lincoln; Boise State at Provo; Michigan at Ann Arbor; Southern Miss at Hattiesburg; Cincinnati at Provo; Connecticut at Provo; UNLV at Las Vegas; Fresno State at Provo and Utah State at Logan.

Kicking Woes Addressed... Bronco Mendenhall saw the same thing we all saw last season. The BYU kicking game was awful. Instead of kicking the problem under the rug and maintaining the status quo for this season, Mendenhall did something about it.

He has brought in two new kickers to add competition, and hopefully accuracy to the Cougar kicking game. The two new kicking candidates brought in reported to camp on Friday. They are freshman Vance Bingham, an LDS returned missionary who prepped at Alta HS in Sandy, Utah and Trevor Samson, a juco transfer from Fresno City College in California.

Here is a video on [Trevor Samson](#) and an interesting item on [Vance "Moose" Bingham](#). Turns out that Bingham is a former Ute who converted, probably because of romance. Not his, but his sister's. She married former BYU great Bryan Kehl.

Open Practice and Scrimmage...

BYU will hold their only open practice and scrimmage for the public this Saturday at LaVell Edwards Stadium. It starts at 10:00 am.

Basketball Briefing

It's been an interesting summer for Dave Rose and BYU basketball.

Let's start with recruiting. The Cougars now have 4 verbal commits for the 2014 class. The latest to give Rose a verbal pledge was Ryan Andrus, a 6-10 post player from American Fork High School in Utah.

He joins T.J. Haws, who committed over a year ago and was part of the national championship team of Lone Peak HS, Dalton Nixon, a 6-7 forward from Orem High School and 6-4 Jake Toolson from Highland HS in Arizona.

With Andrus in the bag, Rose has now secured two of the top three high school players in the state. Two days before Andrus said yes, Brekkott Chapman, a 6-7 forward from Roy HS declared for Utah.

He is definitely a player and the Utes got a good one. A good one, in my opinion is also what the Utes pulled off in the pr department. For months, BYU was reported to be far down Chapman's list of college choices despite BYU's recruiting efforts.

Then just two days before committing to Utah, Chapman suddenly says that his top three are Utah, BYU and UCLA. With BYU miraculously now in the picture, the Utes get even more recruiting swagger because they can say that they beat out the Cougars and get a double win with the Chapman commit.

Again, all of that is conjecture on my part, but I have been doing this for years and know how gamesmanship works in the recruiting business.

With BYU not landing Chapman, Rose is now 0-3 the last two years when it comes to recruiting Black LDS prospects that don't serve or plan to serve Mormon missions. He has missed on Chapman (Utah), Jabari Parker (Duke) and Jordan Loveridge (Utah).

Throw in Brandon Davies and Charles Abouo from a few seasons back, however, and Rose is batting .400 with Black LDS prospects that don't serve or plan to serve missions.

Batting .500

Rose would be hitting .500 if we included Jordan Chatman to the recent list, but we can't because Chatman is currently serving an LDS mission in Taiwan.

BYU will now focus on 6-9 Payton Dastrup as their final 2014 early signee. Look for Rose and his crew to bring Dastrup in for an official visit in September, either for the Texas or Utah game and hope that will sway him to join the rest of his immediate family as Cougars.

Dastrup has had a nice summer circuit and garnered some big time offers from some big time programs such as Ohio State, Florida, Kansas, UofA, ASU, Oregon, USC, Boston College and Virginia. He also has offers from Utah and Utah State.

He has already announced that he will serve an LDS mission before enrolling in college. We are also hearing that could be the plans for Jake Toolson and most likely Dalton Nixon.

If grandmas living in Lindon have any recruiting credibility, we like BYU's chances with Dastrup. The Arizona big man's grandmother lives in Lindon.

Before BYU gets to early signings in November in 2014, they also have another recruit for this current year on their plate that they hope to add to the roster.

BYU has been on Jamal Aytes for well over a year. The 6-6 forward prepped at Junipero Serra HS in Southern California, but just barely became eligible to enroll in college and be able to play in this coming 2013-14 season.

That is good news for the Cougars who, as mentioned, have spent a lot of time on Aytes. The bad news is that now that he is eligible, besides BYU, Kansas State, Boston College, and Miami, Gonzaga and West Virginia have entered the sweepstakes. Aytes reportedly made a visit to Gonzaga this past week.

There are no grandmas in Lindon for BYU in this one, just a lot of time and hard work.

Size and Situation does matter

As good as players like Tyler Haws is and Jimmer Fredette was, you can't win consistently against good to great competition without big men.

That's a fact apparently not lost on Dave Rose. He has got his bigs lined up chronologically to make sure he doesn't get caught short, pun intended.

This coming season, 2013-14, he will have Nate Austin returning, but it is the addition of incoming freshman Eric Mika and Luke Worthington that will give Rose the bigs he needs. Worthington has said that he won't be serving an LDS mission, but Mika's decision to play a year and then serve was more than welcomed by Rose.

Unless Mika explodes and becomes NBA fodder after his freshman year, he should serve. That leaves just Worthington and Austin for 2014-15. That is why new commit Ryan

Andrus will play his freshman season and then leave on a mission. BYU will also have Issac Neilsen back from his LDS mission to Alabama.

The following year Austin will have graduated and will leave just Neilsen and Worthington in 2015-16, provided he hasn't had a change of heart and decided to serve. A season later, 2016-17 Payton Dastrup will be back from his mission. That is assuming he signs with BYU in November. So will Eric Mika. Issac Neilsen will also be on the roster.

You can't have enough bigs and BYU knows it. They now just have to plan how those bigs will fit chronologically.