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This issue of Cougar Sportsline is being sent out later than usual due to muscle issues. After the BYU beat down by Michigan, I have been under my bed in the fetal position until late this morning. My commitment to Cougar Sportsline and the call of nature, finally got me out. It took a little longer than I expected to get my typing muscles limbered up and even longer to try and make up something positive to write. Plus my wife told me I stunk and had to shower first.

31-0 Can Kicking

You Get What You Pay For and Dreams Do Come True

Bronco Mendenhall's dream of playing "against the best teams on the biggest stages in front of as many people as possible" came true last Saturday afternoon against Michigan. It turned out to be a nightmare in the form of a 31-0 "Cougar Can Kicking."

[Jiminy Cricket](#), when singing "When you wish upon a star" got it partly right when he sang, "Like a bolt out of the blue (and Maize), Suddenly, it comes to you, When you wish upon a star, your dreams come true. He was totally wrong however, when he sang, If

your heart is in your dream, no request is too extreme, When you wish upon a star as dreamers do, fate is kind.

The O’Jays, however, come closer to the mark in describing the college football landscape today and Michigan opening up “a Cougar can of whoop--- in Ann Arbor last Saturday when they sing about [“Money, Money, Money.”](#)

Mark Snyder of the *Detroit Free Press* explained nicely how it works in college football in January of this year when he wrote [You get what you pay for](#).

Michigan is getting what they paid for. They are getting one of the top 5 football coaches in America at any level; high school, college and the NFL. Jim Harbaugh’s record speaks for itself. Based on what he articulated in Ann Arbor last Saturday against BYU when he took Bronco Mendenhall to the proverbial “woodshed”, he appears to be worth every penny the Wolverines spent on him.

Tithing

Nobody, but Tom Holmoe and Kevin Worthen, know what BYU is paying Bronco Mendenhall, but despite the debacle of last week, he is a bargain for what BYU is compensating him. Trust me, his salary would probably be just “tithing” for many of the big name college coaches across the country.

This season, Bronco is 2-2 against much higher paid coaches. He beat former San Diego Charger head coach Mike Reilly at Nebraska, should have beat two time former NFL head coach (Atlanta and Seattle) Jim Mora. He whipped Boise State’s [Brian Harsin](#), who probably made more as an assistant at Texas, and definitely makes more at Boise than Bronco does currently at BYU.

Does Bronco have his flaws? Of course. Harbaugh flayed, flogged and flawed him Saturday on national television.

Is he the best BYU can do? Absolutely. Given the fact, that the head football coach at BYU must be LDS, Andy Reid, whom I consider to be in the top five coaches circle along with Harbaugh, isn’t walking through the BYU football door....ever.

Neither is Darrell Bevell, the offensive coordinator of the Seattle Seahawks. And most definitely, neither is Kyle Whittingham.

It’s all about money and morals.

BYU and its sponsoring institution could most definitely come up with the money to be competitive in the coaching race, but they won’t and shouldn’t. Even if it wasn’t a money issue, it is still a moral issue for coaches. No not for the coaches themselves, they are all fine LDS men, it is a moral issue in recruiting.

Beard Card

BYU has a beard card exemption in place, but the chances of BYU ever issuing a honor code exemption card for sports is about as likely as you hearing my named called from the pulpit this Saturday at LDS General Conference. It isn't happening.

So what's a diehard BYU football fan to do?

Think Orem Owlz. They are the rookie league affiliate of the Los Angeles Angels. They are a long ways from the major league level of baseball, but they are still entertaining and fun to watch. It would be like watching Savannah State play Wagner. If the price was right, the two teams playing were competitive and because the field is only a 15 minute walk from my home, I would go and watch.

Of the 128 teams playing FBS football currently, there are probably 10 schools in the rookie league category. There are probably 70 schools at the AA level and 30 schools at the AAA level. That includes a boatload of teams that are currently members of Power 5 conferences and BYU. So instead of thinking Orem Owlz, think Salt Lake Bees the Angels' AAA affiliate. Both venues sell Dr. Pepper which makes any baseball game on a summer evening delightful and would make LaVell Edwards Stadium a much more delightful setting also.

As a AAA football team, it means that the Cougars occasionally have a few players called up to the majors or NFL, but until a honor code exemption card is issued, which will never happen, or until BYU can recapture the Polynesian market for players on both lines of scrimmage, The Cougars may get an occasional September call up to the big leagues, but they are who they are.

My Team

They are still my team. They had their September call up try at the big league level and weren't bad. Now it's back to AAA for a rehab assignment. If things go well against other AAA teams like UConn, East Carolina and Cincinnati, and the pitching holds up (Tanner Mangum), another run at the big leagues looks more than feasible for next season.

That run, however, will be even harder than the recent 4-game slate. It includes games against current top ten ranked teams like Michigan State at East Lansing, UCLA in Provo, Utah in Salt Lake City, plus away games at Boise State, West Virginia (technically a neutral site) and a home game with Mississippi State.

Meanwhile, BYU is my team of choice and Dr. Pepper is my beverage of choice. Hot or cold, they both are still and always will be my favorites. And leave it to Dr. Pepper's [Larry Culpepper](#) to express my feelings for the drink and the future of BYU football.

Where's Donald Trump?

It's About Building and Mending Fences

I hate to mix politics with sports, but where's Donald Trump when he's needed?

It was obvious in the game against Michigan, that the Wolverines dominated the line of scrimmage on both sides of the ball. BYU couldn't provide Tanner Mangum with enough pass protection and when he did immigrate outside the pocket, Michigan had border patrol guys assigned to him. Talk about work place harassment. Mangum felt it all game long.

Defensively, Michigan's running game came across the BYU borders at will. The holes were bigger than the holes between Nogales and Douglas. If Donald Trump can find a way to build a bigger and more secure fence for BYU on both sides of the ball, and if he can get Jim Harbaugh and Michigan to pay for it, he's got my vote as coach of the year.

If Hillary Clinton can stop the price gouging by bio techs as she promised, hire her as a strength and conditioning coach to see if she can stop the "injury gouging" I don't know who she will select for her cabinet if elected, but Bronco Mendenhall certainly could use such players as Taysom Hill, Travis Tuiloma, Algie Brown, and now apparently Adam Hine and Harvey Langi, plus Troy Hinds, and other injured players in his Cougar cabinet.

If somehow Bronco could find a way to add Hillary and Donald to his coaching staff, it would be like the good old days when LaVell Edwards had Doug Scovil and Fred Whittingham as his coordinators. They were always in each other's faces and BYU was always a very good football team.

In the preseason, BYU's running backs situation was euphemistically disguised and described as being thin, but resilient. It has gone beyond that now. It is a full blown catastrophe if Hine is gone and Francis Bernard, the true freshman can't produce. There is no waiver wire that BYU can search for immediate replacements, and there is no waiver flag that Robert Anae will wave.

He will keep running the ball regardless of the results. You can insert your own political statement here.

Ecclesiastically, I believe in life after death. There is no NFL life after BYU for the current receiving corp but this group is a third of the way there. The NFL likes tall receivers that are fast and can make plays. BYU receivers are tall but as Michigan showed us, they are not fast and can't get open to make plays compared to NFL caliber athletes.

That's the bad news. The good news is that NFL caliber athletes on the line of scrimmage and in the secondary for the next three games BYU plays, will be much less frequent for BYU to go up against.

UConn is not Michigan. East Carolina is not UCLA and Cincinnati is not Boise State.

BYU has enough AAA athletes to beat all three of these teams....starting with UConn on Friday night. Las Vegas odds makers have BYU listed as a 17 ½ point favorite even with the BYU injuries factored in.

If the BYU offensive line can protect Tanner Mangum, BYU will protect this betting line for bettors. Better yet (almost a pun, but not quite), they will protect the egos and aspirations of BYU fans from being totally obliterated and shattered.

Better news for BYU football fans is that Mangum's showing against Michigan, sans protection and open receivers, will more than likely be Mangum's worst showing of the season. Every great BYU QB has had a battered, butchered and bloodied game extremely early in their career. See the Josh Rosen of UCLA game two weeks ago against BYU and then take a look at his performance against Arizona last Saturday.

If the Michigan showing by Mangum is going to be his worst learning curve game, his future is indeed extremely bright. Now if BYU can only figure out a way to keep him upright with no running game and sometimes iffy pass protection is another question.

I think that will be answered positively this week against UConn. This will be a get healthy and stay healthy game for Bronco and his Cougars. I call it BYU 41 UConn 21

What isn't answered but maybe answered this week in a blowout is who will be Mangum's backup for the remainder of the season. Most media types thinks it will be Beau Hoge. I look for McCoy Hill to be the first guy in with Hoge redshirting this season. We shall see.

It now appears that Moroni Laulu-Pututau will not redshirt. The talented true freshman wide receiver, played briefly against Nebraska and played briefly against Michigan. He didn't see any action against UCLA and Boise State. His appearance against Michigan would indicate that he is likely not going to redshirt this season. MLP is 6-4, 190 out of Mountain Crest HS in Hyrum, UT. He is a returned missionary and like Mangum, served in the Chile Antofagasta mission.

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Connecticut (Football)

Friday, October 2 at Provo

Kickoff: 8:15 MDT

TV: ESPN2

BYU vs. East Carolina

Saturday, October 10 at Provo

Kickoff: TBA

TV: TBA

BYU vs. Cincinnati

Friday, October 16 at Provo

Kickoff: 6:00 pm MDT

TV: ESPN

BYU vs. Loyola Marymount (Women's Volleyball)

Tuesday, September 29 at Provo

Start Time: 7:00 pm MDT

TV: ESPNU