

HB Arnett's
COUGAR SPORTSLINE

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MONEY, MOVES AND MWC CHAMPIONSHIPS

You gotta love Dave Rose.

In three years at BYU, he has turned in 20-plus wins each season he has coached the Cougars.

He took BYU to the NCAA tourney last year and will do the same this season.

With or without Trent Plaisted next year, it is our opinion that BYU will be an even better basketball team next season.

Like we said, you gotta love Dave Rose if you are a Cougar basketball fan.

You also gotta love Dave Rose if you are an athletic director at a BCS conference school looking to find a replacement for a coach you are going to fire.

Despite a nice raise and contract extension offered by BYU earlier this year to Rose, love and loyalty to a school can only hold up so long before the lure of a big paycheck and giving your family lifetime security becomes a real issue.

Real World

At least that is how it works in the real world of college coaching.

Let's put it this way, a four year deal at around a million dollars per year is something coaches can't and very seldom will turn down.

We don't know what Rose makes now, but you can go to the bank that he isn't going to the bank with what a lot of coaches are earning.

Let's talk money.

Steve Alford, the first-year New Mexico coach, took a pay cut to coach the Lobos. He was making \$1.2 million at Iowa, but the natives were restless.

He found the golden parachute with UNM when they gave him \$975,000 per year.

Alford is a pauper in the pantheon of big name coaches.

Is is a list of what the top coaches in the nation make in reverse order.

10. John Calipari, Memphis, \$1,315,000
9. Billy Donovan, Florida, \$1,389,173
8. Roy Williams, North Carolina, \$1,424,274
7. Jim Calhoun, UConn, \$1,500,00
6. Bill Self, Kansas, \$1,600,700
5. Tom Crean, Marquette, \$1,688,487

4. Tom Izzo, Michigan State, \$1,735,964
3. Thad Matta, Ohio State, \$1,750,000
2. Rick Barnes, Texas, \$1,800,00
1. Tubby Smith, Minnesota, \$2,073,307

There are plenty of other coaches who make at least a \$1 million or more per year.

Kelvin Sampson was making \$1,100,000 at Indiana until they let him go mid season. The Hoosiers are looking to hire a new coach for next season. Mike Kryzewski hauls in \$1,200,000.

Larry Eustachy, the former Utah State coach who went Iowa State before running into off the court trouble, was pulling down \$1.1 million in Ames.

Mark Turgeon at Wichita State makes \$800,000.

Cal pays Ben Braun \$982,500,000 a year and it looks like he will be shown the door after this season.

LSU fired John Brady before the season was over. They are looking for a new coach and you can be sure that they will be paying in the \$100,000,000 range in salary.

Going Rate

That is the going rate in the SEC for basketball coaches. Even Vanderbilt pays Kevin Stallings \$139,643,000 per annum.

You can bet that there will be some job openings after the season is over and the same thing will be happening the following year. It is the nature of the business.

You can also bet that Dave Rose is positioned to be sought after by some schools that have mega money salaries to offer.

Be Very Careful What You Wish For

BYU hasn't won a game in the NCAA Tourney since 1993. Most BYU fans are hoping that will change beginning this year with this Cougar basketball team.

We need to be careful what we wish for.

If Dave Rose somehow can get the Cougars to win a couple of NCAA games, his desirability could very well match the dollars being offered by schools who want a coach with a proven record and some NCAA charisma.

We think the big push for Rose will be next year, but to validate our point, we want to go back a few seasons.

It wasn't that long ago that Stan Heath was coaching at Kent State. His Golden Flash made a sweet sixteen run and he went from making measly dollars at KSU to Arkansas where he made \$800,000 per annum.

Hogs and Coaches

Despite getting an NCAA tourney invite last season, the Hogs in general and Frank Broyles in particular, weren't happy with Heath.

They canned him last year and went looking for a proven and big name coach.

They tried to get John Calipari. He said no. They tried Bill Self and whiffed, Billy Gillespie, Tim Floyd and Tom Crean were all approached. They all declined. Arkansas was reportedly set to offer the new coach \$2 million or more a year.

Dana Altman from Creighton finally said yes. That lasted a day and then he backed out and returned to Omaha. Incidentally, Altman makes \$828,000 with the Blue Jays.

Arkansas was left with no coach.

They eventually hired John Pelphrey. He was at South Alabama for five years where he was making around \$300,000 yearly and coming off NCAA invites.

Yes

He said yes to Arkansas and their offer of \$750,000 a year. He also has incentives written into his contract that would allow him to make as much as another \$1.2 million per year.

The point we are trying to make is that while Dave Rose has put BYU back on the map, he has also put himself on the radar of big name programs that will be looking for a coach either this year or next.

As mentioned before, when the money gets really big, you have to look to your family's financial future.

If New Mexico can pay \$975,000 for a coach, you have to wonder what BCS conference schools will be paying for competent coaches with proven records? That is an apt description of Dave Rose.

Before we go any farther, we know that the big money is out there for the taking and we also know that BYU won't be matching that big money, even with their new Coaches Circle effort to raise more money for salaries of BYU coaches.

Can't Compete

The Cougars won't and can't compete on the open market for high salaries offered by other schools. That brings us to our next point.

If Dave Rose continues to win, you can expect a big money offer. It will be inevitable.

If Rose ever does decide that he will leave Provo for the provision of financial security, who replaces him?

It is obvious to us that the pickings are slim for a Rose replacement.

Rose's No. 1 assistant, Dave Rice, is qualified and will make a good head coach somewhere, but he is not LDS. That will preclude him from ever being offered the head job at BYU.

The other two assistant coaches, John Wardenburg and Terry Nashif would both have to be considered long shots. Nashif would be an extreme long shot because he doesn't have much experience.

SUU

Austin Ainge is an assistant at Southern Utah, but is too green. Roger Reid is the head coach at SUU, but BYU has already been there, done that.

Stew Morrill is at Utah State, but he will never coach at BYU.

Jeff Judkins is the head women's coach, but he would be a last gasp choice, in our opinion.

There are some LDS juco coaches out there and that is where both Rose and Steve Cleveland came from, but we don't see that happening again except in desperate circumstances.

There are two things happening from our vantage point.

Rose will get some big money offers soon.

He will also continue to have some very good basketball teams.

While money will be a strong draw, we remember Rose making what we thought was a very brash statement when he was hired.

He said that his goal was to get the Cougars to a final four appearance.

At the rate he is going and with the improvement of his teams every year, that goal may be what will keep the big money out of the picture for at least a few more years.

RPI and SAGARIN

There has been a lot of hoopla lately about BYU's nice RPI rating. The latest we saw had the Cougars with an RPI of 21.

Jeff Sagarin and his rating system has BYU with a 31. He also has New Mexico rated at 40 and UNLV at 48.

There are some who proclaim that a good RPI will get you an invite to the NCAA tourney, but it's a good Sagarin that gets you a good seed.

We will see this coming Sunday if that assumption has any validity.

What we do find interesting are the teams listed ahead of BYU in both rating systems.

In the RPI here are the teams with better numbers. They include No. 1 Tennessee, North Carolina, Memphis, Duke, Texas, UCLA, Georgetown, Kansas, Xavier, Vanderbilt, Louisville, Wisconsin, Drake, Michigan State, Connecticut, Indiana, Stanford, Butler, Notre Dame, Washington State and No. 31, BYU.

In Sagarin's latest release he has No. 1 North Carolina, Memphis, UCLA, Kansas, Duke, Tennessee, Wisconsin, Georgetown, Texas, Xavier, Louisville, Indiana, Washington State, Stanford, Marquette, Michigan State, Notre Dame, Drake, Connecticut, Gonzaga, West Virginia, Clemson, USC, Butler, Pittsburgh, Texas A&M, Purdue, Arizona, Davidson, Saint Mary's and No. 31, BYU.

If the Sagarin seeding theory holds water, than teams like Butler, Drake, Arizona, Davidson, Saint Mary's and Notre Dame will all have higher seeds than BYU.

We will be interested to see how it plays out on Sunday when the selections and seeding are announced.

FLUFF AND STUFF

Trent Plaisted will graduate next month from BYU. He will still have another year of eligibility left and according to Dave Rose at a recent luncheon, he is planning on Plaisted returning next season.

While Rose may be expecting Plaisted to return, you can bet that he has been covering his bases in recruiting in case Plaisted doesn't come back for his senior season.

We fully expect BYU to sign another player this spring.

BYU used their last two home games to invite the top 2009 recruits from the state of Utah to show up compliments of the Cougars.

The word we get is that C.J. Wilcox and his family were in the Marriott Center for the Air Force game. It looks like the Cougars have made some progress with Wilcox.

Against Wyoming, we didn't see them, but we have a subscriber telling us that Tyler, Haws, Kyle Collinsworth and Brandon Davies were all front and center to see the Cougars cut the nets and secure their second consecutive MWC championship.

Steve Gervais has been the football coach at Skyline HS in Seattle for many years and captured six state titles.

He will be one of the speakers at the BYU coaches' clinic next week.

Instead of speaking as the coach at Skyline, he will now be speaking as the new running back coach for Ty Willingham and the Washington Huskies.

Gervais was hired by Willingham last week and given the responsibility to recruit the local high schools in Washington.

One of his key targets for 2010 will be his sophomore quarterback at Skyline this past year. That would be Jake Heaps, who already has offers from BYU and UW.

Heaps and other family members will be visiting BYU's campus and spring drills during the same weekend of the clinic.

BYU's cumulative Mountain West Conference record the last two years in the two main sports, football and basketball, is 43-5. That is for the regular season in both sports. The Cougars are 16-0 in football and 27-5 in basketball.

If you throw in the MWC basketball tournament for last year, BYU is 45-6.

COUGARS FINISH REGULAR SEASON WITH TWO MORE WINS

BYU capped off their MWC title run last week with two more wins.

They clinched the crown last Wednesday with a home-court victory over the Wyoming Cowboys. The final was 78-61.

Trent Plaisted had a big night with 23 points and 11 rebounds.

Saturday saw the Cougars close out their regular season with a come-from-behind road win against TCU.

The Cougars held a 10-point lead at the intermission, but TCU battled back to take a lead with just 10 minutes remaining in the game.

BYU rallied behind solid defense to get the 61-54 win.

BYU finished with a 14-2 record in conference play and set a record for the most regular season victories by a Cougar basketball team with their overall mark of 25-6.

Conference honors will be announced later today. That will include the all-conference team, Coach of the Year, Player of the Year and Newcomer of the Year.

We expect Trent Plaisted and Lee Cummard to both be named first team all conference, but also expect BYU to get shut out in all of individual honors.

OTHER SPORTS

The BYU women's basketball team finished with a 13-15 overall record and a 7-9 mark in MWC play. They are the fifth seed in the MWC tournament and will face New Mexico on Wednesday in Las Vegas in an opening quarterfinal game.

The game is set to tip off at 2:30 pm Provo time and will be televised live on the Mtn Network.

In Men's Volleyball, BYU swept two matches from No. 5 rated Pepperdine last weekend in Provo.

The No. 2 rated Cougars are now 16-1 on the year and 11-1 in MPSF action.

BYU Baseball saw a minor upturn in their fortunes last week. After starting the year 2-5, the Cougars are currently 6-7.

In Softball, BYU has played some top-ranked teams and their record reflects the competition. The Cougars are now 12-10 on the year.

TELEVISION TIMETABLE

The first game is set in stone. All other games assume BYU continues to win in the MWC Tournament

BYU vs. CSU or Wyoming

Thursday, Mar. 13 at Las Vegas

Tipoff: 1:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: Mtn

BYU vs. Air Force or San Diego State

Friday, Mar. 14 at Las Vegas

Tipoff: 7:35 pm Mountain Time

TV: CSTV

BYU vs. UNLV, TCU, New Mexico or Utah

Saturday, Mar. 15 at Las Vegas

Tipoff: 5:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: Versus