

HB Arnett's



801 372 - 0819

hbarnett@fiber.net

1391 West 800 South – Orem, Utah 84058

Vol. 34, Issue 27 –February 3, 2014

[Click Here To Order Or Renew Your Subscriptions](#)

Is Haws Horse of the Year?

I love horse racing. You can't beat the spectacle and athleticism of big time horses participating in the "Sport of Kings".

Horse racing and basketball have a lot in common at the highest levels. They both have the best athletes in their individual sports. Yet, even with the best athletes, the outcomes of both sports are also dependent on outside influences.

In basketball, it is home court advantages and suspect officiating. Both can influence an inferior team beating a better team with better athletes. We see it all the time. Officiating sets the tone and often determines the outcome. There are even bad coaches hindering great players.

In horse racing, there are lots of variables that determine the winner. It could be a muddy track, poor post position, bad jockey or bad ride. Heaven forbid, there could even be some serious sandbagging going on waiting for just the right odds to appear. That isn't likely to happen when you are in Grade 1 Stake Races which is horse racing at the highest level.

Some horses and athletes are simply so good that they supersede all the distractions of both sports.

Cigar, Curlin et al.

Even if you are not an aficionado of the track, you may recognize these names: Curlin, Cigar, Affirmed, Forego and Secretariat. They were the cream of the crop in their time. They were all Grade I Stake winners multiple times.

The NBA is Grade I when it comes to basketball. Pick any of the legendary names you want and they superseded the atmosphere and ambience. Magic, Bird, and you fill in the blanks.

Before you get to Grade 1 Stake Races, there are Maiden Races, Claiming Races and then Allowance Races, where there will be set conditions and weights to be met. Think power conferences and mid majors in basketball.

College basketball is an allowance race. The athletes playing at this level are good, but they aren't the greatest. The same goes for officials and coaches.

That doesn't make it less entertaining and engaging. Especially as the stakes get higher as the season wears on and post season NCAA play begins.

I don't know enough basketball to determine if Tyler Haws will jump to the next level of basketball and succeed in the NBA. But I do know that he is an absolute horse in current allowance circumstances and BYU and Dave Rose are going to ride him as far as he will take them.

Needs Name

If Haws is BYU's horse, then he needs a good horse racing name. I suggest we steal the name of a pretty good horse currently on the racing scene. I am referring to ***Game on Dude***. This horse is a dark bay gelding and has won 7 Grade 1 Stake races. He wins against all comers in all venues and under all circumstances.

Sounds like Haws. He scores in all circumstances, against all coaches and their defensive schemes and even when getting mugged, mauled and maimed when officials swallow their whistles.

Haws' **Game** has certainly been **On** the last two weeks. ***Game on Dude*** is the best description yet of Haws' last four outings in a Cougar uniform. He broke from the gate early against Portland and took the bit with 48 points poured on the Pilots.

Haws got boxed on the rail and never could get wide while scoring ***just*** 23 in an 84-69 loss against Gonzaga in Spokane. He got no help from the other horses in the BYU stable on this day and in this race.

It was wire-to-wire for Haws against Pacific. He scored early and often against the Tigers with 38 points. The tote board read BYU 88 UOP 78.

Two days later against St. Mary's, Haws stumbled coming out of the gate, but came charging down the back stretch to help Rose break his maiden against the Gaels in WCC play. The final was BYU 84 St. Mary's 71. It was a Win, Place and Show game for Haws. He **showed** that he can score against a good defense, he **placed** BYU on his back in the second half and carried the Cougars and most of all he produced a much needed **win** over the Gaels.

That certainly sounds like two weeks of "*Game on Dude*" to me.

Patting Other Ponies on the Back

Last week this old horse forgot to pat BYU's other athletic ponies on the back. In an effort to keep those subscriber whips off my backside, here is how the Women's Basketball team and Men's Volleyball teams fared this past week.

The women split a pair of WCC road games. They lost at St. Mary's 75-70 despite a career scoring night for the Cougars' Lexi Eaton. She scored 28 points against the Gaels.

Two nights later at Pacific BYU picked up an 88-57 win over the Pacific Tigers. Jennifer Hamson led the way with 25 points and 18 rebounds. The Lady Cougars are currently tied with San Diego in third place in WCC play with a 7-4 record. Overall they are 17-5.

In Men's Volleyball, the Cougars split two matches in California this past week. They were bested in 5 sets by Pepperdine and then bounced back to beat USC, also in 5 sets. The Cougars are currently 7-3 overall, but more importantly, 7-1 in MPSF play. That is good enough for second place in the league standings behind only UCLA at 6-0 in conference action.

Handicappers and Commentators...Some are Better than Others

Let's start with handicappers of horses. The best aren't trying to sell their services on tip sheets and internet web sites. If you are good enough, you are cashing in at the pari-mutuel window by yourself not publishing and fishing for subscribers to subsidize your actual track record.

The only guy I know that has proven to me that he knows horses and handicapping is a guy who doesn't have to make a living doing just that. That's probably why he is so good.

Now on to commentators. Some are okay. Some are good and some are bad. I heard and saw a good one last Saturday night watching the replay of the BYU game against St. Mary's. Kara Lawson surprised me.

As Woody Allen said once in one of his movies while describing catsup, it was artistically subtle and artfully demure.

Ditto for Lawson. She was articulate and definitely knowledgeable. She didn't dominate the broadcast and provided great insight. I don't like watching women's basketball, but I enjoyed hearing Lawson talk about it.

Now when it comes to other commentators with opinions about BYU sports, the best one I know isn't one. He loves commenting on other commentators and other writers' material (including mine) as it deals with BYU sports.

Here is his latest take on Matt Carlino in response to stories published after the St. Mary's game in Provo. This guy is educated, articulate and as far as I know doesn't live in Helaman Halls or in his mother's basement.

I found his Carlino take interesting. You might have a differing opinion.

He says:

Jay Drew makes this observation:

*****While [Kyle Collinsworth](#) kept BYU in the game in the first half — the Cougars trailed 28-14 at the midway point of the half — Haws helped put away the Gaels in the second half.*****

Me: Please note that BYU fell into that 28-14 hole while Collinsworth was in the game. The guy who was on the bench (for most of that time) was Carlino. Once he got in the game, the pace quickened and things improved for BYU, as everyone in the world has noticed except for the Utah media.

But even when Carlino enters the game, these days, it's not the same. Carlino is more subdued; he takes fewer shots and he takes fewer chances. And BYU is not the team it was earlier in the season. Other teams (like Texas) have gotten better; BYU has gotten worse. Earlier this week Dick Harmon wrote about all the great things BYU has done this year. Every one of his examples was from the first part of the season, when Carlino was starting and playing major minutes.

Then Harmon said that the decision to have Carlino come off the bench had been successful.

Successful how? Not successful in making BYU a better team.

I've been watching BYU basketball for forty years, and the team has never had a player like Carlino before. Other teams have players like that, but not BYU. He plays at double-time, and he's capable of doing breathtaking things. He can do everything. But

he's not THAT good--he makes lots of mistakes and he goes into funks. Because his presence is so large, the Utah fans notice his lulls more than they notice the bad stretches from Mika, Collinsworth, or Haws. And Utah fans miss about 75% of what Carlino does on the court. Scoring is the least of his talents, though he does plenty of that. Mostly, he's the motor that makes the team go.

Carlino will not always play well. But here's the key fact: This BYU team cannot be great without Carlino in there, and without Carlino playing well. Sometimes when Carlino plays, BYU will be lousy because Carlino will be lousy. But BYU will never beat anyone good with Carlino on the bench. They have not, and they will not.

Last year BYU started strong, playing fast and wild, just like this year. Then Carlino missed some shots and Rose benched him, and for basically the entirety of league play BYU did nothing exciting, and (as always) they flopped in the league tournament. But BYU had a second life in the N.I.T. Remember that? And do you remember why? It was because Carlino was playing like his old crazy self again.

Obviously Rose doesn't like that style of play; he doesn't like the uncertainty. But if he wants to win big games, he needs Carlino in there. He has no chance without him; some chance with him.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered

By the time you read this and click on the headline above to listen to Stevie Wonder sing his hit song, there will be just 48 hours remaining before BYU's 2014 Football recruiting class can start putting their signatures on the dotted lines of Letters of Intent.

There will be no last minute deals, late commits or change of hearts. What BYU had in the bag on Sunday is what they will unveil to the public on Wednesday. If a prospective recruit wasn't signed, sealed and delivered on Sunday, he won't be signing with the Cougars on Wednesday.

Regardless, you can be assured that Bronco will be singing his same old tune. The first verse is always the same: This is a very good class and meets our needs. The second verse always mentions how hard the coaching staff worked putting this class together. And the final stanza is about how good the recruits are; good students, good kids and good athletes.

We should hear again what a great football program BYU has and how it is only one of a handful of schools that finishes in the top 25 year in and year out...except this year.

Honestly, it is enough to make a grown man cry. Not me mind you, but a grown man like [Roy Orbison](#).

Just kidding. I love Bronco. He has backed up his BYU boasting with consistently decent teams and an occasional exceptional team during his nine year tenure.

And after 9 years of hearing him at the podium on letter of intent day, he is just like all other college coaches. He praises all his signees, but hopes at least a 1/3 of them will actually turn out to be players. And, quite frankly, as fans, we eat it all up every single year.

So pass your plates, here's another serving of signees for 2014.

1. Nick Kurtz, WR, 6-6, 215, Grossmont JC, Calif...he is already enrolled in school.
2. Fred Warner, LB, 6-3, 215, Mission Hills HS, Calif.
3. Kavika Fonua, DB, 6-0, 200, Syracuse, HS, UT
4. Trey Dye, WR/DB, 5-10, 175, Abilene Cooper HS, TX
5. Teancum Fuga, DL, 6-1, 315, Edison HS, Calif.
6. Tejan Koroma, OL, 6-1, 255, Allen HS, TX
7. Sione Takitaki, LB/DL, 6-2, 240, Heritage HS, Calif.
8. Earl Mariner, DL, 6-4, 300, Washburn HS, KS
9. Matt Bushman, TE/LB? 6-5, 220, Sabino HS, AZ
10. Tyler Cook, LB, 6-3, 220, Vista Murrieta HS, Calif.
11. Neal Pauu, QB/WR/DB, 6-4, 200, Servite HS, Calif.
12. Michael Shelton, DB, 5-10, 165, Wakefield HS, NC ...already in school as an early high school graduate.
13. Zac Dawe, DL, 6-4, 285, Pleasant Grove HS, UT
14. Austin Chambers, OL, 6-5, 285, Shawnee Mission West HS, KS
15. Chandon Herring, OL, 6-7, 265, Perry HS, AZ
16. Isaiah Kaufusi, WR/LB, 6-3, 210, Brighton HS, AZ
17. Jaterrius Gulley, DL, 6-3, 325, Hoover HS, AL
18. Devon Blackmon, WR, 6-1, 190, Riverside CC, CA

Players BYU won't be signing

Cedric Dale, WR/DB, 5-10, 185, Hebron, TX...switched commitment from BYU to Purdue

Damien Mama, 6-5, 360, St. John Bosco HS, Calif. BYU has an abysmal recruiting record when going head to head with USC. It will continue this year

Keyon Dilosa, 6-3, 195 Round Rock HS, TX. Now headed to Missouri

Ronald Monroe, 6-2, 175, Bush HS, TX. Headed to Vanderbilt

Courtland Sutton, DB, 6-3, 190, Brenham HS TX. Don't know, but expect the worse. Should sign with CU

On Hold

Bronco mentioned last week that he may be holding a scholarship for a late qb signee if one surfaces. Here's another potential late signee. That would be Jordan Leslie, a 6-3, 210 pound receiver who has led UTEP the last two seasons in receiving. He has announced that he is leaving El Paso and headed to play his last season elsewhere. He will reportedly be graduated from UTEP this summer and that means that he could play immediately next fall.

There is some speculation that he may be headed BYU's way, but don't expect any confirmation from the Cougars. The irony is that his former wide receiver coach, Guy Holliday is now at BYU and BYU's old receiver coach, Patrick Higgins is the current offensive coordinator for the Miners. [Here's an interesting article about the situation.](#)

BYU Television Timetable

BYU vs. Santa Clara

Thursday, Feb 6 at Provo

Tipoff: 9:00 pm MST

TV: ESPNU

BYU vs. San Francisco

Saturday, Feb 8 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm MST

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Pacific

Thursday, Feb 13 at Stockton

Tipoff: 9:00 pm MST

TV: Time Warner Cable, Root, theW.com

BYU vs. Portland (Women's BB)

Thursday, Feb 13 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm MST

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. St. Mary's

Saturday, Feb 15 at Moraga

Tipoff: 6:00 pm MST

TV: ESPN2

BYU vs. Gonzaga (Women's BB)

Saturday, Feb 15 at Provo

Tipoff: 2:00 pm MST

TV: BYUtv