

HB Arnett's
COUGAR SPORTSLINE

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LOST IN WASHINGTON

BYU beat Washington 28-27. It was a major breakthrough for the Cougars against a non-conference foe on the road.

It was also the most national tv time the Cougars have had in a decade. All the tube time, however, was a pity party for the Huskies. BYU's win just an afterthought.

Lost in the uproar of an unsportsmanlike penalty called on Washington's Jake Locker after rallying the Huskies to a 27-28 score with just two seconds left in the game were several salient scenarios.

Washington still could have taken the game to overtime by making a run-of-the mill 35-yard chip shot extra point.

They didn't. It was blocked by Jan Jorgensen, the BYU defensive lineman.

Even if the kick was good, that only meant overtime, not a win.

It would have been fun to see if the Cougars could have finally contained Locker in overtime.

They certainly couldn't in regulation. But with a short field and the back of the end zone acting as another defender for BYU, it would have been very interesting.

What we do know is that Washington couldn't stop the BYU offense.

Opening Drive

BYU drove the ball 76 yards on the opening drive of the game and made it look easy. It culminated in a 38-yard td toss to Austin Collie.

They then punted on two consecutive series in the first quarter.

In the second quarter, the Cougars, behind Max Hall, went 71 yards for another score, a 1-yard flip to Andrew George.

With the clock winding down in the quarter, Hall, trying to get at least into field goal range and without enough time on the clock to patiently use the whole offense, under threw the ball down the middle for his only pick of the game.

The Cougars got the ball back just before halftime, and took a knee on the only play of that possession.

The second half against Washington was a Cougar offensive clinic.

BYU had only four possessions in the last two quarters.

Talk about unsportsmanlike conduct, BYU simply abused the Washington defense.

The Cougars went 63 yards and scored on a Fui Vakapuna 11-yard touchdown scamper. That took all of 3:21 off the clock.

Good

The next time BYU touched the ball offensively, they showed why this offense is as good as almost any in the nation.

All that happened was a 97-yard drive that consumed 4:03 of time. It was impressive, but not productive. Harvey Unga, who had a big game rushing the ball, made his only miscue of the game and fumbled at the goal line going for the score.

BYU came right back and drove 84 yard for the eventual game winning touchdown. It was capped by a Hall to Dennis Pitta 25-yard pass and catch in the end zone.

BYU's final possession was another kneel down with 2 seconds remaining in the game.

How could you not like BYU's chances in over time?

And how could you not like the BYU offense?

How good was Harvey Unga? Good enough for the Washington broadcast homers and honks to say that he should come out early after the season and declare for the NFL draft.

Based on the 136 yards rushing on 23 carries and the 5 catches for another 39 yards, Unga in the NFI is a scenario we certainly could see.

Dennis Pitta came up big again. He had 10 receptions for 148 yards and the one score.

Austin Collie had three consecutive drops in the second quarter, but still came back to end the game with 5 grabs for 74 yards and a touchdown.

Max Hall

Max Hall finished the contest with 338 yards passing and three touchdowns on a 30-41-1 performance.

The scary part of this BYU offense is that Hall, Pitta and Collie are only juniors and Unga is a sophomore.

They can all return for another season together.

It's too bad that the offensive line won't return intact because the performance they produced against the Huskies was a thing of beauty. Hall was almost never touched and Unga was able to rush for almost 6 yards a pop.

BYU bragged about this offensive line all fall and now we can all see why.

This was a big win for BYU. We didn't think they could pull it off in Seattle and said so in our last letter, which called for a 24-20 Husky win.

We had plenty of emails describing our pick as something that only an old flatulent fellow could conjure up.

Those same emails, suggested we take the C out of BCS.

We still maintain the BYU winning on the road against BCS opponents will continue to be extremely difficult.

BYU is certainly not USC, but the Trojans had to hold on for dear life in Seattle last year to come away with a 24-20 win.

Depending on the frame of mind of UW, Oklahoma should find a similar scenario in Seattle when they travel to take on UW. It is not easy to win on the road against teams with good athletes.

Oklahoma is an early 20-point favorite.

WORD ASSOCIATION

You know how the game is played. When it comes to the upcoming BYU-UCLA game, when something is mentioned, I respond with the first thing that comes to mind.

Norm Chow...Kevin Feterick
Rick Neuheisel...Office pool and guitar
Dwayne Walker...Tim McTyre
Ben Olson...Who?
Kevin Craft...Been there, done that
Harvey Unga...Stuffed in Las Vegas
Robert Anae...Dumb call
Max Hall...Bruce Davis
Bronco Mendenhall...Saved by a block
UCLA Bruins...John Wooden
UCLA Cheeleaders...USC
BYU-UCLA Worst Moment...Gaston Green
BYU-UCLA Best Moment...Steve Young
LaVell Edwards Stadium...Dr Pepper free
Rose Bowl...USC
A BYU win...Protect Max Hall
A UCLA win...Sack Max Hall
Dennis Pitta...Wow!
Usain Bolt...UCLA has more speed than Cougars
Jake Locker...UCLA doesn't have him on roster
Pac 10 refs...Weren't invited
Tennessee...Overrated
Washington...Underrated
Final Score...BYU 38 UCLA 21

TWO WEEK MUSINGS

As we have preached for years, it takes four or five weeks until there is some semblance and sense to who the best teams are in college football.

Forget the rankings. They really don't tell much until all teams have gone on the road to play a respectable opponent.

Of the current top 25, only USC, Texas, Alabama, BYU, Fresno State, Utah and California, have whipped a team on the road.

Speaking of road wins, Utah's victory over Michigan doesn't seem quite so lustrous after watching the Wolverines wheeze and geeze against Miami of Ohio last Saturday.

National commentators and pundits had a field day criticizing the call against Washington and Jake Locker. They just couldn't fathom an unsportsmanlike call for simply flicking the ball over a shoulder.

Based on all the replays shown on television, that is exactly what it looked like Locker did. It appeared to be simply a soft flick over the shoulder.

If you want to see what really happened, we suggest you check out this You Tube video.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLCIW9b69UA>.

As you can see, the ball went sky high in the air and came back and hit a Husky in the helmet.

It was one of Locker's more accurate throws.

This kid is the real deal and is a phenomenal athlete and open field runner.

If he could pass the ball down field with more consistency and accuracy, he would be the football version of Roy Hobbs and BYU would have lost.

Referees

Pac-10 referees have taken a lot of heat for throwing the flag on Locker. The consensus among Pac-10 partisans and pundits alike was that it should have been a no-call.

Give the officiating crew for this game some credit. They had plenty of no-calls against the Huskies. We saw at least three blatant cases of holding that allowed Locker to escape for nice gains. He didn't need the help, but in our opinion, he had plenty of it from the Pac-10 crews.

In the first half, BYU was penalized 5 times to just once for the Huskies.

The game totals show 7 penalties assessed against the Cougars to 4 for UW.

Two of those Washington penalties occurred in the last two seconds of the game when the unsportsmanlike call was made and with an off side call on the ensuing on side kick.

Incidentally BYU was also penalized after blocking the extra point when the team streamed on the field. None of that video made it to Sports Center.

Vic So'oto, BYU's starting strong side linebacker, broke his foot in the game and early projections having him missing 4-6 weeks. He was replaced by Coleby Clawson.

What it means is that an already thin roster at outside linebacker is now thinner. It means that Daniel Sorensen will see more time and that Mike Alisa will get more reps in practice.

It could also mean that coaches may move another safety to linebacker.

For all the glowing reports of kickoffs going into and out of the endzone in fall camp, none did against Washington.

NO NEED TO WAIT, UTAH BEATS BYU

The anticipation of the November football showdown between BYU and Utah is already sizzling.

It should be quite a game, depending on how injuries affect both teams during the course of the regular season.

While that battle of instate programs is still to be determined, Utah has already snagged a win in the heated rivalry.

As of last week, the Utes defeated the Cougars 17-14 in the battle of NFL rosters.

When final cuts were made Utah had 17 former players on NFL rosters and BYU had only 14.

Here is how it played out. The list includes names on the regular roster, injured reserve and practice squads.

BYU

Daniel Coats...Cincinnati, TE

Scott Young...Cleveland, OL

Chris Hoke...Pittsburgh, DL, LDS Missionary

Brett Keisel...Pittsburgh, DL

Scott Jackson...Houston, OL, LDS Missionary

Ryan Denney...Buffalo, DL, LDS Missionary

John Beck...Miami, QB, LDS Missionary

John Denney...Miami, Deep Snapper, LDS Missionary

Todd Watkins...Oakland, WR

John Tait...Chicago, OL, LDS Missionary

Brady Poppinga...Green Bay, LB, LDS Missionary

Fahu Tahia...Minnesota, RB, LDS Missionary

Bryan Kehl...New York Giants, LB, LDS Missionary

Aaron Francisco...Arizona, DB

Utah

Jonathan Fanene...Cincinnati, DL
Chris Kemoeatu...Pittsburgh, OL
Gabe Long...Houston, DL
Quinton Ganther...Tennessee, RB
Paul Soliai...Miami, DL
Sione Pouha...New York Jets, DL, LDS Missionary
Brett Ratliff...New York Jets, QB
Eric Weddle...San Diego, DB
Barry Sims...San Francisco, OL
Alex Smith...San Francisco, QB
Jordan Gross...Carolina, OL
Steve Smith...Carolina, WR
Maake Kemoeatu...Carolina, DL
Martail Burnett...Minnesota, DL
John Madsen...Oakland, TE
Josh Savage...New Orleans, DL
Kelly Talavou...Baltimore, DL

Take heart Cougar fans. With a little creative scoring, BYU can still come out ahead of the NFL roster competition.

Here is how.

If we add Michael Marquardt and C.J. Ah You to BYU's ledger, then it is a 17-16 nail biter.

Marquardt stuck with Philadelphia as a defensive lineman and Ah You is with St. Louis.

In case you forgot, both played a couple of seasons at BYU before transferring. Marquardt landed at Arizona State and Ah You ended up at Oklahoma with a one year stop at Snow College between the Cougars and Sooners.

If we get even more creative, BYU might be able to claim Jonathan Fanene as theirs instead of belonging to Utah.

Fanene was first signed by BYU out of junior college, but never had the academic necessities to get into school in Provo. After another year at the juco level, he signed with Utah.

If BYU can claim Marquardt, Ah You and Fanene, the Cougars then win the NFL roster game 17-16.

See it is just like the last two BYU-Utah football games. The Utes had two wins in their pocket only to see BYU make a couple of miraculous finishes to steal the wins.

The same holds here. Using some miraculous math, BYU makes another late-game rally to win the NFL roster war 17-16.

Breaking Down the Game

When it comes to breaking down the Ute and Cougar NFL rosters, it is a pretty even match up, with the exception of defensive linemen.

The Utes have two quarterbacks drawing paychecks. BYU has John Beck. Neither Beck, Alex Smith nor Brett Ratliff will ever be more than clipboard holders, based on what we see.

BYU has three offensive linemen. Utah also has three.

The Cougars and Utes have a tight end apiece. Both schools have one wide receiver, one running back and one defensive back each.

Both schools have two offensive linemen. BYU has a linebacker and a deep snapper and the Utes don't.

What stands out, however, is that while BYU has three defensive linemen toiling in the NFL, the Utes

can boast seven players drawing paychecks.

If you want to dig a little deeper, all three of BYU's defensive lineman played under Tom Ramage. There hasn't been another d-lineman drafted from BYU since Ramage retired six years ago.

Six of Utah's NFL defensive linemen have all entered the league in the last four years.

As BYU fans we are sure there are some valid reasons for the discrepancy in defensive linemen, especially recently. But based on the numbers, we can see why the perception that currently exists among recruits is that Utah produces NFL caliber defensive linemen and BYU doesn't.

Remember Sealver Siliaga? He was the big nose guard that committed to BYU during the summer of 2007 only to change his mind and commit to Utah. One of the reasons reportedly given for his change of heart was that the Utes have a better track record for getting defensive linemen to the NFL.

Numbers don't lie and we don't see the Cougars catching up any time soon with defensive linemen entering the NFL until the BYU recruiting pipeline in this position is fully flooded. When that happens, it still remains to be seen if the gap can be closed.

Non BYU NFL LDS Players

Todd Heaps, TE, ASU, Baltimore

Haloti Ngata, DL, Oregon, Baltimore

Derek Schoumann, TE, Boise State, Buffalo

Shawn Murphy, OL, Utah State, Miami (Son of Dale Murphy) LDS Missionary

Kirk Chambers, OL, Stanford, Buffalo, LDS Missionary

Derek Smith, LB, ASU, San Diego

C.J. Ah You, DL, Oklahoma, St. Louis

Garrett Mills, TE, Tulsa, Minnesota

Eric Heitmann, OL, Stanford, San Francisco, LDS Missionary

Harvey Dahl, OL, Nevada, Atlanta

Spencer Larson, FB, Arizona (was LB at UofA), Denver, LDS Missionary

Kevin Curtis, WR, Utah State, Philadelphia, LDS Missionary

David Hale, OL, Weber State, Baltimore, LDS Missionary

Deuce Lutui, OL, USC, Arizona

Ryon Bingham, DL, Nebraska, San Diego

Brandon Manumaleuna, TE, Arizona, San Diego

Ed Mulitalo, OL, Arizona, Detroit, LDS Missionary

Michael Marquart, DL, ASU, Philadelphia, LDS Missionary

Caleb Hanie, QB, Colorado State, Chicago (Hanie isn't LDS, but the fact that he stuck with the Bears should give Max Hall and his fans some serious encouragement about playing at the next level.)

MARIO MENDOZA, BYU AND STANFORD

When it comes to BYU basketball going head-to-head against Stanford in recruiting LDS players, the Cardinal are working on a no-hitter.

Since we have been following BYU athletics, BYU has whiffed every time they step to the plate against Stanford's best stuff.

Here's the basketball box score.

Mark Madsen choose Stanford over BYU and Roger Reid. He played basketball at Palo Alto. He must like Provo at least a little because he has spent considerable time here during the summers off from the NBA and Minnesota Timberwolves. Madsen served an LDS mission while at Stanford.

Casey Jacobson told BYU and Steve Cleveland thanks, but no thanks. He was a long shot coming

out of high school. He too toils in the NBA with the Memphis Grizzlies.

BYU basketball had a chance to reach the Mendoza line and hit at least .200 against Stanford with Nick Robinson.

BYU was caught looking and didn't even swing or offer Robinson when he was a high school player in Kansas City. Cleveland had a chance for a black LDS returned missionary and passed. Stanford didn't.

Julius Barnes was the latest LDS player to select Stanford over BYU. The point guard from Pomona, California was courted early by the Cougars, but his interest waned and he went to Stanford.

BYU now gets another at bat against Stanford.

Tyler Haws, the most highly recruited LDS basketball prospect in some time, has narrowed his college choice down to either BYU or Stanford.

He visited Palo Alto a week ago and will visit BYU officially this coming weekend.

Mike Montgomery was on the mound for Stanford when BYU fanned on all four previous LDS players.

The Cardinal have now gone to the bullpen and brought in a new pitcher. Johnny Dawkins is now the head coach of the Cardinal. He was a long time assistant at Duke before landing the Stanford gig.

It should be an interesting at bat for Dave Rose and the Cougars. Rose has never faced Stanford's recruiting pitch as the head guy of the Cougars until now.

Like we said, it should be very interesting.

TELEVISION TIMETABLE

BYU vs. UCLA

Saturday, Sep 13 at Provo

Kickoff: 1:30 PM Mountain Time

TV: Versus

BYU vs. Wyoming

Saturday, Sep 20 at Provo

Kickoff: 1:00 PM Mountain Time

TV: Mtn

BYU vs. Utah State

Friday, Oct 3 at Logan

Kickoff: 6:00 pm (tentative)

TV: KJZZ (tentative)

BYU vs. New Mexico

Saturday, Oct 11 at Provo

Kickoff: 4:00 PM Mountain Time

TV: Mtn