

HB Arnett's



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Forget Stars...BYU's Football Recruiting Rated in Crayons

I don't have any advanced degrees in kinesiology, nor have I ever read the book *The Anthropology of Sport* by Kendall Blanchard.

But I did graduate Magna Cum Milk from Kindergarten at Duncan, Arizona Elementary School. Every thing I now know about football at all levels generally and BYU football in particular, I learned from my teacher Irene Kennedy when she handed out my first 8 ct. box of Crayons.

After thinking the standard No. 2 lead pencil would get me through life, I couldn't believe the contrast between pencil and my first Pandora and panoramic box of crayons.

Here's the life lesson that has stayed with me since age 5. When it comes to Colors and Cougar football, more is better. Of the 20 players BYU inked to letters of intent last

Wednesday, 15 are players of color. Mendenhall signed 8 African Americans and 7 Polynesians.

That may not mean much to you, but to a guy like me who has followed and watched for forty plus years the No. 2 pencil period of BYU Football, what took place last Wednesday was a historical and colorful moment.

Pencils and Players

Before all lovers of pencils pound me with emails about how BYU flourished in football with the standard pencil and players, I agree. What BYU did with less was remarkable, especially that nice pencil drawing of the 1984 National Championship.

I'm just saying, however, that despite Bronco's promise of competing for a national title at best and national recognition at the least, last season convinced him that BYU didn't have good enough athletes to make that promise ever happen. That's Crayola code for not enough speed or players of color.

Even LaVell Edwards had a few seasons and recruiting classes with enough colorful crayons to make things exciting. Bronco has followed suit in his pursuit of color and championships. Both coaches have played with at least 8 ct. boxes of crayons before. That's nice, but not enough any more.

I don't need graduate school to prove my point. I just turn on television any Saturday afternoon and get all the lessons I need about college football. If I want advanced learning, I also turn on the television on Sunday's and watch NFL football.

While BYU may have gone from an 8 ct. box of crayons to a 24.ct box of crayons with this latest recruiting rainbow of color, it still isn't enough.

Just go back and check out the past 5 BCS title games. Each coach of the schools that participated, had 64 ct. boxes of crayons with which to compete against another school that also had the same count of crayons at their disposal.

Yes, a team of No. 2 pencils can still beat a crayon box of colors but the frequency of that occurring is certainly diminishing and totally non existent on the big stages where the big boys and big boxes of crayons play.

And BYU can't buy or recruit their crayons anywhere. They have to do some serious shopping to make sure Cougar crayons have the right hue and honor code qualifications. BYU has the Crowton Crayola case to prove that point.

That's why this year's class for color and qualification alone, may just be the best class ever produced by BYU football.

Here then is BYU's most recent recruiting class. Bronco Mendenhall rated this class as not just good, but great. He also said his two biggest priorities and needs were at wide receiver and at outside linebackers and said that in his opinion; those needs were met exceptionally well. Click on the individual signees below to read their official BYU bios.

Wide Receivers

[Devon Blackmon](#)

[Nick Kurtz](#)

[Jordan Leslie](#)

[Trey Dye](#)

[Matt Bushman](#)

The happiest guy on the roster of BYU for this group of new receivers is Jamaal Williams. No longer can opposing defenses jam the box with linebackers and safeties. Now those defenders will have to be cheating to the outside to deal with BYU's new athleticism and speed at wide receiver. My pick for the biggest immediate impact is Jordan Leslie. He has talent, but most of all he has experience to go along with an NFL body.

Buckle up buckaroos. If Taysom Hill can get better protection, BYU may finally be legitimately in the wide receiver business.

Outside Linebackers

[Fred Warner](#)

[Tyler Cook](#)

[Uriah Leiataua](#)

[Isaiah Kaufusi](#)

The Beach Boys sang of California Girls and now Bronco is singing the praises of a group of California linebackers that has him drooling with their speed, quickness and toughness. Warner is the marquee name, but any of these guys could be headliners before they are through.

Middle Linebacker

[Sione Takitaki](#)

The last name of this stud linebacker may sound redundant, but tackle tackle is all this kid did in high school and projects to do at the next level.

Defensive Line

[Zac Dawe](#)

[Earl Mariner](#)

[Isaiah Nacua](#)
[Jaterrius Gulley](#)
[Teancum “Tico” Fuga](#)

Isaiah Nacua was a surprise signing for BYU when the Prodigal son returned to the fold after wavering and waffling for most of his senior season. Gulley, if he can adjust to the climate and culture of BYU, could be the biggest steal in Cougar recruiting history. He will give Bronco a dump truck parked in the middle of the defensive line. Opponents can't go through him and will have to go around him where BYU's outside linebackers will be parked.

Defensive Backs

[Kavika Fonua](#)
[Michael Shelton](#)

It may take some time before these two freshmen emerge out of the pipeline spout, but both have abilities. Shelton may be the biggest surprise of the duo.

Offensive Line

[Tejan Koroma](#)
[Chandon Herring](#)
[Austin Chambers](#)

It will be years and missionary service before Herring and Chambers are heard of again. Koroma lacks size, but he has never lacked in production on the field. The paucity of players signed to help put out the dumpster fire that was last year's offensive line was surprising. Mendenhall assures any and all that he has his bases covered with increased experience, better coaching and understanding of the current offensive system. What he is really banking on is the addition of several returning linemen from LDS missions.

Mendenhall Also Announces Missionaries Are Back for Next Season

McCoy Hill, QB, 6-5, 230, R-FR -Texas McAllen
Colby Jorgensen, TE, 6-7, 230, R -FR-Canada Calgary
Matt Sumsion, TE, 6-8, 240, FR -Mississippi Jackson
Corbin Kaufusi, OL, 6-8, 255, FR -Korea Seoul
Ului Lapuaho, OL, 6-7, 320, FR – Australia Sydney
Manu Mulitalo, OL, 6-2, 340, R-FR – Texas McAllen
Brian Rawlinson, OL, 6-6, 280, FR – New Zealand Auckland
Corey Edwards, PK, 5-10, 190, FR – Taiwan Taichung
Phillip Amone, LB, 6-0, 230, FR – Chile Osorno
Austin Heder, LB, 6-1, 241, R-FR – Canada Montreal
Troy Hinds, LB, 6-5, 235, FR –Mississippi Jackson

Va'a Niumatalolo, LB, 6-1, 227 R-FR – Utah St. George
Adam Pulsipher, LB, 6-2, 230, FR – Chile Rancagua
Tanner Balderree, DL, 6-3, 230, FR- England Leeds
Steven Richards, DL, 6-4, 240, FR – New York NY
Graham Rowley, DL, 6-4, 280, JR – Illinois Chicago
Kesni Tausinga, DL, 6-1, 285, FR- Fiji Suva
Travis Tuiloma, DL, 6-2, 320, R-SO – Samoa Apia

Here's where it gets interesting. I have never heard Bronco gush as much as he did in describing returning missionary and offensive lineman Ului Lapuaho. He said the freshman will be not only NFL caliber, but NFL all pro material before he is finished in Provo. Sounds like he may be the Xavier Su'a-filo we never had but should have. He was the big time tackle out of Timpview in Provo that spurned the Cougars and signed with UCLA. He declared for the NFL recently after playing two years after returning from his LDS mission.

Lapuaho has been back for a few of months and is already working out. What he has shown in those workouts has Mendenhall singing his praise.

Mendenhall was also very high on Troy Hinds, the outside linebacker from Davis HS. . Hinds won't return from his service until June. The way Mendenhall was praising these two returned missionaries; I would have thought they might have been walk-ons.

Walk-ons are certainly still welcome and they will still account for some nice feel good stories, but as mentioned before, Mendenhall has finally realized that if you want to play with the big boys and beat the big boys, you need big boy athletes. And in the Cougars' case, they need big boy athletes that can accept the unique culture, honor code and ambience of BYU.

Quite frankly, that appears to be exactly what Mendenhall and his staff reeled in this past week.

BYU 68 USF 63

Does Rose Need to Implement the Collinsworth Line?

BYU secured sole possession of second place in WCC play last Saturday night with a gut-it-out 68-63 win over San Francisco in Provo.

The game had several heroes. Matt Carlino was fabulous in running the offense, dishing assists and not turning the ball over. He also hit two critical bombs from outside to give the Cougars needed breathing room

Nate Austin has endured two years of verbal abuse and criticism by BYU fans for his lack of inside scoring. He still didn't score much, but he did have 16 rebounds and was a key cog in the win.

Tyler Haws had an “off” night offensively. When you score at the clip that Haws has, 19 points is considered an off night.

Eric Mika is starting to play more consistently and showing why he was considered a top recruit for the Cougars.

Kyle Collinsworth kept the Cougars in the first half with 13 points. He finished the game with 19 points, 8 rebounds, 4 assists and 2 steals.

He also missed 80 percent of his free throws, including the last four with the game in doubt and on the line and a minute left to play. All of which brings up the name Mario Mendoza and the “Mendoza Line.”

The **Mendoza Line** is a baseball term and is derived from Mario Mendoza, a former major league shortstop that was an outstanding defensive player, but couldn’t hit. In playing for the Pittsburgh Pirates, Seattle Mariners and Texas Rangers, he struggled at the plate.

In his career from 1974-79; he was known as a sub .200 hitter who frequently fell into the .180 to .199 range.

The Mendoza line was coined by baseball people to define the threshold of incompetent hitting at the major league level. This is often thought of as the offensive threshold below which a player’s presence in Major League Baseball cannot be justified, regardless of his defensive abilities and assets.

Dave Rose may need to implement his own “Collinsworth Line.” The sophomore multi-purpose guard/forward is a fabulous rebounder, can get to the basket, defend and score in bunches, but he simply can’t make free throws at a consistent enough rate. In borrowing from the Mendoza Line, Collinsworth’s free throw percentage, may not justify him being in a game late with the contest still in doubt, regardless of his other proven abilities and assets.

In my opinion, Rose needs to come up with free throw percentage from the charity stripe that is acceptable enough to keep a player in the game late when the contests are close and determined by free throws.

Don’t look for it to happen this year. It’s too late to mess with confidence and chemistry of a player and team now. Besides when you already have 9 losses on the year and will likely have three more before the season is over, it doesn’t really matter.

It will matter down the road and next year. Collinsworth will be a go to guy along with Haws next season. He also will have the ball in his hands in the late going of games. Opposing coaches will have their own Collinsworth Line to use against BYU. Unless he can prove he is consistent from the line, coaches are going to put him there more and

more frequently and make Rose come up with his own version of the Mendoza Line when it comes to Collinsworth.

Women Win and Lose

The BYU women's basketball team matched the men last week by winning two games against Santa Clara and San Francisco. The difference was that those two games were on the road.

The Cougars beat the Broncos of SCU 87-80 in overtime and then defeated the Dons of USF 73-66, BYU was led by Lexi Eaton against Santa Clara with a career high 31 points. Jennifer Hamson also was big with 25 points and 18 points. Against San Francisco, Hawson again led the way with 25 points, 13 rebounds and 8 blocks. weeping games from

The women's softball team got their season started with tournament action in St. George. The start was mediocre as the Cougars could only manage a 2-3 record with wins against Southern Utah and East Carolina. The losses were against Weber State, Nevada and Texas-Arlington.

BYU Television Timetable

Men's Basketball

BYU vs. Pacific

Thursday, Feb 13 at Stockton

Tipoff: 9:00 pm MST

TV: Time Warner Cable, Root, theW.com

BYU vs. St. Mary's

Saturday, Feb 15 at Moraga

Tipoff: 6:00 pm MST

TV: ESPN2

BYU vs. Gonzaga

Thursday, Feb 20 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm MST

TV: ESPN or ESPN2

BYU vs. Portland

Saturday, Feb 22 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm MST

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. San Diego

Saturday, March 1 at San Diego

Tipoff: 2:00 pm MST

TV: TWC and Root Sports

Women's Basketball

BYU vs. Portland

Thursday, Feb 13 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm MST

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Gonzaga

Saturday, Feb 15 at Provo

Tipoff: 2:00 pm MST

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. San Diego

Saturday, Mar 1 at Provo

Tipoff: 1:00 MST

TV: BYUtv

Men's Volleyball

BYU vs. USC

Friday, Feb 28 at Provo

Match Start: 7:00 pm ST

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Pepperdine

Saturday, Mar 1 at Provo

Match Start: 7:00 pm

TV: BYUtv