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## **We Can't Have it Both Ways**

Matt Carlino has gone to play his senior season somewhere else other than BYU. His departure has caused some to complain about his lack of commitment to Dave Rose and the Cougar program.

The irony of those complaints is that I have never heard any BYU sports fan complain about Jordan Leslie leaving UTEP for BYU. That's probably because they have seen some of his high school highlights on You Tube. [Click here](#) to see for yourself. Also, so far there have been no complaints from Cougar fans about Chase Fischer leaving Wake Forest a year ago for BYU.

Carlino has taken some heat from some BYU fans for supposedly abandoning BYU for his last year of eligibility. Yet, those same fans are excited and exhilarated about Taysom Hill forsaking his letter of intent to Stanford and bringing his talents to Provo.

We loved the way Uani Unga played middle linebacker last season for BYU, but conveniently forgot he took the same option Carlino is taking by leaving left Oregon State for BYU.

As a fan base we were more than happy to get Dave Rice as a coach from Utah State but sad to see him opt out of BYU for UNLV's head job

New Mexico fans hated to see Bronco Mendenhall accept Gary Crowton's offer to coach at BYU, but now Bronco is ours and we don't care how we got him

### **Nobody Knows**

Look, nobody knows why Carlino is moving on. He may not even know. It could be playing time or lack of it. It could be because he felt underappreciated, it could be family dynamics.

It's his life. And in this country, the last time I checked, it is still about choices.

We love it when we get to exercise our right of choice in our own lives, but when it comes to others and especially others in sports that play for the team that we root and pull for, how dare they leave our favorite team. And ironies of all irony, Keanu Nelson, a seldom used wide receiver from Stanford, is opting to play his last year at BYU this coming season using the same NCAA out provided by getting a degree and then moving on without any eligibility penalty.

I have a good friend that has had four wives. Actually he has had just three, but married one of his wives twice. I've had just one. She had other marriage proposals before she *settled* for me. That made me happy. I can't speak for those other chumps who asked her to marry them, but I don't think they were happy about her choosing me. Choices are interesting. One man's happiness is another's disappointment.

That's life in general and in sports in particular.

I still think had I never left Blythe, California after high school, I could have been Mayor of that town. I cite my high school classmate Eddy Rodriquez as a prime example of making the choice to stay and his rise to political prominence as Mayor of Blythe.

I left town looking for greener pastures and all I found was a wannabe gig as a pseudo sports writer/commentator/observer. Blythe residents were the better for it.

I like my Church and its semi-annual conferences, but I made the choice to skip the Saturday afternoon session to go to a BYU (same church) baseball game and plant peas in my garden. I think there is a scriptural and agriculture reference in there somewhere about "*reaping what you sow*".

### **Pea Planting Proof**

You will have to wait at least two weeks for germination to get proof of the pea planting, but I have posted a pix below of me and my niece (visiting from Arizona with her family for conference) to verify my baseball attendance.

I am also hoping my picture post will make me more recognizable in Wal-Mart checkout lines across America. (The home plate ump and I are the ones in the black hats. We both are used to being called jerks. It must come with the Johnny Cash wardrobes.)

I don't begrudge Matt Carlino opting out of BYU for what he considers greener pastures, playing time or whatever the reason. It's about choices. If I cherish my right to choice, I can't begrudge him or anybody else that same right.

Now speaking of choices, there are some BYU fans who think Carlino was the best player on the BYU basketball team. Others would vehemently disagree.

Here's the beauty of old age and sports history. The older I get, the more I have seen and the more I realize that nobody is irreplaceable. Joe Montana was replaceable by Steve Young. Steve Young was replaceable by Colin Kaepernick.

At BYU, we always are hoping that the last star certainly is replaceable. We are hoping that Taysom Hill can replace Ty Detmer. We are hoping that the next Lone Peak HS star will be better than Jimmer Fredette. If you live long enough those hopes are eventually realized.

That's why Matt Carlino transferring for one last season of playing basketball elsewhere really is a non story for me. Everybody is replaceable, including me. Just ask my wife.

## **Collinsworth's Prognosis for Full Recovery Just Got Better**

I'm no doctor and neither is Matty Basketball, but Matt Carlino's decision to look for another playing option for next year, in my opinion, is a pretty good prognosis and projection issued by Carlino that he expects a full recovery from Collinsworth in time for the start of the coming BYU Basketball season.

A healthy Collinsworth will be playing the point for Dave Rose next season. There can be debate, discussion and even doctoral dissertations on Collinsworth at the point, but Dave Rose is the MD (Making Decisions) writing the prescriptions and he has decided to give hefty doses of Collinsworth to BYU basketball fans for the next year and beyond.

That means, barring a full recovery, that there would have been limited minutes available for Carlino to play his preferred position this coming season. It also means that there will not be lots of minutes available for other potential point guards at BYU next year.

Those potential points will be Frank Bartley IV, Jordan Chatman and maybe a little Anson Winder. Rose has already said that all three are combo guards who can play the 1 and 2 spots.

Chase Fischer can't and won't play the point, but he will fill in very, very nicely in providing the three point shooting that Carlino did when he was hot.

Steve Cleveland, in his first year as a novice Division I coach at BYU, foresaw the problem with BYU basketball and its guard line this past season.

### **Shoot the Three and Play Some D**

In case you forgot, Cleveland's mantra that first year while trying to promote BYU basketball was that his team was going to "Shoot the Three and Play Some D." The sooner the BYU guard line, in any and all combinations and rotations, starts hitting from distance consistently and playing defense the better this team will be.

Carlino and his transfer may be getting the headlines, but the headaches for Rose more likely will be who is going to take the place of Eric Mika?

The guard line issues for BYU will somehow resolve itself for next season, but resolving who can score in the low block, rebound and defend in the front court will still be a mystery.

The possibilities of a consistent and productive BYU post presence will come from these five players: Nate Austin, Isaac Neilson, Ryan Andrus, Luke Worthington, Jamal Aytes and Josh Sharp.

Dave Rose is convinced that these guys will make BYU a better team than they were last season. He has pronounced his optimism publicly.

But really, does that front court sound like Final Four material? How about Sweet Sixteen? How about just NCAA invite material? Heck, it doesn't even sound like WCC championship material.

Just one guy's opinion, but the departure of Matt Carlino and the health of Kyle Collinsworth is the least of Dave Rose's worries for next season. But remember Rose is still the guy calling the shots and he has vigorously stated that he likes his front court for next season.

That means he likes the players he has and the NCAA post season play has proven it is all about players. Half court offenses are nice, strategy is sometimes good, but good players make good coaches. That is the bottom line in basketball and always will be.

BYU will only be as good as its players and Rose thinks his will be better next year. I'll take his word on that assessment until proven otherwise.

### **BYU-Idaho, BYU-Hawaii...Could BYU-Provo Be Next?**

I had a subscriber email last week and asked if I thought BYU would ever drop sports like was done in Rexburg a few years back and in Laie last week.

Not in my lifetime was my original answer, but after [reading this](#) a few days ago, I might die sooner than I expect.

In the decisions by BYU-Idaho and BYU-Hawaii to cut sports, the crucial criteria were based on facilitating the education of more students.

Cutting athletics at BYU would potentially free up a few hundred openings for additional students, but the key factor is that at the other two BYU schools, athletics weren't self sustaining. They required funds that could be used for education. Now there's a novel thought at a university.

BYU adamantly claims that their athletic programs in Provo are not funded by university or Church resources. The programs are maintained by revenue generated from ticket sales, TV, and generous donations from boosters and backers.

Tom Holmoe, BYU's current athletic director, has maintained that BYU will do whatever it takes to be competitive at the highest athletic levels in college sports.

But what if that means having to opt to pay players a stipend, salary or what ever you want to call it to participate at the highest levels of football and basketball?

### **Board of Trustees?**

Holmoe may want to do it, but would the Board of Trustees?

In my opinion, it's all about money. Those that are producing it want to keep it and make their own rules to insure they don't have to continue sharing their money with the have not's.

Paying to play would widen the gulf between the big boys and the little boys and insure that the big boys get to play by their rules. In theory, paying for players sounds like it would work for men's football and basketball. Assuming you are hiring 85 football players to work for you and 13 basketball players to be on the payroll that is just 98 jobs you need to fill and fund.

Tell that to the Title IX people. If you are going to pay 98 men, you will also have to pay at least 98 women to do the same thing. And if unionization of college athletic teams is just around the corner, you can bet that the Olympic sports on campus will be organizing and orchestrating their plans and litigation in order to get paid.

If it was about hard work effort and determination all would be equal because all athletes, regardless of the sport, are equal in trying to do their best in their particular sport. Unfortunately, it's about revenue and who produces it and who gobbles it up. That is what the NCAA fight is all about.

Look, we are already in the pay for play game in college basketball if you know how AAU basketball works during the summer for most of the prominent teams on the circuit.

### **Annuities and Stock Options?**

And what about recruiting? Forget about jobs, cars and cash. They would become obsolete and be replaced by deferred annuities and stock options as incentives to sign a letter of intent.

Yeah, but think of the missionary message that BYU and big time athletics provides the Church. The last time I checked, missionaries don't have to fill out a W-4 form when they are called.

The sooner we get to the soccer system worldwide, the better off we will be. That's where players are paid by their respective clubs and advance monetarily based on their talents and abilities.

It is a total farce to say that the big boys of college athletics espouse amateurism in athletics. The money is way too big to believe that.

Privatize college football and basketball and all other sports and let clubs or other business interests take them over. Then all the universities would have to do is make the highest bid to insure that their names were displayed prominently on the jerseys worn by those club teams.

The faster we get to that model, the faster universities can get back to educating students and get out of the sports business into which they have invested and continue to invest millions of dollars.

Bottom line: Yes, I actually can see BYU dropping sports. If you disagree, you better hope I live to be 100 years old.

### **Spring Sports Recap**

BYU lost two consecutive men's volleyball matches this past week against the Hawaii in Honolulu. Friday night the Cougars were upset in five games, (16-25, 19-25, 26-24, 25-18, 15-12). Saturday, it only took a three game sweep by Hawaii (37-35, 25-20, 25-19).

The Cougars are now 18-6 overall and 18-4 in MPSF play. They still are the No. 1 seed and will host opening matches in MPSF tournament play later this month. The Cougars face UC Santa Barbara Friday and UCLA Saturday, both at 7 p.m. PDT. BYU locked up a share of the conference title with its win against UCLA March 29, and will host at least the first round of the MPSF tournament starting April 19.

In baseball and softball, BYU took two of three games in their respective series against Pacific and San Diego this past weekend.

The men bested the Tigers of Pacific 10-1 and 9-3 in the first two games of the series, but lost 11-7 on Saturday, in a game that was played on the campus of UVU in Orem. BYU is currently 12-21 on the year and 4-8 in WCC play.

The BYU softball team traveled to San Diego to open WCC play for both clubs. The Lady Cougars were no-hit by the Toreros in the Friday opener and suffered a 4-0 loss. The Cougars bounced back on Saturday and swept two from USD by the scores of 2-1 and 4-3. The Cougars are now 16-20 overall and 2-1 in league play.



**I could have been a big shot in Blythe but optioned to transfer out because I couldn't shoot the 3 and definitely didn't play any D!**