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John Greenleaf Whittier Weighs in on BYU Basketball

Whittier is not a scout for any NBA team nor does he own and run a basketball website. He actually was an American Quaker poet and advocate of the abolition of slavery in the United States. (December 17, 1807 – September 7, 1892) He is famous for the following:

For of all sad *words of tongue or pen... The saddest* are these: "It might have been!"

I bring that up because of Kyle Collinsworth. They guy has had an incredible career at BYU. He is a legend of the triple double and finds himself in the company of and on top of the list of some of the greatest college players like Jason Kidd and Shaq O'Neal. They went on to great NBA success.

It remains to be see if Collinsworth will have any success even making an NBA roster. Despite all his talents, he lacks what the NBA demands from 6-6 guards. He can guard, he can rebound, he can get to the basket, and he can make free throws. What he can't do is make a jumper with any kind of consistency from 10-feet out.

That will put him in Europe and not in the NBA. I hope I'm wrong, because what he has done for BYU basketball in his four years at BYU is amazing.

So how does Whittier weigh in on all this? What might have been if the last three years Collinsworth would have been in the post for BYU? That's my question. Take a look at the shot charts for Collinsworth. Where does he score?

From 10-feet in. He is a terror and tiger in rebounding the ball. BYU has had plenty of guards, but very little in the post for the last few years. True, Collinsworth distributes the ball. He could do the same in the post when the ball goes down low and teams have to double him to keep him from the rim and rebounding the ball.

Yes, he is only 6-6, but our current guy is only 6-7. Do you like Kyle Davis inside or would you like to see what Collinsworth could have done or would do inside posting up while letting somebody else get the ball to him?

Keena Young, probably the best inside scorer Dave Rose has coached in the last decade, was only 6-6 and ended up being the MVP of the MWC. I'm just saying that since Collinsworth dramatically improved his free throw shooting a year ago and with his inside moves to the basket and rebounding prowess, why not put him in the post.

Despite the improvement with the inside game since Davis started play this season, BYU is still not known for its post presence.

BYU is guard oriented. They have Chase Fischer, Nick Emery and Zac Seljaas, all of whom can make it rain from the outside. Emery has proven that he can bring the ball up court and distribute it. From my viewpoint, it would be fun to watch BYU run an inside out offense with Collinsworth posted up down low and with Emery, Fischer and Seljaas, all waiting beyond the arc to cast up uncontested threes.

There is no way Collinsworth would approve of the move this late in his career because he still holds NBA aspirations as a guard. Unless he can miraculously come up with an outside shot, those aspirations as an NBA guard are just an apparition.

There is no way that Dave Rose would even think of this move, because he didn't think of it the last three years when he had so little post presence. Hence, the Whittier wish, "what might have been?"

All is not totally sad, however. BYU is currently seriously in the hunt for a WCC basketball title after 4 games. With a 3-1 league ledger, they now have the same number as losses as Saint Mary's who lost to Pepperdine on the road last Saturday afternoon. Here are the current league standings:

Gonzaga	5-0 13-3
Saint Mary's	5-1 14-2
BYU	3-1 12-5
Pepperdine	3-2 10-6
San Francisco	3-3 9-7

Pacific	3-3 4-11
Portland	2-3 8-10
Santa Clara	2-4 6-12
San Diego	0-4 5-10
Loyola Marymount	0-5 7-9

Just based on what I have seen so far this season, look for BYU to lose to Gonzaga, Pepperdine and probably San Francisco on the road and end with a 14-4 league mark at best. That won't be good enough again to take home a regular season crown. A Gonzaga loss in Spokane is a done deal, but if BYU can find a way to manufacture wins at USF and Pepperdine on the road, this could potentially be BYU's best WCC regular season finish.

Which brings me to my next point. Instead of talking about what could have been, how about what might be. That seems to be the eternal hope for BYU basketball. Wait until next year.

BYU currently has a four-guard rotation. Collinsworth, Chase Fischer, Nick Emery and Zac Seljaas. Throw in Jordan Chatman and it is a five-man rotation. Usually with Jake Toolson currently on a medical leave, there would be a clamoring from fans and media to want to know what's up with the guy.

He has been spared from the inquisition because with the play and torrid shooting of Seljaas, nobody really notices that Toolson is on leave of absence.

Back to guards. Next year the four guards will be Emery, TJ Haws, Jordan Chatman and Elijah Bryant. I took flack several weeks ago when I said that I thought Bryant was a big time player and was a Frank Jackson clone with better size and strength. I stand by that claim. Think Collinsworth's size and skill and ability to bull his way to the basket, but with a Nick Emery outside shot. Buckle up for this guy.

And brace yourself for Haws part II. Don't know what his body will look like upon his return from a mission, but he looked scrawny and skinny as a prep...until you saw him shoot from big time range and get to the rim whenever he wanted. Then he looked all world. Throw in a plethora of post guys like Eric Mika, Payton Dasturp and Alan Hamson, all 7-3 of him, and maybe that eternal BYU basketball flame might actually become a raging BYU bonfire on the basketball court.

We shall see.

Sitake Still Scouring and Scrubbing for Talent

Last week we listed the names of several players that were due back from missions that had been signed and recruited by Bronco Mendenhall. We also said that you could look for some reduction and redaction from that list.

That started when BYU coaches told Keegan Hicks, an offensive lineman from Bingham HS, that he would not have a football scholarship based on the new staff's evaluation of his high school film.

That didn't sit well with Hicks, who went public with his complaint. We don't think this staff is through sifting and shuffling scholarships in order to bring in the talent they deem necessary to win sooner than later.

Here are some names that were not on BYU's Mendenhall lists, but are now being pursued heavily by Sitake and his crew:

Sione Finau...5-10, 170, wide out, slot back and kick and punt returner out of Kearns HS in Utah. He committed to Oregon State in November, but now has an offer from Sitake and BYU. He would be BYU's version of Britain Covey. [Watch here](#), #20 to see why I think that way. [Click here](#) for a nice article on him committing to Oregon State. BYU has offered and he will trip to Provo this month.

Fua Pututau...6-3, 230, linebacker, Cottonwood HS, UT. Was looking primarily at Utah, Colorado and Oregon State, but now has BYU pushing for a late January visit to Provo. His video is impressive and if Sitake is making a big push, his ability also should impress. [Click here](#), #2 to watch.

Wayne Kirby...6-3, 305 defensive tackle, Highland HS, ID. If that name sounds familiar, it should. He committed to Bronco and BYU early last fall and then said he was no longer committed in October. BYU is still pursuing and he will make visits to Utah, Washington State and BYU this month.

Chris Wilcox...6-3, 175 DB, Roosevelt HS, Corona, CA. Originally offered by Ed Lamb at SUU, Lamb has now offered him at BYU. [Click here](#) to see video.

Taysom Hill, Secret Service and Stanford

I have a son-in-law who is a Secret Service Agent. He's a modern day John Wayne. He can shoot, thwart cartel credit card fraud, run long distances and beat the crap out of me and you.

He is in the protection business. He will tell my daughter where he going and for how long, but when we ask who he will be guarding, he just says, "read the papers and you can figure it out."

Same with me and Taysom Hill. He hasn't told me or anybody else where he is going to play football next season, but I can read the papers and figure it out.

Paper perusing says that BYU wants him back. Virginia and Texas A&M are also mentioned in the papers. So is Stanford and Michigan. I don't have any great insight, but I do know a little football so my guess is Stanford will be Hill's destination if he wants to continue to play college football one more season.

Here's why. Stanford has an awesome offensive line and a great power running game. Hill wouldn't have to be the whole offense. Did I mention that Christian McCaffrey is also back at tailback?

Hill would be great and only have to pass occasionally and run when a play breaks down. For a guy who has injury issues and history, protection from a great line and other offensive stars would make the perfect fit.

All I know is that wherever Hill ends up and stays healthy, he would be a great Secret Service Agent because he has proven that when healthy, he can beat the crap out any other team.

Now as far as BYU and the Secret Service goes, there may not be as much glamor for Hill or Tanner Mangum together. Sometimes my son-in-law travels with the POTUS (President of the United States) and does nothing but guard one of the two armored limousines that accompany the POTUS everywhere he goes.

Those two vehicles are under 24-hour surveillance and supervision regardless if they are used or not during the trip. That means sometimes my son-in-law spends a 12 hour shift just staring at a car in a garage reading books or playing games on his phone.

The point being, if Hill decides BYU is still his home, then BYU would have two exclusive and top of the line limousines that Ty Detmer and his offensive coaches would have to guard to insure there aren't any egos or ambitions being bruised, bent or broken.

Detmer has said he wants Hill back and that you can't have too many good athletes on your team. He also said that competition is great and that both quarterbacks should give it their best shot and that coaches would then do the rest. [Click here](#) to hear Detmer's most recent opinings on the two quarterbacks.

When the POTUS travels, nobody knows which limousine he will use until he actually climbs in it. Same with BYU if Hill comes back. Nobody but Ty Detmer and Kalani Sitake will know which quarterback they will use until they take their team to Phoenix to open the 2016 season against Arizona.

I hope that Hill does come back healthy and then I hope that both he and Mangum beat the crap out of each other in battling for the quarterback job. I also hope that somehow BYU comes up with an offensive line that is more Stanford like than SUU like so neither Mangum or Hill will get the crap beat out of them against the upcoming 2016 schedule.

Government Intervention Ruining Rivalry

Title IX basically shut down many men's sports at many universities. Now it looks OSHA wants in on the action in an effort to shut down the BYU-Utah basketball rivalry.

In case you missed it, here is Utah's safety statement. *"The events that have occurred in our recent games with BYU led me to ask athletics director (Chris) Hill several weeks ago if we could take a cooling-off period and put the rivalry on hold. The level of emotions has escalated to the point where there is the potential for serious injury. Chris said he would support me in canceling next year's scheduled game against BYU."* — Utah basketball coach Larry Krystkowiak.

Here is the rebuttal by BYU's Dave Rose, given on KFAN radio. [Click](#) to listen.

Here is my rebuttal to Utah's recent rejection of BYU and an almost century long rivalry.

When I asked my wife to marry me, she fortunately said yes. Had she said no, there is no way that I would have wanted to beg her to say yes. And there was no way that I would have wanted to date her sisters if I couldn't have her.

That's how I feel about Utah. If they don't want BYU, then BYU shouldn't beg her to stay engaged. And they shouldn't still try to date her sisters.

Cut the cord and move on. That goes for all the sister sports like Women's basketball, volleyball, softball and men's baseball.

This isn't about sports, it's about the DMA, the Designated Market Area for Television. Utah wants to dominate it because that is what the Pac 12 expected when they signed the Utes up.

In my opinion, the Utah move is intended to diminish the BYU brand in the market. It won't work, because despite the Pac 12 network and affiliation, BYUtv keeps BYU at the market forefront. And if a Big 12 invite ever shows up at the Cougar doorstep, then Utah's goose is cooked and so is the Pac 12 golden goose.

Right now the Utes get home games with USC, UCLA, etc. What if BYU starts getting Oklahoma, Texas, Baylor in football and Kansas in basketball making appearances in Provo.

Game over for the Utes and their and the Pac 12 hopes for increasing market share and dominating the DMA.

Here is another reason this move won't matter. The LDS Church is not going to let BYU sports become second rate. They will either cut bait or pony up. I still maintain that they will find a way to fund BYU sports to diminish the disparity of dollars that P5 conferences rake in compared to what BYU does.

I still think the ideal way is to give \$20 million a year to the BYUtv budget so they can contract with the BYU athletic department for the rights to broadcast all BYU sports, not currently tied up with other contracts.

If the Church can give \$4 million to the UofU for a law school donation, how do you think they will react to Utah not acting nice to the Church's university. There will be a lot of eyes opened with this move in Salt Lake.

If Utah doesn't play nice, it is my opinion, that the LDS Church still will. Only they will play much nicer with BYU and the BYUtv budget which will indirectly funnel enough dollars to the BYU athletic department to make up for a lack of P5 dough.

The Church has too much invested in BYUtv and has reaped big benefits from it already. Another \$20 million annually for Athletic programming would keep both departments humming quite nicely and give the Church a public relations buffer from critics within the Church for indirectly funneling money to athletics.

Cut bait with Utah and let them cast their line elsewhere and let BYU do the same. Eventually BYU will find the right bait to lure a P5 invite or a Church subsidy disguised as a BYUtv programming budget. Then it's all good and BYU will still be the top dog in television's local DMA market.

What I like the best about this current Utah-BYU scheduling brouhaha is that Dave Rose has painted two athletic directors into uncomfortable positions and corners. If Chris Hill denies wanting to do away playing BYU, he is then calling Dave Rose a liar. Listen again to Rose's radio comments above.

In my opinion, he has also put Holmoe, the eternal pacifist and sometime patsy for the Utes when it comes to dealing with them, in a corner. Again, in my opinion, Holmoe's halftime interview on ESPNU during the Santa Clara basketball game, sounded more conciliatory and Chamberlain (Neville) like than BYU Braveheart (Movie and Mel Gibson) like.

Holmoe is walking a tight rope. He has to support Rose and his comments, but still wants to pacify Hill and future AD's in another league so they don't buy the story that BYU is hard to work with.

Games and Names

Men Win at Home and Women Do the Same on Road

Game: BYU 97 Santa Clara 61 **Names:** Kyle Collinsworth notched his 9th triple double with 21 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists. Nick Emery was 5-6 from beyond the arc and led all scorers with 23 points.

Game: BYU 102 San Francisco 92 **Names:** Chase Fischer (5-100, Nick Emery (3-60 and Zac Seljaas (6-10), went 14-26 from three-point land.

Game: BYU 3 Loyola Chicago 1 **Names:** Ben Patch is back. The sophomore led BYU with 21 kills in a win over defending NCAA champ Loyola.

Game: BYU 3 George Mason 1 **Names:** Tim Dobbert led the Cougars with 13 blocks and 8 digs. Patch did not play in this match.

Game: BYU 68 Santa Clara 63 **Names:** Lexi Eaton Rydalch led the Cougars with 27 points. Kalani Purcell had 12 rebounds.

Game: BYU 66 San Francisco 57 **Names:** Rydalch is reduntant, scored 22 in win. BYU women now 12-4 on year and 4-1 in WCC play which is good for a second place tie with San Diego. Gonzaga is leading the league with a 5-0 record and visit Provo this Thursday.

Television Timetable

BYU vs. Gonzaga (M Basketball)

Thursday, January 14 at Spokane

Tipoff: 7:00 pm MST

TV: ESPN2

BYU vs. Gonzaga (W Basketball)

Thursday, January 14 at Provo

Tipoff: 7:00 pm MST

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Stanford (M Volleyball)

Friday, January 15 at Provo

Match Start: 7:00 pm MST

TV: BYUtv

BYU vs. Portland (M Basketball)

Saturday, January 16, at Portland

Tipoff: 4:00 pm MST

TV: Root Rocky Mountain

BYU vs. Portland (W Basketball)

Saturday, January 14 at Provo

Tipoff: 2:00 pm MST

TV:) BYUtv

BYU vs. Stanford

Saturday, January 16, at Provo

Match Start: 7:00 pm MST

TV: BYUtv