

HB Arnett's

COUGAR SPORTSLINE

801 372 0819

hbarnett@fiber.net and hbarnett@xmission.com

PO Box 50424 Provo, Utah 84605

Vol. 29, Issue 36 – April 6, 2009

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

MAX HALL IS STILL THE BIG DOG

Max Hall is not a laughing matter despite his luster among Cougar fans becoming a little tarnished late last season.

Throwing six picks against Utah will do that sort of thing.

Here is a Max Hall joke that was making the rounds after the season ended. Did you hear that Max Hall lost his three best receivers to early entry into the NFL?

Yeah, Austin Collie, Paul Kruger and Sean Smith (The latter two both picked off a Hall pass for the Utes and both are headed early to the NFL.

Hall certainly was good for a little levity, but without him as quarterback for BYU last year, a little levity would have been a lot of losing.

That is not funny, but true.

Without Hall last season, the Cougars are lucky to get 5 wins.

Without Hall this season, the same will hold true.

Here something else to smile about.

Hall is having a great spring.

Here are some numbers that are no joke and will get you longing for the season to get started right away.

With three weeks in the books and several 11-on-11 drills and two serious scrimmages, Hall's numbers are not laughable, but laudable. That lends itself to a big fall for the senior-to-be quarterback.

Game Like

In the two most game-like scrimmages, Hall has gone 19-of-26 for 176 yards.

As has always been the case with BYU football, the Cougars will only go as far as their quarterback will take them.

Stand-up comics are funny, but Hall has put up some stand-up-and-take-notice numbers this spring. In other work during the spring, he has completed 53-of-67 throws.

We don't think you will see any coaches in the MWC laughing about Hall coming back for his senior season and neither should we as BYU fans.

COUNTING CORNERBACKS AND OTHER RECRUITS

There is a good reason that Bronco Mendenhall focuses on recruiting LDS players. There is an even better reason why he focuses on trying to find LDS cornerbacks and other defensive backs.

If the recruit is a defensive back and not LDS and signs with BYU out of high school, history shows it is highly unlikely he will last at BYU.

There is normal attrition of recruits at BYU and with all football programs, but when it comes to non-LDS recruits in general and defensive backs, in particular, they seldom survive in Provo for long. The numbers are even bleaker for black non-LDS recruits.

We go back ten years to look at the non-LDS high school recruits BYU has signed in the last decade and see how they fared in the program.

1998...In this recruiting class BYU signed four high school non-LDS recruits: Kevin Gilbride, qb; Eugene Childs, wr; Michael Westbrook, wr; Jernaro Gilford, db; Brandon McFerron, ol.

Gilbride, Childs, McFerron and Westbrook lasted two seasons or less. Gilford did go the distance, but he had to take an honor code hiatus before returning to Provo to finish.

The Cougars also signed a jc defensive back, Michael Lafitte. He didn't play much, but made it through his two years of eligibility in Provo.

1999...BYU signed Jenaro Gilford (again, because he didn't qualify academically the year before), db; Colby Bockwoldt, lb; Kurt Elliott, db; Devian Mims, dl; Robert Ramirez, db.

Mims and Ramirez never qualified academically and never enrolled. Only Bockwoldt made it through 4 years of eligibility.

In the non-LDS juco ranks, BYU signed Hashi Robertson, db; Brian Gray, db; Jonathan Pittman, wr. All three played their two years.

2000...Isaiah Joiner, a running back, was the only non-LDS high school signee that year. He ran back a few kickoffs and also had an incident where he ran through a mall parking lot. He was a quick exit.

On the juco scene, Danny Phillips and Derrus Wilson, both db's, didn't contribute much, but stayed two years. Brian McDonald, rb, also played 2 years. He enrolled as non-LDS, but joined the Church and served a mission after graduation.

2001...O'Neal Howell, db and Breyon Jones, wr signed. Both made four years. Josh Brandon, db, a juco, played his two years.

2002...Curtis Brown, rb, Dan Coats, te, Travonne Jackson, db, Thomas Stancil, rb signed out of high school. Brown and Coats were four year-guys and stars. Jackson and Stancil lasted a year. Brown joined the LDS Church while in Provo.

James Allen, db and Walt Williams, db, signed from the juco ranks. Allen lasted a year and Williams could never qualify academically.

2003...This was a small class and no non-LDS recruits were signed.

2004...Karland Bennett, db; Antwaun Harris, wr, B.J. Mathis, rb; Michael Reed, wr; Ibrahim Rashada, db; Billy Skinner, db; William Turner, lb. Only Reed survived and graduated. We would tell you what happened to the others, but Cougar fans don't want to be reminded of it.

Juco wise, BYU signed non-LDS recruits Todd Watkins, wr; Riley Weber, wr; Eddie Scipio, db; Michael Morris, wr; Gary Lovely, lb; Greg Lovely, db, Justin Luettgerodt, lb.

Watkins, Weber, Luttgerodt and Gary Lovely made it. Scipio never enrolled for academic reasons.

2005...Brandon Howard was the only non-LDS high school signee. He started last year, but is not currently in school. There is hope that he will return in the fall.

On the juco scene BYU signed non-LDS recruits Sete Aula, ol and Justin Robinson, db. Both were starters and played through their eligibility.

2006... BYU signed just one non-LDS recruit; a juco deep snapper, Matt Johnson. He never enrolled.

2007...BYU signed 4 non-LDS high school recruits. They included: Brannon Brooks, db, J.J. DiLuigi, rb; Ryan Kessman, wr and G Pittman, db.

Only DiLuigi is still here after just two years.

No non-LDS jucos were signed.

2008...Only 2 non-LDS signed. O'Neill Chambers, wr and Garrett Nicholson, db. Both present and accounted for after one season.

No jucos signed.

Stats aren't our forte, but our numbers show that BYU is retaining just 33 percent of its non-LDS high school recruits over the last decade.

When you figure the retention rate of non-LDS high school defensive backs that have signed in the last ten years, it is only 25 percent.

By contrast, when you figure the retention rate of non-LDS juco recruits, the retention rate of juco signees in the last decade is 81 percent.

We are sure there must be other factors, but it appears to us that BYU would be better served by focusing more attention on the junior college market, especially when it comes to defensive backs and non-LDS prospects.

For perspective, from what we can gather from the official press guides of BYU football for the last ten years, there is also a pretty good turnover rate for the bread and butter LDS recruit over the last 10 years.

Here are the counts per year. The attrition can be attributed to scholarships being pulled, transfers, injuries, academics and other problems, but here are the numbers.

1998...Signed 13 LDS high school recruits. Only 7 made it through 4 years of eligibility.

1999...Signed 16 LDS high school recruits. Only 8 finished four years of eligibility.

2000...Signed 19 LDS high school recruits. Only 5 finished the full scholarship trip. Highest attrition rate in the last decade.

2001...Signed 9 LDS high school recruits. Only 4 survived the full four years.

2002...Signed 12 LDS high school recruits. Only 6 made it to the end.

2003...Signed 11 LDS high school recruits. There are still 8 left with this being the senior season for those signees.

2004...Signed 9 LDS high school recruits. Three left the program early. The rest are still playing with the exception of Austin Collie who left for the NFL. We aren't counting him as part of the attrition.

2005...Signed 13 LDS high school recruits, but three are long gone already. The rest are still in the program.

2006...Signed 20 LDS high school recruits, some of which will be enrolled as true freshmen this fall.

Of the 20, 4 are already gone for good.

2007...Signed 17 LDS high school recruits. Most of this group is just getting started in the program, but 4 are already not considered part of the team and we are hearing from a pretty good source that one more who is currently serving a mission is seriously considering not coming back and transferring to the Pac 10 instead.

Before we give up the name, we want to wait a few more months to see if this changes. We will say that this is a high profile player who made waves as a freshman.

2008...Signed 15 LDS high school recruits a year ago. It's too early, but we are sniffing at least three right now who won't last.

The numbers are rough and are skewed to show better than they really are because we don't know yet what the ultimate attrition will be in the latest recruiting classes.

Regardless, even if no other players leave the program from the most recent classes, the numbers show the retention rate for LDS high school signees for the last 10 years is 61 percent.

If you look at the early classes in the last decade which had time for a class to work itself through, the retention rate for LDS high school signees in the years 1998-2003 was only 47 percent.

We expect the recruiting years from 2004-2008, when it all shakes out and attrition is accounted for, to be pretty similar.

Based on those retention numbers, there is a reason why BYU focuses on LDS recruits in football.

Based on those same retention numbers, when it comes to signing non-LDS players, BYU has more success in retaining jucos than high school recruits.

Who really knows what it means. Our best guess and extrapolation is that the LDS Church demographics still lacks a propensity to produce good LDS defensive backs.

We are still probably another decade and 7 million baptisms away from that changing.

NAMES AND GAMES OF SPRING

With the annual spring game put on ice for this year, we are publishing the official BYU spring football roster.

Almost half of those names listed are probably guys of whom you have never heard and who will not be listed on the roster this fall.

These are names you would have watched if the game was played. You wouldn't have seen guys like Max Hall, Harvey Unga, Dennis Pitta, Jan Jorgensen etc.

As another bonus, we are passing along the score of the Blue-White contest, had it been played. Blue 16 White 10.

Here is the roster to help you predict your own score.

90 Bernard Afutiti	6-1	262	DL Jr.	Fontana, CA/Mt. SAC College
51 Matt Ah You	5-11	220	LB	Sr. Rancho Cucamonga, CA/ Lone Peak HS (UT)
72 Nick Alletto	6-6	318	OL	Jr. Parker, CO/Ponderosa HS
29 Luke Ashworth	6-2	201	WR	Jr. Provo, UT/Timpview HS
43 Jordan Atkinson	6-3	243	LB Jr.	Martinez, CA/Diablo Valley JC
35 Matt Bauman	6-1	230	LB	Sr. Salt Lake City, UT/Skyline HS
58 Jeff Bell	6-0	218	LB	Sr. Williamsburg, VA/Bruton HS
5 Brandon Bradley	6-0	200	DB Jr.	Tallahassee, FL/Lincoln HS
89 Braden Brown	6-6	260	TE Fr.	Salt Lake City, UT/Highland HS
87 Rhen Brown	5-10	187	WR	Fr. Summerville, SC/Lone Peak HS (UT)

60 Terence Brown	6-3	351	OL So.	Summerville, SC/Summerville HS
32 Riley Bushman	6-1	215	LB Fr.	Tucson, AZ/Sabino HS
11 O'Neill Chambers	6-2	210	WR So.	Harmony, FL/Harmony HS
41 Coleby Clawson	6-3	235	LB Sr.	Wales, UT/Snow College
34 Jefferson Court	6-3	212	LB Fr.	Sandy, UT/Alta HS
12 Stephen Covey	5-11	198	WR So.	Provo, UT/Timpview HS
92 Brett Denney	6-4	265	DL Sr.	Thornton, CO/Legacy HS
10 J.J. Diluigi	5-9	200	RB So.	Canyon Country, CA/Canyon HS
42 Shawn Doman	6-2	232	LB Sr.	Woodburn, OR/Canby HS
80 Matthew Edwards	6-3	195	WR So.	N. Salt Lake, UT/Woods Cross HS
96 Steven Fisher	6-4	250	DL So.	Orem, UT/Timpanogas HS
26 Landon Fowler	5-11	185	DB Fr.	Kaysville, UT/Davis HS
56 McKay Frandsen	6-3	225	LB Fr.	American Fork, UT/American Fork HS
48 Jameson Frazier	6-2	200	DB So.	Draper, UT/Alta HS
16 Brenden Gaskins	6-4	215	QB Sr.	Farmington, NM/Glendale JC
88 Andrew George	6-5	250	TE Sr.	Englewood, CO/Cherry Creek HS
15 Max Hall	6-1	205	QB Sr.	Mesa, AZ/Arizona State
76 Braden Hansen	6-6	285	OL Fr.	Sandy, UT/Alta HS
59 Chase Hansen	6-3	20	LB So.	Draper, UT/Snow College
20 Daniel Hansen	5-10	195	RB So.	Madera, CA/Madera HS
67 Nate Hartung	6-2	345	OL So.	Butler, PA/Butler Area HS
30 Connell Hess	6-0	210	LB Fr.	Boise, ID/Capital HS
97 Tevita Hola	6-1	320	DL Sr.	West Valley, UT/Snow College
31 Tyler Holt	5-9	175	K/P So.	Granite Bay, CA/Granite Bay HS
47 Terrance Hooks	6-1	230	LB Sr.	Tempe, AZ/Marcos de Niza HS
45 Shane Hunter	5-10	235	LB Jr.	Idaho Falls, ID/Snow College
26 David Jackson	6-1	175	WR Fr.	Provo, UT/Timpview HS
6 McKay Jacobson	5-11	190	WR So.	Southlake, TX/Southlake Carroll HS
23 Landon Jaussi	6-5	210	DB Jr.	Wylie, TX/Southern Virginia
85 Leon Johnson	6-0	185	WR Jr.	Thatcher, AZ/Eastern Arizona JC
21 Scott Johnson	5-11	185	DB Sr.	Provo, UT/Timpview HS
84 Jan Jorgensen	6-3	260	DL Sr.	Helper, UT/Carbon HS
55 Solomone Kafu	6-2	310	OL Fr.	Rio Linda, CA/Rio Linda HS
91 Rockey Kalamafoni	6-2	290	DL So.	Portland, OR/Liahona HS (Tonga)
28 Bryan Kariya	6-0	215	RB So.	Kaysville, UT/Davis HS
7 Tyler Kozlowski	5-9	185	WR Jr.	Wildwood, IL/Warren Township HS
34 Tucker Lamb	5-9	195	RB Fr.	Orem, UT/Orem HS
33 Ryan Love	5-10	175	RB So.	Cameron Park, CA/Ponderosa HS
5 Parker Mangum	6-4	210	QB Sr.	Boise, ID/St. Mary's
16 Brady Marshall	5-8	180	DB So.	Modesto, CA/Beyer HS
19 Matt Marshall	5-10	185	WR So.	Salt Lake City, UT/Skyline HS
96 Jonathan McCullough	6-5	230	TE Jr.	Hillsboro, OR/Glencoe HS
25 Steven McFarland	6-2	235	RB So.	Lakeview, OR/Lakeview HS
13 Carter Mees	5-11	190	DB Fr.	St. George, UT/Pine View HS
27 Blake Morgan	5-11	195	DB So.	Greeley, CO/Greeley West HS
17 Rex Morgan	5-10	175	DB Fr.	Greeley, CO/Greeley West HS
82 Mike Muehlmann	6-5	225	TE Fr.	American Fork, UT/American Fork HS
39 Grant Nelson	6-3	225	LB Jr.	Sewickley, PA/Hopewell HS
3 Garrett Nicholson	5-9	180	DB Fr.	Salt Lake City, UT/West HS
53 Austin Nielsen	6-0	230	LB Fr.	Glendale, AZ/O'Connor HS

36 Billy Oden	5-10	220	LB	Fr. Waimanalo, HI/Kailua HS
38 Brandon Ogletree	6-0	225	LB	Fr. McKinney, TX/McKinney HS
17 Paul Olsen	5-11	195	DB	Fr. American Fork, UT/American Fork HS
59 John Pace	6-2	210	DS	Sr. Yorba Linda, CA/Esperanza HS
38 Mitch Payne	6-2	210	K	Jr. North Ogden, UT/Weber HS
1 Jordan Pendleton	6-2	230	DB	So. South Jordan, UT/Bingham HS
86 B.J. Peterson	6-3	200	WR	Jr. Salt Lake City, UT/Brighton HS
98 Matt Peterson	6-5	265	DL	Fr. Bluffdale, UT/Riverton HS
32 Dennis Pitta	6-5	250	TE	Sr. Moorpark, CA/Moorpark HS
31 Byron Putnam	5-11	195	DB	So. Draper, UT/UofU
57 Matt Putnam	6-6	265	DL	So. Brigham City, UT/Box Elder HS
70 Matt Reynolds	6-6	320	OL	So. Provo, UT/Timpview HS
22 Andrew Rich	6-3	215	DB	Jr. Ogden, UT/Snow College
37 Vic So'oto	6-3	250	LB	Sr. Carlsbad, CA/Carlsbad HS
73 Jason Speredon	6-5	305	OL	Jr. West Valley, UT/Granger HS
63 Jesse Taufi	6-4	302	OL	Jr. Long Beach, CA/Long Beach CC
75 Stetson Tenney	6-5	295	OL	Fr. Show Low, AZ/Show Low HS
30 Malosi Te'o	5-10	200	RB	Fr. Laie, HI/Kahuku HS
2 Shiloah Te'o	5-10	205	DB	So. Laie, HI/Kahuku HS
24 StevenThomas	5-11	180	DB	So. Chino Hills, CA/Chino Hills HS
62 Marco Thorson	6-3	310	OL	Fr. Ramona, CA/Ramona HS
52 Russell Tialavea	6-3	290	DL	Sr. Oceanside, CA/Oceanside HS
46 Masi Tuitama	6-2	215	LB	Fr. Oxnard, CA/Pacifica HS
94 David Tuitupou	6-5	255	DL	So. Orem, UT/Mountain View HS
18 Travis Uale	6-2	195	DB	So. Hawaii Kai, HI/Kamehameha HS
45 Harvey Unga	6-0	240	RB	Jr. Provo, UT/Timpview HS
44 Dan Van Sweden	6-2	235	LB	Sr. West Point, UT/Northridge HS
99 A.J. Van Valkenburg	6-1	195	LB	Jr. South Jordan, UT/Snow College
49 Jadon Wagner	6-4	235	LB	So. Lethbridge, Alberta/LCI
21 Neal Watterson	6-0	180	RB	Jr. Charlotte, NC/Charlotte Country Day
9 Kase Wells	6-2	185	WR	Jr. Basin City, WA/BYU-Idaho
64 R.J. Willing	6-5	310	OL	Sr. Kahuku, HI/Kamehameha HS
71 Rick Wolfley	6-3	350	DL	Jr. Afton, WY/Star Valley HS
50 Tanner Zylstra	6-3	225	LB	Fr. LaVerne, CA/Bonita HS