

HB Arnett's

COUGAR SPORTSLINE

801 372 0819

hbarnett@fiber.net and hbarnett@xmission.com

1391 West 800 South – Orem, Utah 84058

Vol. 30, Issue 8 – September 28, 2009

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

BYU 42 CSU 23

WINNING IS STILL THE ULTIMATE COUGAR COSMETIC

There were a few blemishes last Saturday in LaVell Edwards Stadium.

BYU's defense looked a little splotchy and spotty and Max Hall continued to break out with a few unwanted pimples and picks on offense, but winning is still the perfect Cougar cosmetic.

Thanks to 42 points of BYU blush on offense and defensive lipstick that limited Colorado State to just 23 points, Bronco Mendenhall and his Cougars are sitting 1-0 in Mountain West Conference play.

As the CSU Rams showed, BYU's complexion in conference play won't be smooth and silky.

The Cougars will have some bags under the eyes and baggage on both sides of the ball that will require some cosmetic and coaching adjustments if BYU hopes to coverup and capture its third conference championship under Bronco Mendenhall.

Speaking of makeup, CSU couldn't make up for the three first quarter touchdowns they gift wrapped and gave the Cougars.

BYU got out of the gate early thanks to two Ram tipped passes that resulted in interceptions deep in CSU's own territory.

Cougars Capitalize

The Cougars capitalized on both for two touchdowns and added a third when Matt Marshall blocked a Ram punt in the same quarter. BYU converted that turnover into 7 points and at the end of the first quarter it was BYU 21 and CSU looking for a total makeover or at least a do-over after 15 minutes of play.

The Rams put up 438 yards of total offense on BYU's defense. Conversely, the Cougars had 373 yards of offense against CSU.

Like Florida State the week before, CSU showed that teams that can protect their quarterbacks can throw the ball against the Cougars.

For BYU cornerback Brian Logan, it was *"the best of times and the worst of times"* for the new juco transfer.

He had a "Dickens" of a time against the Ram passing game. His best came in the first quarter when he was involved in both CSU interceptions. He was on the receiving end of the first interception and broke up the second that resulted in Andrew Rich coming up with the ball.

The rest of the game didn't work out so well for him as CSU continually tried to mismatch him with bigger receivers. Two of the Ram touchdown passes were against Logan.

Sticks and Stones

While CSU was throwing sticks, stones and touchdowns over Logan, Bronco Mendenhall words were much kinder. Before the game he said that Logan is the best field corner he has coached at BYU since taking over the program 5 years ago.

We agree. Logan is a major upgrade at cornerback for the Cougars from the last two seasons.

Winning also is the perfect cosmetic for covering up rashes.

A rash of interceptions is what Max Hall is currently throwing.

Here is a stat that even globs of makeup and cosmetics will be unable to cover up.

In four games, Hall's touchdown-to-interception ratio is not good. He has thrown 8 touchdown passes and 8 interceptions. Balance offensively is good, but balance in td/int's is not.

In Hall's sophomore year when BYU won the MWC championship, that ratio was much better. He threw 26 touchdowns and had 12 interceptions. Last year he threw 36 TDs and 14 picks.

Harvey Unga's hamstring doesn't need any cosmetic enhancement. The junior running back is doing quite well on his own. Unga turned in another nice rushing performance Against CSU. He ran for 113 yards on 22 carries and scored 3 touchdowns.

He currently has gained 227 yards on 35 carries for 4 touchdowns in basically two games. He didn't play against Oklahoma and saw just one quarter of play against Tulane. He currently is averaging 6.5 yards per carry.

Rouge

In the recurring blemish department and cosmetics, the BYU kicking game could certainly use more rouge.

In Canadian Football it is called a rouge or single when a team kicks the ball into the opponent's end zone and they can't or don't run the ball out.

The last few seasons, rouge has been rare for the BYU kicking game. Despite all the recruiting promises of big-leg kickers, BYU seldom can get the ball into the end zone on kickoffs.

It wouldn't be that big of a deal except for the fact that BYU kickers are at 4000-plus feet and when we randomly change channels while watching other college football games, kickers at sea level seem to have no problem reaching and rouging the end zone.

AGGIES ARE AN OFFENSIVE TEAM

We have never liked Utah State.

This year we find them particularly offensive.

Based on their first three games, USU, under new coach Gary Anderson, the former Utah defensive coordinator, has no problems moving the ball and scoring touchdowns.

They just have had problems winning games.

In case you haven't been paying attention, BYU's opponent for this coming Friday night in LaVell Edwards Stadium, is 1-2 on the year.

They opened their season in Salt Lake against Utah and lost 35-17. They then travelled to College Station and lost to Texas A&M 38-30. Last week they finally played a home game and defeated Southern Utah 53-34.

Losing is not new for Logan. What is different is the Aggie offense. They move the ball at will.

Utah State is averaging 489 yards per game offensively. They put up 342 yards against Utah, 521 yards

against Texas A&M and 604 last week against SUU.

The Aggies have a formula for giving the BYU defense fits. They have an experienced and returning quarterback in Diondre Borel. Even worse, Borel is a quarterback that can make plays with his legs.

Problems

BYU has problems containing mobile quarterbacks. The latest example was Christian Ponder of Florida State. Ponder was just mobile enough to keep plays alive. Borel is more athletic and more mobile and able to make big plays with his feet.

Utah State is pretty balanced offensively. They have racked up 800 yards passing in three games and 667 yard rushing.

They have playmakers on that side of the ball.

It will be interesting to see how BYU and its defense game plans for the Aggies. We are sure that their top priority will be to keep Borel from getting outside of containment. That is when he is most dangerous.

Defensively, The Aggies are giving up about the same yardage that they are producing on offense. In three games, they have let their opponents have 1459 yards of offense and giving up 35 points per game.

This has the makings of an offensive shootout.

Its a good thing that offense is the strong suit of BYU.

We call it BYU 48 USU 31.

The game will be televised live on the Mtn with kickoff set for 7:00 pm.

DAN HAWKINS SPEAKS TO MY VIEW OF BYU FOOTBALL

I admit that I used to be insecure about BYU football.

When the Cougars were in their heydays of the '80s, I followed the national polls religiously. I couldn't believe that the Cougars were always underrated and not higher in the polls. The East coast bias bugged me.

I intensely disliked Barry Switzer and Bryant Gumbel for their total lack of respect for the BYU football program.

I used to eagerly await post game shows just to hear what opposing coaches said about BYU after the Cougars had defeated them. I was always sure that they would be effusive in their praise of BYU after the Cougars whipped them.

I hated it that the Cougars weren't given enough accolades for their accomplishments.

I used to subscribe to the Kevin Bacon and six degrees of separation football theory. If BYU beat Weber State, who beat Idaho State who beat Portland State who upset Oregon State who beat Washington State who upset UCLA, it proved that BYU could win the Pac 10.

Pundits and Polls

I no longer care what the polls or pundits say. It doesn't bother me if others across the country don't think BYU is a top five football program, because I don't think they are either.

My football philosophy is now more in line with Dan Hawkins, the head coach of Colorado, when he screamed in 2007, "It's Division I football. If you don't like it, go play intramurals."

In case you missed it or forgot, here is an audio clip of Hawkins' infamous tirade.

It used to be that if BYU lost a game or even won, but didn't play well, I couldn't sleep at night. How could the Cougars let me down?

Those days are long gone. It's Division I football.

Good teams lose. Great teams lose. Bad teams occasionally win.

If BYU played Oklahoma another 9 times this year, they would lose at least seven of those games, with or without Sam Bradford.

The Sooners now have tape of the Cougars. Who cares? BYU's win over OU was the ultimate entertainment and is one of my all-time favorite BYU football moments.

If BYU played Florida State another 9 times this year, the Cougars would likely win at least five of those games.

How can Florida State pummel BYU but struggle to whip Jacksonville State and get beat by South Florida? It's Division I football.

College football is a lot like the national political scene. Substance is gone, regardless of party affiliation. Without a playoff, we don't really know which teams can beat other teams.

Talking Heads

Instead, it is about sound bites, snippets of video and talking heads on networks who tell us who is good and why we should think like they do.

Take away the studio hosts and sets and it is still Division I football where real teams with real players with abilities and talent are spread among all teams. Those teams then actually go out and go mano a mano on the football field.

How else do you explain USC getting beat by Washington last week and this week Cal getting pummeled by Oregon or highly regarded Penn State taking it on the chin at home against Iowa. How do explain a nondescript team like Colorado State making BYU look ordinary?

Pardon the backtracking to Kevin Bacon, but in their opening game at home this season, Iowa had to hang on for dear life and a bad opposing field goal kicker to defeat Northern Iowa.

That means that since BYU pounded Northern Iowa last year, they could beat Iowa and in turn could have beaten Penn State.

Crown the Cougars champions of the Big Ten.

Top 25

At the risk of sounding like one of those talking heads, BYU is a very good football team, one of the top 25 in the nation, but they are not an elite team. They don't have a good enough defense or enough speed to bang heads consistently with the elite teams of the nation.

Regardless, they are still very entertaining to watch and follow. They are what they are. Craving respect is in my rear view mirror. What I am looking for is entertainment and some much needed recreation and relief from real life.

BYU football provides that, thank you.

BYU will win some big games. They will lose some big games. Harking back to Hawkins, "It is Division I football." That is what happens.

In the last two decades BYU has won a lot of football games and most of the time looked good doing it. That said, there are plenty of teams that can beat them or make them look ordinary just because it is Division I football.

BYU isn't the only team with decent coaches who watch film and find deficiencies they can attack and defeat.

Give any coach in the MWC a little bit of talent in the right spots, enough looks at enough film and

enough times on the same field with BYU, and they will eventually make it competitive. As Dan Hawkins shouted, "It's Division I football."

QUARTERBACK QUEUE

Max Hall...Completed 18-of-29 passes for 241 yards and two touchdowns. Also threw two interceptions.

Riley Nelson...Did not play against Colorado State.

James Lark and Jason Munns...Both are still serving missions. Lark is due back in January and Munns will return in May.

Jake Heaps...Completed 17 of 22 passes for 272 yards and five touchdowns in Skyline's 55-6 win over Newport HS.

Tanner Mangum..The sophomore qb from Timberline HS in Boise completed 23-33 for 301 yards and three touchdowns in a 19-6 win over Borah HS. He also had one pick.

Alex Kuresa...Completed 18-of-24 passes for 356 yards and six touchdowns in 50-17 win over Box Elder HS.

Football Fluff and Stuff

We don't know if he is LDS, but with a name like Mahonri Bostrom, it is a possibility. The 5-9, 180 pound senior running back for Nampa HS in Idaho rushed for 362 yards and three touchdowns on 41 carries last week in a 45-38 win over Skyview. He is also the reigning 4A Idaho state champion in the 200 meters. He has rushed for 973 yards on 106 carries in four games so far this season. He is African American.

A week or so back Tom Holmoe was speaking to a luncheon group and said that BYU is well aware of its speed issues in football. He basically said it would likely take another 15 years of LDS Church growth and an increase in ethnic diversity in the Church population for that speed to start to arrive at BYU. He stated what we have know for some time. Speed and talent for BYU football will have to primarily come from the LDS membership base.

Holmoe also stated that after the Oklahoma win, he was contacted by a top-five program want to inquire about scheduling the Cougars in football, but no immediate compatible dates were available for both schools.

TELEVISION TIMETABLE

BYU vs. Utah State

Friday, Oct 2 at Provo

Kickoff: 7:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: The Mtn

BYU vs. UNLV

Saturday, Oct 10 at Las Vegas

Kickoff: 8:00 pm Mountain Time

TV: The Mtn

BYU vs. San Diego State

Saturday, Oct 17 at San Diego
Kickoff: 4:00 pm Mountain Time
TV: The Mtn

BYU vs. TCU

Saturday, Oct 24 at Provo
Kickoff: 5:30 pm Mountain Time
TV: Versus